

**Implementation Plan for the National Partnership Agreement
on Youth Attainment and Transitions**

Victoria

Contents Page

Purpose.....	3
Monitoring annual improvements in participation, attainment and transitions, including Indigenous performance.....	3
State/Territory Context.....	5
Participation and Attainment Targets.....	11
Indigenous State/Territory Year 12 or equivalent attainment Trajectories	12
Monitoring and reporting of Koorie students in schools with high Koorie enrolments	13
Strengthened participation requirements – National Youth Participation Requirement ..	15
Lifting Qualifications – Education or Training Entitlement	16
Areas of Reform.....	17
Reform Area: Maximising Engagement, Attainment and Successful Transitions.....	18
Reform Area: School, Business and Community Partnerships	41
Reform Area: Individualised, Personalised Support for Young People at Risk	43
Conditions for transfer of program responsibilities and funding	47
Evaluation and Audit Arrangements	49
Evaluation.....	49
Audit arrangements	49
Communications Strategy to support Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership.....	49
Governance Arrangements	52
Multilateral Governance Group	52
State Governance Structures	52

Purpose

62. States and Territories entering into this Agreement will be required to develop an implementation plan which demonstrates how they will manage and implement the Agreement.

Refer to National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions, Part 5, page 15

The Commonwealth and Victoria are committed to working collaboratively to increase the educational engagement, attainment and successful transitions of young people. This implementation plan outlines how the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions will be implemented in Victoria.

The National Partnership was established to achieve a national Year 12 or equivalent attainment rate of 90 per cent by 2015, provide an education or training entitlement to young people aged 15-24; better engage young people in education and training; assist young people aged 15-24 to make a successful transition from schooling into further education, training or employment; and better align Commonwealth, State and Territory programs and services related to youth, careers and transitions.

Monitoring annual improvements in participation, attainment and transitions, including Indigenous performance

The Performance Indicators are generally consistent with commonly sourced data sets, and reporting requirements under the National Education Agreement and the National Indigenous Reform Agreement.

Two reward payments¹ available under the National Partnership support improved participation and attainment subject to the achievement of targets, as assessed by the COAG Reform Council.

In Victoria, the full reward payment will be made available once the 2012 Year 12 or equivalent attainment rate target is reached², regardless of whether the participation rate target has been reached. As per clause 91 of the National Partnership Victoria may access this funding early. Clause 91 states: “should a State or Territory achieve their participation target before 2010 or their attainment target before 2012, they may access their reward funding early”.

Improving Indigenous engagement and closing the gap in Indigenous attainment is a fundamental part of creating a fair Australia. Indigenous disaggregation of Performance Indicators provides a focus on Indigenous attendance, retention, and participation in middle secondary and lower levels of Vocational Education and Training (VET).

¹ Reward payments are detailed at Table 10 of the National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions

² Relevant targets are outlined at page 12 of this implementation plan

Outcome	Performance Indicator	Source
Increased participation of young people in education and training	Enrolment of full-time equivalent students in Years 11 and 12*, including Indigenous students	National Schools Statistics Collection
	Enrolment of Indigenous fulltime equivalent students in Years 9 and 10	
	15-19 year olds without a Year 12 certificate and not enrolled in school who are enrolled in a vocational education and training (VET) course at Certificate II level or higher*, including Indigenous students	Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard collection
	Indigenous 15-19 year olds without a Year 12 certificate and not enrolled in school who are enrolled in a vocational education and training (VET) course at Certificate I level	
Increased attainment of young people aged 15-24, including Indigenous youth	The proportion of young people aged 20-24 who have attained Year 12 or Certificate II or above ^ <i>As per: NEA p9; NIRA p13</i>	ABS Survey of Education and Work, supplemented by census, survey and administrative data <i>As per COAG Communiqué 30 April 2009, p5</i>
	The proportion of young Indigenous people aged 20-24 who have attained Year 12 or Certificate II or above <i>As per: NEA p9; NIRA p13</i>	ABS Census of Population and Housing (principal source) and administrative and survey data on the award of Year 12 and VET certificates ³
Young people make a successful transition from school to further education, training or full-time employment	The proportion of young people aged 15-24 participating in post-school education, training or employment six months after leaving school	ABS Survey of Education and Work <i>As per NP YAT Table 3 (p14)</i>
Improved Indigenous attendance	Attendance rates for Indigenous students in Years 1-10 <i>As per: NIRA p14; NEA pC-25</i>	National Schools Statistics Collection
Improved Indigenous retention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apparent retention Years 7/8 to Year 10, by Indigenous status ▪ Apparent retention Years 7/8 to Year 12, by Indigenous status <i>As per NIRA p13</i>	National Schools Statistics Collection

* Indicator for participation reward payment (measured in 2010; payment available in 2011).

^ Indicator for attainment reward payment (measured in 2012; payment available in 2013).

³ Relevant data from other sources that can show improvement over time as agreed with jurisdictions will be considered in inter-Censal years to monitor progress towards the 2020 halving the Indigenous attainment gap target.

State/Territory Context

This Implementation Plan has been developed in partnership with stakeholders including the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and Independent Schools Victoria. The initiatives outlined within the Plan aim to improve the outcomes for students across all sectors. Unless specified otherwise, this Implementation Plan, and the specific initiatives within it, applies across the Victorian education and training system, including all school sectors and education and training providers.

The Victorian Government recognises that a strong and effective youth transition system is a key underpinning element to improving outcomes for all young people. Youth transitions refers to the phase in a young person's life during which they progress from compulsory schooling to independent adult working life. Research indicates that young people have the best chance of a successful transition if they achieve a sequence of milestones from the age of 15 to 24, as detailed in the table below.

Stage	Outcome	Indicators
By 24 years-old	Young adults participate fully in social and economic life, and are equipped for a fulfilling future life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young adults move into strong career paths through education, training and employment.
20-24 years-old	Young adults develop and actively pursue their chosen career paths.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people continue to develop their careers through education and training.
By 19 years-old	Young people are successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens.	Young people <ul style="list-style-type: none"> attain (or are attaining) a foundation qualification that provides the basis for further education or employment proceed to further education or employment have the capacity to make active choices about their careers.
15 to 19 years-old	Students participate in a program to complete a foundation qualification, with the intention to complete it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students participate in education or training which will lead to a foundation qualification. An increasing proportion of students continue in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).
At 15 years-old	Students have the capacity and the disposition to engage in a program that provides a foundation qualification.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students achieve foundation skills in numeracy and literacy to successfully undertake a foundation qualification. Students intend to complete Year 12 or its equivalent. Students plan a practical pathway to achieve a foundation qualification. Students have the knowledge and disposition to participate as informed citizens in Australia's democracy.

This sequence of milestones in the youth transitions years is followed by the majority of young Victorians, but some are continuing to miss out and others could be supported to

achieve more. Making progress towards more young people achieving these milestones sets the framework for the Victorian efforts to meet targets in the area of youth attainment and transitions. A particular focus is required on individuals from those groups most at risk in youth transition: those from Koorie backgrounds, from low socio-economic backgrounds, in families under stress, low achievers, refugees and other newly arrived communities and those in neighbourhoods of pronounced poverty or in remote locations.

International best practice in youth transitions systems is based on:

- ensuring the acquisition of effective literacy and numeracy skills in the post-compulsory years and broad preparation for work and life
- arrangements that support and encourage people to complete qualifications with strong employment and further education outcomes
- systems with strong pathways that assist students to move effectively between courses, institutions and sectors
- support for making education and training choices, and
- opportunities for people to re-engage with education and training.

The investment and initiatives of the Victorian government to date have addressed these areas, with good progress made in terms of outcomes and strong transitions by young people. Victoria has remained consistently above the national average for the percentage of 20-24 year olds with Year 12 or equivalent and has the highest Year 12 or equivalent completion rate of all the states.

The challenge for 2010 – 2013 is to continue to improve the level of educational achievement in the 15 – 24 cohort in Victoria and to support the most at-risk groups, enabling Victoria to meet the targets embedded in the National Partnership.

Policy and Programmatic context

In Victoria, the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions will be delivered within the following policy and programmatic context.

The Victorian Government has a number of key policies which outline the priorities for improving youth attainment and transitions:

- *Growing Victoria Together*⁴ which first articulated the Government's priority of improving participation and achievement in education, employment and training
- The *Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development*⁵ which builds upon earlier reforms to improve the education, development and wellbeing of all Victorian children and young people
- *Securing Jobs for Your Future – Skills for Victoria*⁶ will ensure Victoria continues to have a broad and responsive vocational education and training system; and
- The *Wannik Education Strategy for Koorie Students*⁷ which reiterates the Victorian Government's commitment to ensuring every Koorie child receives a first class education in Victoria's government schools.

⁴ Available at: <http://www.dpc.vic.gov.au/CA256D8000265E1A/page/Growing+Victoria+Together-History!OpenDocument&1=30-Growing+Victoria+Together~&2=50-History~&3=~>

⁵ Available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/blueprint2008/thepaper.htm>

⁶ Available at: <http://www.skills.vic.gov.au/corporate/directions/skillsreform>

⁷ Available at: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/directions/aboriginal/wannik/default.htm>

The following provides an overview of existing arrangements for education and training provision and youth transitions support in Victoria.

Qualifications and pathways

To enhance young people's options, Victoria has developed the most diverse set of qualifications and pathways of any State or Territory in Australia, in terms of the qualifications that young people can attain and the location in which they can study. Education and training options available to students in the senior secondary years of schooling include academic courses of study under the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) and the International Baccalaureate, hands-on applied learning through the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) and nationally accredited VET that can be undertaken as part of either the VCE or VCAL. School-based apprenticeships and traineeships (SBATs) are an important pathway for students through VET in Schools (VETiS), undertaken as part of a program of studies that combine the VCE or VCAL with a nationally accredited training certificate and employment. Students in these programs have the opportunity to undertake workplace learning and to develop and enhance their employability skills. Within the VCE or VCAL, clusters of subjects that lead to further training and employment in specific industries are being developed and promoted.

Young people's options are not confined to the school system. Victoria has a strong vocational education and training sector with a variety of providers including TAFE Institutes and private and community training organisations. Young people can continue to pursue VCE, VCAL or vocational education and training beyond school, including apprenticeships and traineeships.

Delivery arrangements

There are a range of delivery arrangements which enable young people to take advantage of the broad range of qualifications and subjects available. These include provision in schools, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and Adult Community Education (ACE). Since 2007, young people aged between 16 and 19 years have had the opportunity to access training from one of four Technical Education Centres (or TECs). In 2009, three new TECs have been established in Geelong, Bendigo and Bairnsdale/Sale following integration of the former Australian Technical Colleges into the Victorian training system. TECs provide senior secondary students with access to high-tech, modern facilities, teachers with current industry knowledge and a learning environment, on a TAFE site, that is catered specifically to young people. Victoria is also working closely with the Commonwealth in the implementation of the Trade Training Centres in Schools Program funding, to build or upgrade trade training facilities to support delivery of vocational education and training.

Regeneration projects are place-based interventions to address pockets of disadvantage where schools, their communities and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) work together to develop a planned response to help improve curriculum provision, student learning and pathways.

Transition support

Victoria actively supports young people who are at-risk of disengaging or disengaged from education and training. A range of programs and tools are available to assist in supporting student transitions:

- Managed Individual Pathways (MIPs) provide all 15-19 year olds attending Government schools with individual pathway plans and associated support to enable a successful transition through the post compulsory years to continued education, training or full-time employment. Additional funding from 2009 under the *Wannik* strategy has enhanced provision to Koorie students and allowed earlier intervention with this group (from Year 8) in all government schools.
- The Youth Transition Support Initiative (YTSI) provides transition support workers in some of the most disadvantaged areas of Victoria. These workers provide personalised assistance to young people aged 15–19 who are not in education or training, not working full-time and do not have Year 12 or an equivalent qualification. The objective is to help disengaged young people achieve a sustainable education, training or employment outcome. Additional YTSI provision has been established to support Koorie young people in three of these areas. The YTSI initiative will deliver service until September 2010.
- *Career On Track* pilots have been established in three regions in 2009 to trial targeted careers counselling support for early school leavers who are not in education, employment or training with the aim of re-attaching them to education and training and helping them acquire life-long career management skills. Through this initiative school responsibility for their students will be increased as schools will be required to ensure that a young person is making a suitable transition to education, training or employment or refer them to this service.
- The services currently offered by YTSI and *Career On Track* will, after the conclusion of these programs, be provided through Youth Connections under the National Partnership.
- The School Focused Youth Service works to establish collaborative mechanisms between schools and agencies that support young people, and purchases service to fill gaps at the local level.
- *TAFE and ACE completions officer* pilots are underway, providing staff whose role is to support students in these organisations to complete VET Certificates.

Accountability and Monitoring

- Successful student transitions and pathways is one of the three accountability outcomes expected of government schools in the School Accountability and Improvement Framework. Schools incorporate strategies to achieve successful pathways and transitions initiatives in their School Strategic Plans and Annual Implementation Plans.
- An annual *On Track* telephone survey of government and non-government school leavers maps their further education, training and employment destinations and provides comprehensive data to schools and other stakeholders. Support is provided through the *On Track* Connect program to young people not studying or in full time work who request additional pathway advice. These young people are referred to appropriate local service providers to help them get their career plans back on track. From 2010, *On Track* Connect will be provided through the Youth Connections program.

Strengthening Partnerships around education, training, employment and youth support

- 31 Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) were established in all areas of the State from 2001. LLENs develop partnerships between local education providers, industries and communities to improve education, training and employment outcomes of their local young people, with a focus on the most disadvantaged.⁸
- Regional Youth Commitments in all DEECD Regions develop coordinated arrangements across the Region with all providers of education and training as well as agencies involved in career and transition support on behalf of young people 15 to 19 years.

Linkages with other national reforms

In progressing towards the improved outcomes sought under the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions, there are clear links to the COAG *Smarter Schools* National Partnerships which include:

- National Partnership on Improving Teacher Quality
- National Partnership on Low Socioeconomic Status School (SES) Communities, and
- National Partnership on Literacy and Numeracy.

Victoria has developed an integrated approach to the *Smarter Schools* National Partnerships which is part of a broad, whole-of system strategy designed to implement significant reforms across a range of Victorian schools identified as requiring improvement. Victoria's approach to the *Smarter Schools* National Partnerships intersects around three key reform priorities:

- Leadership and Teacher Capacity
- Recognition and Response to Individual Learning Needs, and
- School-community Engagement and Extended Schools.

These three key reform areas complement the reform directions and initiatives in the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions.

Leadership and Teacher Capacity

Improving Leadership and Teacher Capacity aligns well with the existing vision for schools articulated in the Victorian *Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development*. Effective leaders and a skilled teaching workforce operating in a system with a strong focus on overall school improvement will clearly impact favourably on retention and outcomes of all young people in schools. Enhancing the quality of teaching will also assist more young people to transition into the post-compulsory years with strong literacy, numeracy and foundational skills as well as the capacity and disposition to continue their education and training and improve their transitional outcomes.

Recognition and Response to Individual Learning Needs

Recognition and Response to Individual Learning Needs reflects the importance of all students being engaged in their learning. Initiatives will focus on:

- improving the use of individual student performance information
- offering programs which meet the needs and interests of students

⁸ From 2010, LLENs will be enhanced to deliver against additional requirements of the Commonwealth Partnership Broker program

- enabling students to be active participants in their learning, and
- providing intensive intervention for identified students

By recognising and responding to individual learning needs, student outcomes can be improved across the participating schools.

This initiative addresses the key area of '*ensuring the acquisition of effective literacy and numeracy skills*' for successful youth transition, noted earlier in the Implementation Plan. It will assist the State to reach performance indicators, especially around attainment level targets.

School-community Engagement and Extended Schools

While many of the factors that impact on student improvement are outside the school gate, there is a growing body of evidence on the positive effects of collaborative approaches between schools and their communities. In disadvantaged communities the increased focus on engaging parents, community and business in schools and student learning will interact with the Partnership Broker initiative formed under the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions.

While the focus of the school community engagement and extended schools reform area is in the primary school years, early intervention in these communities will assist more young people to aspire to, and have the capacity to participate in post-compulsory learning and to attain a Year 12 or equivalent qualification. The enhanced LLENs, with their new focus on primary as well as secondary schools, are expected to link in with these place-based efforts.

DEECD will provide the coordination and monitoring function across the *Smarter Schools* National Partnerships.

The National Education Agreement and the National Skills and Workforce Development Agreement, which both came into force on 1 January 2009; also support the aims of the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions.

The National Education Agreement articulates the commitment of all Australian governments to ensure that Australian school students acquire the knowledge and skills to participate effectively in society and employment in a globalised economy, and delivers additional financial support from the Commonwealth to the States towards achieving this aim. Initiatives under the agreement are expected to contribute to young people meeting literacy and numeracy standards and making successful transitions from school, and to reducing disadvantage especially for Koorie young people.

The National Skills and Workforce Development Agreement, sets out the commitment between the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions to work towards increasing the skill levels of all Australians, including Koorie Australians. Intended outcomes include reduction of gaps in foundation skills and building the depth and breadth of skills and capabilities required for the 21st century labour market.

Participation and Attainment Targets

Refer to National Partnership Table 8: Participation Rate Targets in 2010 page 19.

The National Partnership documents the following agreed Victorian participation rate targets.

For 2010, the Victorian target will be 148,484 and the increase on 2008 will be 8,353.

Refer to National Partnership Table 9: 2012 Attainment Targets page 20.

For 2012, the Victorian attainment rate will be 89.35, the number increase from 2009 to 2012 will be 11,937 and the percentage increase from 2009 to 2012 will be 3.77.

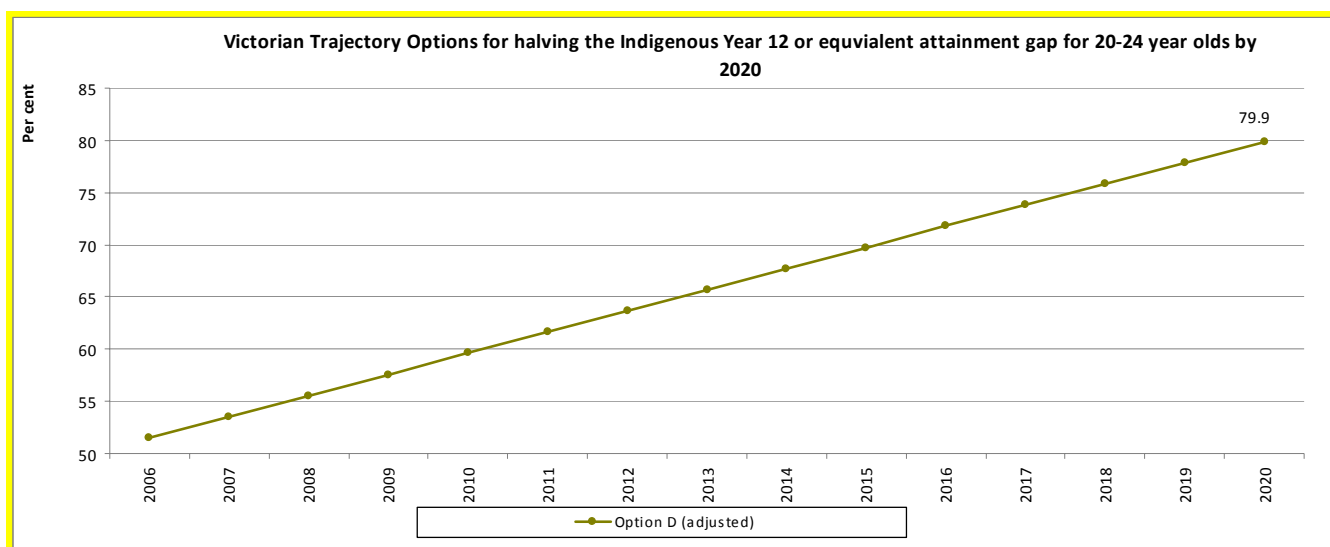
Refer to National Partnership Table 9: 2012 Attainment Targets page 20.

For 2015, the Victorian attainment target rate will be 92.6 the number increase from 2012 to 2015 will be 11,937 and the percentage increase from 2012 to 2015 will be 3.64.

Indigenous State/Territory Year 12 or equivalent attainment Trajectories

Individual jurisdictional trajectories will be based on the national 'S' curve trajectory shape.

Refer to National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions, Schedule B, Indigenous Reporting, page 27.



Monitoring of this trajectory in Victoria is subject to the following caveats:

- Overall breakdown of indigenous targets across jurisdictions is amended following advice from the Productivity Data Development Group
- If future data improvements provide better estimates of actual Koorie attainment, starting rates, corresponding targets and the national target may be adjusted to reflect greater accuracy. Any changes would be negotiated by the Australian Government with all jurisdictions and finalised by mid 2010.
- Jurisdiction trajectories are a guide to anticipated progress from current to target Koorie attainment rates. They provide an *indicative* path only which is not intended to present actual progress at any point.

Monitoring and reporting of Koorie students in schools with high Koorie enrolments

States and Territories will also monitor and report on: school level strategies; leading indicators (participation, attendance and retention); and Year 12 attainment; initially for schools with 30 or more Indigenous students where this equates to 10 per cent or more of total enrolments, to be expanded over time as agreed through State and Territory implementation plans, to schools with 10 per cent or more Indigenous enrolments or more than 30 Indigenous students.

Refer to National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions, Schedule B, Indigenous Reporting, page 26.

Note. The school enrolment specifications that apply to this monitoring and reporting (30 or more Koorie students, or greater than 10 per cent of the school population) will have limited applicability (either currently or over time) to Victoria, given the distribution of Koorie students throughout mainstream schools.

Annual monitoring and reporting of participation in Victoria

Total enrolment of full time students in Years 11 and 12 and 15-17 year olds (without a Year 12 Certificate) and not enrolled in school who are enrolled in a VET course (full time or part time) at Certificate II level or higher. This is a composite measure.

Data sources:

- DEECD administrative data — enrolment at August school Census (available September of each year)
- Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) school VET enrolment data — 15 to 17 years olds (available December of each year), and
- Skills Victoria administrative data — VET enrolments (available September of each year)

Total enrolment of full time students in Years 9 and 10 and 15-17 year olds (without a Year 12 Certificate) and not enrolled in school who are enrolled in a VET course (full time or part time) at Certificate I level. This is a composite measure.

Data sources:

- DEECD administrative data — enrolment at August school Census (available September of each year)
- Skills Victoria administrative data — VET enrolments (available September of each year)

Monitoring and reporting of leading indicators in Victoria

Attendance monitoring – based on continued enrolment throughout a year (February to August Victorian School Census)

- DEECD administrative data — enrolment (available October of each year)

Retention – based on enrolment continuing into the next year (February Victorian School Census)

- DEECD administrative data — enrolment (available March of each year)

Trends in administrative data

- As displayed in above data sources over time.

School Level Strategies

School level strategies are monitored in the Annual School Census. Data is collected on:

- whether a school has any students that identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (Koorie)
- whether a school currently has targets to improve Koorie student outcomes in its Annual Implementation Plan or the Principal's Performance Plan
- whether the school has engaged in the following national programs — *What Works or Dare to Lead*
- whether the school uses the *Student Mapping Tool (SMT)* to determine intervention and support requirements for Koorie students
- approximately what percentage of Koorie students at the school has an *Individual Education Plan*
- whether the school utilises a Koorie-specific version of the *It's Not OK to Be Away* attendance strategy to support Koorie students, and
- whether literacy specialists from the Literacy Improvement Team initiative are being utilised in the school for Koorie students.

The data are collected in August (Government schools only) and are available for reporting in September each year. 2008 and 2009 data is available.

Strengthened participation requirements – National Youth Participation Requirement

All States and Territories will implement the National Youth Participation Requirement.

Refer to National Partnership, Part 2, clause 20-25, page 6.

The participation requirement under the National Partnership includes:

- a mandatory requirement for all young people to participate in schooling (an approved school or equivalent) until they complete Year 10, and
- a mandatory requirement for young people who have completed Year 10 to participate full-time (at least 25 hours per week) in education, training or employment, or a combination of these activities, until age 17.

Victoria's response to fulfil the participation requirement in the Partnership is to:

- amend the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 to
 - change the compulsory school age from 16 to 17 years, and
 - include an exemption to the compulsory school age if the child is participating in education or training, or employment or a combination of education, training or employment
- establish a Ministerial Order under the Act providing further detail of exemptions from the compulsory age attendance requirements for young people participating in approved training, employment or a combination of these activities, including definitions of Year 10 and the number of hours required to meet the participation requirement

The new participation requirement legislation is to take effect on 1 January 2010.

Lifting Qualifications – Education or Training Entitlement

Commonwealth, States and Territories will deliver an education or training entitlement for young people aged 15-24

Refer to National Partnership, Part 2, clause 36-40, pages 7-8.

Education and Training Entitlement for 15 to 19 year olds from 1 July 2009

In implementing the Compact with Young Australians, Victoria builds on the highly successful Guaranteed Place in TAFE initiative. Since 2007, the initiative has ensured that TAFE institutes, and some Adult and Community Education (ACE) providers, can deliver training to any young person between 16 and 19 years of age, who have not attained Year 12 or its equivalent.

From 1 July 2009 the education and training entitlement for 15 to 19 year olds has been available through Victoria's 18 TAFE institutes, and some Adult Community Education providers, with additional funding received by each Institute to meet demand for training from this cohort.

From 1 January 2010, implementation of the entitlement for 15 to 19 year olds will be delivered through Victoria's 18 TAFE institutes, as well as registered training providers who deliver government funded training. Some ACE providers will also offer the entitlement for this cohort.

In Victoria, a young person is already entitled to free education in a Victorian government school if they are under 20 years of age on 1 January of the year in which the instruction takes place.

Education and Training Entitlement for 20 to 24 year olds from 1 January 2010

From 1 January 2010, implementation of the entitlement for 20 to 24 year olds who are upskilling will be delivered through Victoria's 18 TAFE institutes, as well as registered training providers who deliver government funded training. Some ACE providers will also offer the entitlement for this cohort.

From 1 January 2011, these entitlements to training will continue as part of the broader implementation of Skills for Life: the Victorian Training Guarantee, under Securing Jobs for Your Future: Skills for Victoria.

Victoria has committed to providing data to support the review of the Education or Training Entitlement to take place in April 2011.

Areas of Reform

The National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions also involves the clarification of roles and responsibilities between the Commonwealth and the states and territories in the area of youth, career and transitions resulting in:

- the Commonwealth having primary responsibility for youth labour-market programs
- the States and Territories having primary responsibility for the delivery of education and training including Vocational Education in Schools work placements, and
- the States and Territories progressively taking primary responsibility for all youth, careers and transitions programs.

To support the achievement of this, and the other outcomes being sought under the National Partnership, from 1 January 2010, a range of the Commonwealth's current Youth Career and Transition programs will be consolidated and streamlined into four new reform areas.

Reform Area: Maximising Engagement, Attainment and Successful Transitions

49. Project funding for Maximising Engagement, Attainment and Successful Transitions will be made available to the States and Territories from 1 January 2010 for the reform areas of multiple learning pathways, career development and mentoring. The reform areas and indicative actions should be seen as a menu which States and Territories will be able to select from. The implementation plans will outline the actions to be undertaken in the selected reform areas.

Refer to National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions, Part 3, p 9-10.

53. States and Territories will consult with the non-government sectors in their jurisdiction about how this project funding will support government and non-government schools, Registered Training Organisations and community transition service providers to ensure all young people will have access to these programs and services and this will be detailed in implementation plans.

Refer to National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions, Part 3, p 11-12.

In Victoria, the following programs and initiatives will be funded to support these reform areas:

- Workplace Learning Coordinators
- Pastoral Care for Apprentices
- Improving Career Development Services, and
- Koorie Transitions Coordinators.

The agreed Victorian allocation of project funding for **Maximising Engagement Attainment and Successful Transitions** is outlined in the table below.

Initiative	2009-10	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	4 year total
Workplace Learning Coordinators	\$1.375m	\$5.310m	\$5.310m	\$5.310m	\$2.655m	\$19.961m
Pastoral Care for Apprentices	\$1.759m	\$3.505m	\$3.593m	\$3.683m	\$1.887m	\$14.428m
Improving Career Development Services	\$0.566m	\$2.667m	\$2.584m	\$2.659m	\$1.387m	\$9.862m
Koorie Transitions Coordinators	\$0.146m	\$0.924m	\$0.947m	\$0.971m	\$0.524m	\$ 3.511m
Total	\$3.846m	\$12.406m	\$12.434m	\$12.623m	\$6.453m	\$47.762m⁹

Note: All figures have been rounded to three decimal places.

Details of each program are outlined below.

⁹ Total funding to Maximising Engagement Attainment and Successful Transitions reflects transfer of funding allocated under the National Partnership to Partnership Brokers. This is as a result of Victorian Government investment.

Workplace Learning Coordinators

Outline of the proposed program/strategy

The Workplace Learning Coordinator program will seek to:

- increase the numbers of students undertaking workplace learning placements¹⁰ in places of employment, especially in industries that provide strong vocational outcomes for students
- increase the alignment between VET provision in schools and local industry needs, and
- increase the number of Koorie students undertaking workplace learning placements.

To achieve this, the Workplace Learning Coordinators will generate and identify new workplace learning placement opportunities and expand existing work placements to ensure that more young people are able to undertake workplace learning, especially in industries that provide strong vocational outcomes for students.

The program will contribute to multiple learning pathways and career development by:

- improving opportunities for all students to undertake workplace learning placements
- improving the quality of VETiS programs through increased opportunities for students to undertake Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) and be assessed in work based contexts
- developing a 'bank' of ongoing workplace learning placements
- improving the match between VET provision, effective student learning pathways, use of trade training facilities and work placements, as agreed in network provision planning
- promoting workplace learning to industry by improving industry understanding of the benefits to them, and
- improving opportunities for Koorie students to undertake workplace learning placements by linking with existing targeted initiatives such as the Australian Employment Covenant.

Key deliverable	Date to be achieved
Workplace Learning Coordinators established in each of the 31 youth transitions service regions	Start Term 2, 2010
Service plans developed for each of the 31 youth transitions service regions	30 June 2010
Monitoring and review of service plans and Workplace Learning Coordinator's achievements against those plans	On an annual basis

Should Workplace Learning Coordinators **not** be established it is likely that:

- there will be decreased numbers of young people undertaking workplace learning placements
- there will be a decreased focus on the importance of multiple learning pathways
- the opportunity to improve the quality of VETiS programs in this regard will be missed

¹⁰ Workplace learning placements include: School Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship (SBAT), pre-apprenticeship and other Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) students undertaking Structured Workplace Learning (SWL); and work experience placements

- the majority of work placements will continue in industries where young people are already likely to be working (eg hospitality and retail) and the opportunity to increase the proportion of placements in areas of strong vocational outcomes for students and high priority for industry will be lost, and
- there will be fewer Koorie students undertaking workplace learning placements.

Appropriateness and Effectiveness - Evidence that the proposed program/strategy will work

Through increasing young people's access to work placements as part of their education and training, Workplace Learning Coordinators will help to create more socially inclusive pathways for young people from school to further education, training or work. This will be achieved through providing quality workplace learning opportunities to complement senior secondary programs as well as enhancing young people's understanding of applied learning and vocational pathways as well as post-school career options.

Exposing Koorie young people to the world of work is particularly important in families where intergenerational unemployment exists. Through linking with other initiatives targeting Koorie young people this program will also improve opportunities for Koorie young people to gain access to workplace learning placements and an increased understanding of the benefits of vocational pathways.

This initiative will also promote industry involvement in workplace learning by increasing knowledge and understanding of the benefits of offering workplace learning placements, which will potentially lead to an increase in the availability of these placements for all students.

Employing dedicated Workplace Learning Coordinators will ensure effective and efficient planning and coordination of student work placements. Coordinators would provide:

- A brokering role. Workplace Learning Coordinators would be required to liaise with industry and schools (both government and non-government) to identify appropriate workplace learning placement opportunities, and facilitate and coordinate these placements.
- An information dissemination role through LLENs to ensure comprehensive access across all stakeholders. This includes working through LLENs with industry, schools, TAFE and ACE providers to identify local skill needs and local student learning needs.
- A visible contact for employers. Workplace Learning Coordinators would be a consistent and visible contact for employers throughout the state.
- A contribution to network provision planning. Workplace Learning Coordinators would contribute to the process of network provision planning in their area to ensure that their effort reinforces the priorities agreed upon in the provision plan.
- Targeted opportunities for Koorie young people. Workplace Learning Coordinators would work with Koorie transitions coordinators and initiatives such as the Australian Employment Covenant to increase Koorie young people's access to workplace learning placements.

The Workplace Learning Coordinators program has been designed based on research into the importance of SWL as a key component of quality VETiS programs and the experience gained from past programs in Victoria to coordinate SWL placements. It is also based on

evidence from a stakeholder roundtable of school and industry representatives¹¹ and recent discussions with VECCI which confirmed that lack of coordination is a hindrance to establishing structured workplace learning placements.

The 2006 *Improving the Delivery of VET in Schools Report* found that access to SWL placements, and having those placements effectively linked to the VET units being undertaken, was one of the five most important factors influencing the quality of VETiS delivery. The report found that to ensure quality delivery of VETiS programs in Victoria, “opportunities for students to participate in Structured Workplace Learning and to be assessed in work based contexts must also be improved.”¹² This reinforces the need to increase student access to quality workplace learning placements.

The Workplace Learning Coordinators program is consistent with the six essential elements of SWL identified in the *Quality of Structured Workplace Learning 2005* report conducted by PhillipsKPA for the Department of Education, Science and Training. The six essential elements identified in the report are:

1. *Ensure efficient, effective and appropriately resourced internal organisational arrangements.*
2. *Establish strong and enduring relationships with clients and stakeholders.*
3. *Manage demand for places sensitively and effectively.*
4. *Ensure work readiness/workplace preparation arrangements are systematic and consistently rigorous for employers and students.*
5. *Aim for mutually beneficial and rewarding workplace experiences for employers and students, including Koorie students, students with disabilities, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students ‘at risk’ of leaving school early.*
6. *Guarantee the reliability of the outcomes of the workplace experience.*¹³

A state-wide network of Workplace Learning Coordinators would be able to directly address each of these essential elements.

Structured workplace learning participation data for Victoria, as collected by DEECD, also supports the need for the Workplace Learning Coordinators program. The *Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Schools Report - June 2009* shows that in 2008 there was a decline of 7.8 per cent on 2007 in the number of structured workplace learning hours undertaken by Victorian students across all school sectors.¹⁴ This follows a decline of 6.3 per cent in the previous year.¹⁵ The reports notes that this decline coincides with a change in the role of the Local Community Partnership (LCP) program, where prior to 2007 the LCPs directly facilitated SWL placements for students. This evidence supports the need for dedicated Workplace Learning Coordinators to facilitate work placements.

¹¹ Structured Workplace Learning Forum held 28 May 2008

¹² PhillipsKPA (2006), *Improving the Delivery of VET in Schools Report*, Department of Education and Training, Melbourne.

¹³ PhillipsKPA (2005), *Quality of Structured Workplace Learning*, Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra.

¹⁴ DEECD (Office for Policy, Research and Innovation) (2009), *Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Schools Report - June 2009*, DEECD, Melbourne.

¹⁵ DEECD (Office for Policy, Research and Innovation) (2008), *Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Schools Report – April 2008*, DEECD, Melbourne.

Efficiency

The Workplace Learning Coordinators program, through the coordination and brokering of work placements for students across all school sectors in each service region, provides the most efficient model for brokering this type of placements. This model removes the need for each individual school to dedicate resources to seeking work placements for their students, and creates a more efficient process through economies of scale.

Aligning the Workplace Learning Coordinators boundaries with the service regions used for the Youth Connections service and the enhanced LLEN network will create an efficient and coherent youth career and transitions system in Victoria. These boundaries are also broadly consistent with existing school network boundaries.

The program will be delivered through a tender process in each youth transitions service region to ensure market efficiency for the delivery of this service.

There is also a significant efficiency gain for employers through having a single point of contact for the coordination of work placements. Previous feedback and consultations with industry and employer peak bodies indicate frustration through being contacted by multiple schools in their local area. Industry and employer peak bodies have strongly endorsed a more streamlined process through a single point of contact, such as the Workplace Learning Coordinators.

Implementation Risk Assessment

Risk description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk rating	Proposed strategy and key actions
Workplace Learning Coordinators can not be found in each youth transitions service area	1	3	Low	Promotion of the tender through key stakeholder networks
Number of students and hours of work placements does not increase	2	4	Medium	Mid-program review will allow for refinement of program

Performance Assessment

The following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be used to assess this program's performance:

KPI 1 – Demonstration of year on year improvements in both the number of students and hours of SWL placements. This will be measured according to VCAA data and include the government, Catholic and Independent school sectors.

KPI 2 – Demonstration of the quality of work placements arranged by the Workplace Learning Coordinator. Workplace Learning Coordinators will be required to include in their annual report how they are delivering placements which meet the following quality indicators:

- Flexible placements which meet the needs of local employers, schools and students
- Placements in areas of high priority to industry, and those likely to lead to strong outcomes for students
- Students are effectively inducted into the workplace

- All parties are clear about their expectations of the purpose, roles and responsibilities with the placement
- Students have a clear understanding of the role of work placements as part of the development of their pathway to further education, work or employment, and
- Schools clearly link the student's experience with their career education and planning.¹⁶

Provider reports that included feedback from key stakeholders will also be used to measure this KPI.

KPI 3 – Demonstration of input into regional provision planning. Workplace Learning Coordinators will be required to include in their annual report what input they have had into the regional provision planning process in their service region. Feedback from key stakeholders will also be used to measure this KPI.

Current annual data collection and reporting by the DEECD will allow for tracking of progress towards delivery of expected outcomes.

Benefits will be assessed by DEECD through annual reports on the number and hours of student work placements.

Monitoring and Review

DEECD central office will be responsible for the ongoing monitoring and contract managing of the Workplace Learning Coordinators. This will enable ongoing monitoring of individual Workplace Learning Coordinator performance and intervention if required.

A formative evaluation to inform the implementation of the program will be carried out in the first year to ensure that outcomes are likely to be realised.

An impact evaluation will take place in the third year of the program (2012-13) to assess impact, and recommendations on future approach (including whether the program will be ongoing).

Impact on Koorie young people

The Workplace Learning Coordinators will be able to work with the Koorie Transitions Coordinators in each DEECD region and other targeted initiatives such as the Australian Employment Covenant to ensure Koorie students gain the maximum benefits available through work placements. This includes creating relationships with prospective employers to strengthen pathways from education to employment for Koorie students.

Funding

\$19.961 million dollars will be made available for the period 2010-2013 across the 31 youth attainment and transitions service regions.¹⁷ This amount enables funding across each area to ensure:

- a full time Workplace Learning Coordinator in each service region, and

¹⁶ Quality indicators are based on those identified in: PhillipsKPA (2005), *Quality of Structured Workplace Learning*, Department of Education, Science and Training, Canberra.

¹⁷ Resources for contract management, program review and professional development for workplace learning coordinators will be provided from the internal DEECD budget.

- funding for additional coordinators is distributed across all service regions according to the number of young people and the expected relationship with the number of work placements.

Timeframes

Milestone	Date to be achieved
Workplace Learning Coordinators program is released for tender	January/February 2010
Tenders granted for each youth transitions service region	March 2010
Workplace Learning Coordinators commence in each youth transitions service region	Start Term 2, 2010
Funding period concludes	31 December 2013

Apprenticeship Support Officers

Outline of the proposed program/strategy

The Apprenticeship Support Officers program will seek to:

- increase the rates of apprenticeship completion in Victoria, which will contribute to increasing the rate of Year 12 or equivalent attainment, and
- increase the number of skilled workers in key industry areas in Victoria.

The Apprenticeship Support Officer program aims to increase the rates of apprenticeship completion by:

- providing early intervention and targeted support to apprentices in the early stages of the apprenticeship, particularly the first three to twelve months
- provide an 'end to end' support to young apprentices, and
- complement Victoria's existing network of 33 Apprenticeship Field Officers (AFOs), who provide employers, apprentices and trainees with assistance in dispute resolution.

Key deliverable	Date to be achieved
Commence recruitment and establishment of administrative systems for ASOs	1 January 2010
Apprenticeship Support Officers fully operative	31 March 2010
Each Apprenticeship Support Officer will support approximately 550 apprenticeship commencements per year	On an annual basis

Should the Apprenticeship Support Officers program **not** be established it is likely that:

- apprenticeship completion rates will not be significantly increased, risking the ability of Victoria to meet its Year 12 or equivalent completion target under this National Partnership, and
- Victoria will continue to have unmet demand for skilled workers in key industry areas.

Appropriateness and Effectiveness - Evidence that the proposed program/strategy will work

Victorian apprentice completion rates have historically been low. The Apprenticeship Support Officer program is aimed at supporting more apprentices to complete, addressing a failure of the current apprenticeship system of support.

Additionally, apprenticeships are critical to meeting the skills needs of the economy both in the short and long term.

This program will involve the employment of 27 Apprenticeship Support Officers to provide intensive support to apprentices in the initial stages of their apprenticeship, particularly the first 3-12 months.

Specifically, the role of the new officers will be the:

- provision of support and appropriate referral for personal and workplace issues affecting the apprenticeship
- provision of information to the apprentice and the employer
- monitoring progression through the apprenticeship, including identification of any training needs, and
- providing continuity of support through the apprenticeship, via handover to the Apprenticeship Field Officers after the initial phase of support.

Provision of this level of support is expected to lead to reduced attrition in the early stages of apprenticeships and increased apprenticeship completions.

Research indicates that pastoral care is an effective mechanism to support apprentices to complete. A report by the University of Melbourne's Centre for Post-Compulsory Education and Lifelong Learning (CPELL) found that many apprenticeship non-completions are due to personal reasons such as poor health, family care responsibilities, changes in personal circumstances and relocation.¹⁸ Further, it was noted that there are some key factors influencing apprenticeship completion rates that apply across industry/occupational groups. These include:

- inadequate wages
- choice of apprenticeship/traineeship without adequate understanding of the requirements of the occupation
- poor employer attitudes to training, supervision and support for learning, and
- inadequate provision of workplace based training.

With the exception of 'inadequate wages', these findings all relate to a lack of provision of pastoral care.

A 2008 National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER) report to the National Training Statistics Committee noted that many stakeholders believe pastoral care is important in promoting completions, particularly in the first two years of the training program.¹⁹

¹⁸ Volkoff, V and Jones, T (2007), *Analysis of Factors Contributing to Apprenticeship and Traineeship Completion*, CPELL, University of Melbourne.

¹⁹ B Knight (unpublished, April 2008), *Report to the National Training Statistics Committee*, NCVER.

A report commissioned by the Victorian government titled *Provision of Pastoral Care in Apprenticeships*²⁰, which included a national phone survey of apprenticeship stakeholders (including training providers; employers and industry peak bodies; state/territory training authorities and apprenticeship system regulators; and Australian Apprenticeship Centres), suggests that the most effective strategies and approaches common to all stakeholders to retain young apprentices and support effective participation is early intervention within the first three to twelve months.

Another key theme that emerged from the survey was that currently the lines are blurred in relation to stakeholder responsibility for supporting apprentices, and there is a lack of continuity of support for the apprentice throughout their contract from a single stakeholder.²¹

The *Provision of Pastoral Care in Apprenticeships* report provided a number of case studies of good practice in effective provision of pastoral care for young apprentices, one of these being the system of support in Queensland.²² The Queensland Department of Education and Training (DET) employs 75 regional field officers to take a pro-active role to support apprentices through workplace visits, with the aim of reducing contract cancellations. Visits are targeted at the early stages of the apprenticeship from the start of probation to 12 months, particularly concentrating on 13-52 weeks to allow the Australian Apprenticeship Centres to carry out their role. Of the apprentices that the regional field officers visit, DET estimates that there is only a 13 per cent attrition rate (in the first 12 months). The regional field officers are backed up by 40-45 office-based client service officers so that they can focus on developing relationships with apprentices and supporting them. The Queensland Training Ombudsman has also been established to provide assistance with dispute resolution.

Efficiency

Currently, the direct support role provided by Skills Victoria is discharged through 33 AFOs, who provide assistance and support to all apprentices and trainees, on a risk assessed and as needs basis. Specifically, AFOs provide field support to apprentices and trainees by mediating disputes relating to obligations under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* and the Training Contract. As such, their contact with apprentices could occur at any point during the contract, or not at all, if no disputes arise in the course of the contract. AFOs also:

- investigate complaints and prepare reports for delegates of the Victorian Skills Commission
- provide apprentices and trainees with support in contacting appropriate referral agencies for matters relating to abuse of wage related issues i.e. Worksafe or Fairwork Australia
- negotiate with employers and apprentices regarding both time and educational credit to be considered for apprentices recommencing with new employers, and
- maintain well developed networks with local industry, Australian Apprenticeship Centres and Registered Training Organisations.

This service has significant buy-in from stakeholders, particularly industry.

²⁰ Clarke, K and Lamb, S. (unpublished, 2009) *Provision of Pastoral Care in Apprenticeships* .

²¹ *ibid.*

²² *ibid.*

The simplest and most cost-effective manner to provide support in the front-end of the apprenticeship is to provide Apprenticeship Support Officers to target the initial stages of the apprenticeship.

This will supplement, not duplicate, the support provided by AFOs. Unlike AFOs, Apprenticeship Support Officers will not be authorised officers under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* and will support apprentices aged 15-24 only. Their role will encompass the following activities:

- personal contact with every new apprentice during the first 3 to 6 months providing intensive support to employer and apprentice to ensure mutually agreed arrangements are in place between the employer and apprentice
- ongoing support during this period and through the first 12 months to ensure issues are addressed expeditiously and to the satisfaction of both parties, and
- personal referral to appropriate advisory services before problems, such as workplace discontent regarding issues like appropriate wages and conditions and occupation health and safety, become irreversible.

ASOs will provide labour intensive support in the first 12 months of an apprenticeship, particularly in the first 3 to 6 months. Co-located with AFOs, the ASOs will seek support from AFOs to ensure issues requiring support of a regulatory nature or where sensitive circumstances arise are successfully managed. AFOs will complement the work of the ASOs by a handover of individual circumstances requiring ongoing case management post 12 months.

Making any changes to the level of support currently provided for dispute resolution would risk support and buy-in for the program by stakeholders.

Australian Apprenticeship Centres are another key organisation that provides services to apprentices and employers. However, their role is less focused on supporting apprentices to complete, and more focused on:

- providing assistance to employers, Australian Apprentices and training providers throughout the duration of the Australian Apprenticeship – including provision of information; the signing of training contracts; and assessing, approving and processing the payment of Australian Government employer incentives, scholarships, and income support payments to eligible Australian Apprentices
- marketing and promoting Australian Apprenticeships in the local area
- administering incentive payments to employers
- working with the [State and Territory Training Authorities](#) to provide an integrated service, and
- establishing effective relationships with [Job Services Australia](#) providers, [Group Training Organisations](#), Registered Training Organisations, schools and community organisations.

Apprenticeship Support Officers will work with Australian Apprenticeship Centres to provide co-ordinated and comprehensive support to apprentices.

Implementation Risk Assessment

Risk description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk rating	Proposed strategy and key actions
There is low take up of support provided by Apprenticeship Support Officers	2	5	Medium	Information sessions outlining the benefits of Apprenticeship Support Officers. Information regarding Apprenticeship Support Officers provided at start of contract by Australian Apprenticeship Centres.
Completion rates do not improve	3	5	High	Promote Apprenticeship Support Officers to apprentices and employers. Review the efficacy of the Apprenticeship Support Officer program.

Performance Assessment

The following KPIs will be used to assess this programs performance:

KPI 1 – Increase the number percentage of apprentices who qualify for the 6-month Apprentice Trade Bonus.

KPI 2 – Increase the percentage of apprentices who qualify for the 12-month Apprentice Trade Bonus.

Both these key performance indicators will indicate whether apprenticeship completions are improving for 15-24 year olds, which is the key objective of the program.

Data collection and analysis will occur throughout the life of the program to ensure that evaluation objectives are being monitored and measured. Evaluation tools include contract and budget monitoring mechanisms and data tracking.

Benefits will be assessed on an annual basis.

Monitoring and Review

Skills Victoria is currently undertaking a review of its information technology system to manage apprenticeship contracts and data, as part of the enhancement of administrative systems associated with *Securing Jobs for Your Future – Skills for Victoria*.²³ A new case management system is proposed for AFOs, which can be adopted to also manage planning and reporting on pastoral care support. These new IT and administrative systems will enable monitoring of the efficacy of the Apprenticeship Support Officer program.

²³ Available at: <http://www.skills.vic.gov.au/corporate/directions/skillsreform>

Data collection and analysis will occur throughout the life of the program to ensure that evaluation objectives are being monitored and measured. Evaluation tools include contract and budget monitoring mechanisms and data tracking.

An internal operational review of the program will be carried out one year after commencement from 1 January 2011, to examine the effectiveness of the program.

An impact evaluation will also take place in the third year of the program (2012) to assess impact, and recommendations on future approach, including whether the program will be ongoing.

Impact on Koorie young people

Improved completion of apprenticeships will contribute to increased rates of equivalent attainment to Year 12. Koorie people aged 15-64 are well represented in the TAFE system.

Additionally, among young people who commence VET programs, the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth research suggests that Koorie students are much more likely to persist in apprenticeships and traineeships than non-Koorie students, but less likely to persist in non-apprenticeship VET programs.²⁴

Apprenticeship Support Officers will seek to support Koorie apprentices through working with appropriate Koorie services.

Therefore, while this program does not directly target Koorie young people, it will contribute to halving the gap in Koorie Year 12 or equivalent attainment.

Funding

\$14.428 million dollars will be made available for the period 2010-2013 for 27 Apprenticeship Support Officers and associated Departmental support.

This funding constitutes the following resources:

- 3 Managers at the level of VPS5 employed by Skills Victoria to oversight the regions covered by the Apprenticeship Support Officers, including required operating costs (laptop, mobile phone and car)
- 1 Administrative Officer at the level of VPS3 employed by Skills Victoria to provide administrative support, and
- Grants paid directly to institutions/organisations supporting the 27 Apprenticeship Support Officers.

Timeframes

Milestone	Date to be achieved
Negotiations with host institutions/organisations	1 January 2010
Recruitment of Apprenticeship Support Officers	January – March 2010
Apprenticeship Support Officers commence employment	From 1 January 2010
Apprenticeship Support Officers fully operative	31 March 2010

²⁴ The Allen Consulting Group (2009) *Re-engagement of 20-24 year olds who have not completed year 12 (or equivalent) in education and training in Victoria* (unpublished).

Improving Career Development Services

Outline of the proposed program/strategy

The Improving Career Development Services suite of initiative seeks to:

- improve capacity within the schools and the VET sector to deliver quality career development programs
- increase the number of specially qualified career practitioners in Victorian schools
- improve the career development skills of young people in Victoria, and
- increase student engagement, retention and improve post-school outcomes.

Four complementary initiatives are proposed for funding, three focussed on systemic change and capacity building within schools and the VET sector to improve career development services and one focussed on improving outcomes for the most disadvantaged groups of young people. These programs will address the reform area of career development.

These initiatives will work together to provide support where it is needed, and drive continuous improvement at a system level into the long term, increasing student engagement and retention.

The four initiatives are:

- development of a careers curriculum
- professional development for career practitioners
- careers mentoring network initiative, and
- regional career development coaches.

A brief description of each initiative is provided below.

Development of careers curriculum

This initiative will develop a careers curriculum from Year 7 to Year 12 that is based on the best current knowledge about young people's career development needs and processes and articulate a development continuum of learning. It will build on existing work in the Victorian Essential Learning Standards, as well as the *Australian Blueprint for Career Development* and will be equally applicable to the VET sector. The curriculum will be available for use by providers in all sectors.

Professional Development for Career Practitioners

This initiative will involve the implementation of a professional development program to increase the number of careers advisors who have specialised qualifications. The initiative will focus on a larger scale (short-term) professionalisation of the career development workforce. Research shows that in Victoria approximately 13 per cent of careers practitioners have no specialist training or qualification and that this figure is at least 16 percent in the government school sector.²⁵

Access would be provided to a graduate certificate²⁶ or vocational graduate certificate²⁷ in career development to meet the Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) professional level standards.

²⁵ It is likely that this figure could be even higher given that it is based on a survey of 193 practitioners who self-selected to answer and could therefore be biased towards good-practice providers

²⁶ Offered by either RMIT or Swinburne University

Eligibility for the program would be open to:

- current career practitioners in a government school without a leading practitioner with specialised qualifications
- current career practitioners in non-government schools without a leading practitioner with specialised qualifications
- people replacing retiring qualified practitioners in the following calendar year, and
- TAFE and ACE providers (who provide whole programs to those aged 19 and under) without a leading practitioner with specialised qualifications.

It is also expected that:

- the person participating in the Professional Development Program would be the lead career practitioner for their education/training provider, and
- the participant would commit to working in the role for at least 2 years following attainment of the qualification.

The Careers Mentoring Network Initiative

The Careers Mentoring Network Initiative aims to improve the long-term lifelong learning and employment prospects of current students from three targeted groups:

- Koorie students
- English as a Second Language and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse students including refugees, and
- students from low SES families experiencing intergenerational poverty and unemployment.

A coordinator within DEECD will establish programs for each of the three cohorts. A youth worker will be employed to operate each program, who will then recruit appropriate employers and students to the program, match the students to their career mentors, devise a schedule for mentors to meet with the students, develop resources and provide training for mentors and the students and monitor their progress. Students from all sectors (all school sectors, VET and ACE) will be eligible to access the Careers Mentoring Network.

The careers mentors will assist young people with their personal career development from Years 7 and 8 (explore their skills, strengths, interests, values, aspirations), raise their career awareness and aspirations, and give them practical help to explore career options, submit quality job applications, guide them through critical transition phases and engage them to explore further workplace learning, education and training opportunities. They will also seek to ensure that the families of students can participate in career development activities. This will include developing families' understanding of career development, thereby empowering them to support and assist their children in making career decisions.

Regional Career Development Coaches

Nine Regional Career Development Coaches located in each of the DEECD regional offices will support all education and training providers (regardless of sector) and partners in the other initiatives contained in this proposal, to drive continuous improvement in the long

²⁷ To be offered in 2010 by the Career Education Association of Victoria - a decision on which of these programs to use would be made in early 2010

term. They will support systemic change at provider level, capacity building and system change.

The Coaches will undertake a phased program of support to educate education and training providers on career development and support (where requested), audit current practice and implement targeted improvements germane to the providers and their students' needs, utilising key resources and practices to support best practice. They would also:

- support small schools in particular to network student support
- increase teachers' awareness of post-school options
- support the Koorie workforce focus on Koorie student outcomes
- ensure that career development activities are accessible to both students and their families to build families' capacity to assist their children in making career decisions
- leverage opportunities linked to Koorie sport, art and cultural events to provide career development advice, and
- create links with external bodies including local Universities, TAFE Institutes, ACE providers, LLENs, Youth Connections providers, Skills Stores, local employers and industry groups and others.

Key deliverable	Date to be achieved
Delivery of specific careers curriculum for Years 7 - 12	31 January 2011
Provide 96 training places for Victorian careers practitioners	Annually
Establishment of careers mentoring programs for each of the three specified cohorts	31 December 2010
Regional Career Development Coaches employed in each of the 9 DEECD Regions	1 July 2010

Should the Improving Career Development Services initiatives **not** be implemented it is likely that:

- schools, VET and ACE providers will have limited capacity to improve the quality career development programs
- there will continue to be a shortfall in the number of specially qualified career practitioners in Victorian schools, and
- the career development skills of young people in Victoria will not be significantly improved.
- there will not be increases in student engagement, retention and post-school outcomes.

Appropriateness and Effectiveness - Evidence that the proposed program/strategy will work

Australian and international research indicates that quality career development services are a vital part of an effective youth transitions system, increasing student engagement and directly contributing to improved student completion rates. Quality career development services can also raise student aspirations, assist students to make effective and informed choices about their future education, training and employment options, help them navigate their way through the multiplicity of pathways available, increase motivation to complete a qualification and are critical in assisting students to make the link between initial qualifications and their preferred employment destinations.

The CPELL report *Making Career Development Core Business*²⁸ highlighted that quality career development services were particularly important in Victoria given that:

- Victoria is moving towards a demand driven VET and higher education system
- the post-compulsory qualifications and institutional choices that young people face are more diverse than in any other state or territory, and
- the extended youth participation and youth guarantee requirements²⁹ mean that more young people who may previously have left the education and training systems will need support to pursue their pathways.³⁰

Victorian research indicates that there are a number of gaps between the overall level and quality of current provision, and international and national best practice benchmarks. The 2008 *On Track* survey shows that one of the key factors that would have encouraged early leavers to stay at school and attain an initial qualification is better career advice – a factor identified by almost half of early leavers.

The *Making Career Development Core Business* report also identified that few services (if any) were offered prior to Year 10.³¹ This indicates that career development in Victoria is not offered in a way which encourages the development of young people's skills but rather is offered when students are about to exit the system to assist them only to their next destination.³² This is corroborated by evidence from both the *Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth* and *On Track*.

Efficiency

Development of career curriculum

A dedicated, experienced staff member being employed for a year to develop this curriculum is the most effective way to implement this initiative, as it allows sufficient expertise and time for consultation. In addition, this staff member can work closely with other curriculum managers to ensure consistency and appropriateness of the developed curriculum.

Professional development for career development practitioners

DEEWR currently supports a national professional development program for career practitioners. However, this program only supports 75 participants annually from across Australia. This is not enough places to meet the short-term needs of Victoria.

The Careers Mentoring Network Initiative

Research shows that mentoring programs can provide transformational outcomes for young people, but requires significant operational resources and supports to both mentors and mentees to be successful. The proposed model provides funding for the operation of 3 programs (at \$100,000 per annum for each program).

Regional career development coaches

The model of regionally based coaches is widely acknowledged as a highly successful way to implement and lead system change in key areas affecting student outcomes. The recent

²⁸ Sweet, Volkoff, Watts et al, August 2009, *Making Career Development Core Business*, CPELL, unpublished internal report for the Interdepartmental Policy Unit (DEECD/DIIRD).

²⁹ From the 2 July COAG agreed National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions

³⁰ Sweet, Volkoff, Watts et al, August 2009, *Making Career Development Core Business*, CPELL, unpublished internal report for the Interdepartmental Policy Unit (DEECD/DIIRD), pages 6 - 9

³¹ *ibid.*

³² *ibid.* page 21.

introduction of both Literacy Improvement Team coaches and more recently numeracy coaches in Victoria has led to material improvements in student outcomes, and similar affects are to be expected in career literacy from the introduction of career development coaches. The coaching model of service improvement is also highly cost-effective.

Implementation Risk Assessment

Risk description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk rating	Proposed strategy and key actions
Development of a careers curriculum				
Poor response to PD assisting implementation by schools / TAFE / ACE	1	3	Low	PD programs to be developed and marketed in consultation with key stakeholders to ensure high numbers of subscriptions
Resistance to implementation by schools / TAFE / ACE	2	3	Medium	Communications strategy to be developed in consultation with DEECD Communications and key stakeholders to ensure positive reception
Professional development for careers practitioners				
Poor response to call for applications	1	4	Medium	Program to be publicised through existing careers networks and via school Circular
Careers practitioners don't remain in their roles for 2 years following completion of qualification	3	2	Medium	Ensure all participants sign documentation clearly outlining eligibility requirements and expectations, and brief participants at the commencement of the program to ensure all participants are aware of requirements and obligations
Careers Mentoring initiative				
Poor response to call for mentors	1	3	Low	Work with existing careers, industry, charitable (e.g. Rotary, Lions, Apex etc) and other related informal networks to source suitable mentors
Poor response to call for mentees	1	3	Low	Ensure all schools and VET sector providers are fully briefed about the initiative, its benefits and the entry prerequisites for the mentees.

Risk description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk rating	Proposed strategy and key actions
Regional career development coaches				
Lack of willingness to engage by schools, TAFE, ACE	1	3	Low	Develop communications program in consultation with representatives from schools and the VET sector.
Lack of capacity to influence outcomes	3	4	Medium	Provide Career Development Coaches with negotiation and influencing training to improve stakeholder relations; formalise accountability structures within the DEECD Regional Office to provide supportive authorising environment.

Performance Assessment

The following KPIs will be used to assess this programs performance:

KPI 1 – Development of careers curriculum for implementation at the start of the 2011 school year

KPI 2 – Provide training places for 96 Victorian careers practitioners in schools, TAFE and ACE to access training in either a graduate certificate or vocational graduate certificate in career development each year from 2010 – 2013

KPI 3 – Establishment and maintenance of 30 careers mentoring matches per program each year

KPI 4 – Regional career development coaches will report to their Regional Director and DEECD Central Office on the number of schools, TAFE and ACE providers audited annually (with individual performance plans for number of expected annual audits be developed following the first year of audits).

Monitoring and Review

DEECD will monitor the number of applications for the Professional development for careers practitioners program and the ongoing need for the program. Both a formative and an impact evaluation have been built in to the funding model, to be conducted by external contractors.

DEECD will also provide support to and manage the Regional Career Development Coaches and the Careers Mentoring Network Initiative coordinator.

Impact on Koorie young people

The development of the career development curriculum will include a focus on how different cohorts of young people, including Koorie young people, should be supported to improve their career development skills from Year 7. Similarly, some key roles of the Regional Career Development Coaches will be to audit the career development programs of schools and institutions in the VET sector to support them to customise their policies and programs to ensure that they meet the needs of all students (in particular of targeted groups) and to make connections with and support the Koorie workforce to provide appropriate services to Koorie young people and their families. The Careers Mentoring Initiative also contains a stream explicitly and solely focussing on creating and supporting careers mentoring opportunities for Koorie young people and ensuring the involvement of their families.

Funding

\$9.862 million dollars will be made available for the period 2010-2013 for the Improving Career Development Services program.

This funding will be used to:

- develop a careers curriculum
- provide funding for 96 careers practitioners to undertake a specified professional development program
- provide for careers mentoring programs to be established for each of the targeted cohorts, and
- employ career development coaches in each of the DEECD regions.

Timeframes

Milestone	Date to be achieved
Recruit staff member to develop careers curriculum	February 2010
Professional development program for career practitioners commences and 96 places offered annually	February 2010
Recruit career development coaches to each DEECD regional office	February 2010
Recruit staff for career mentoring programs	April 2010

Koorie Transitions Coordinators

What is the proposed program/strategy objective?

The Koorie Transitions Coordinators program will seek to:

- increase engagement, retention and attainment levels of Koorie young people in Victoria, and
- increase Koorie young people's aspirations to succeed at school and support them to develop strong post-school pathways.

Koorie Transitions Coordinators will enhance the effectiveness of services and supports for Koorie students operating both outside and within schools across all sectors, aimed at strengthening transitions from school to further education, training and employment. This includes:

- Working with DEECD and with the Catholic and Independent school sectors to increase targeted supports at all the key transitions points through secondary education (Year 8 to 9, Year 9 to 10, Year 10 to 11 and Year 11 to 12).
- Overseeing the implementation of the Australian Employment Covenant's P-Plater Scheme in targeted schools to build stronger pathways from education and training into employment.
- Working with Workplace Learning Coordinators, LLENs and Youth Connections providers to provide maximum benefits to Koorie students across all education and training sectors. For example, supporting earlier exposure to employment related activities and opportunities for Koorie students including part time work, work experience and Structured Workplace Learning.
- Working with Koorie Educators and Careers Teachers across all sectors to ensure support for Koorie students to access and realise the external opportunities provided by employers and facilitated through Workplace Learning Coordinators and LLENs.
- Working with LLENs to increase partnerships between employers, schools (including non-government schools) and further education and training providers across DEECD regions to establish stronger pathways into employment and further education and training for Koorie students.

Key deliverable	Date to be achieved
Koorie Transitions Coordinators are employed across DEECD Regions	1 February 2010

Should the Koorie Transitions Coordinators program not be established it is likely that:

- engagement, retention and attainment levels of Koorie young people will remain significantly lower than non-Koorie students, risking the ability of Victoria to meet its Year 12 or equivalent completion target and Koorie completion target under this National Partnership, and
- the aspirations of Koorie young people will remain low which is likely to result in continued disengagement from education or training at key transitions points

Appropriateness and Effectiveness - Evidence that the proposed program/strategy will work

The Koorie Transitions Coordinators will help to create more socially inclusive pathways to economic participation for young Koorie students by:

- supporting the increased engagement of young Koorie people in education, training and employment, and
- strengthening the pathway between education and training and employment.

Koorie Transitions Coordinators will act as a resource to drive, facilitate and coordinate the activity needed to:

- increase the aspirations of young Koorie people to complete secondary education and VET qualifications
- develop clearer pathways from education into employment, further education and training.

Specifically, Koorie Transitions Coordinators will work with existing Koorie Engagement Support Officers to ensure that:

- students' MIPs plans in government schools and similar career plans established in other sectors identify the training required to move into strong career pathways

- students across all sectors are supported to establish relationships with their prospective employer prior to completing their education, and
- students across all sectors receive career development advice that facilitates the introduction and engagement of students in early secondary school to further education, work and career concepts e.g. part-time work, workplace learning placements, VET taster events, TAFE/uni open days.

Koorie Transitions Coordinators will work with schools, Workplace Learning Coordinators and LLENs to facilitate the opportunities for students to be exposed to employment from Years 7 and 8 and enable students to fulfil the vocational elements of their MIPs or other career plans. In doing so, they will support the increased attainment of core foundation and employability skills. They will develop closer partnerships with further education and training institutions to facilitate better transitions for students.

The proposed response is consistent with the findings of a detailed analysis of Koorie youth transitions commissioned by the Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs on behalf of the Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Group and completed by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) earlier in 2009.

The Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Group was established by the Ministerial Taskforce on Aboriginal Affairs (the Taskforce) in December 2008 to advise the Taskforce on improving economic outcomes for Aboriginal Victorians. The Terms of Reference required the Group to make recommendations on improving the transition of young Koorie people from education and training to employment and further education.

The Victorian Aboriginal Economic Development Group's work on youth transitions highlighted the importance of:

- introducing work concepts, job information and work experience prior to post-compulsory schooling years as a key success factor in improving transitions in later years
- strong relationships between education providers and industry and local employers
- individualised preparation supports in schools to enable students to successfully take up the opportunities provided by local employers
- engaging students with higher levels of education and training while they are still at school to improve retention rates and enrolment in tertiary education, and
- local and regional networks in connecting young people to potential vehicles that enable successful transitions.

Efficiency

The Koorie Transitions Coordinator model is an evidence based solution that will increase the effectiveness of existing specialist and mainstream effort. Working through existing resources both within and external to schools, the Coordinator role will bring engagement with the student, family and community together with engagement with employers and further education institutions.

Koorie Transitions Coordinators will be the interface between the broad range of supports operating within and outside schools. By acting as the identified single point of contact for employers, LLENs, Workplace Learning Coordinators and philanthropic organisations, they will help to streamline effort and ensure more efficient use of resources

The philanthropic sector has expressed interest in supporting efforts to engage Koorie families and communities in the education system. There may be an opportunity to leverage philanthropic support for this approach. There is also an opportunity to engage with the corporate sector to obtain support for the Coordinator’s role.

While Koorie Transition Coordinators primary focus will be students in secondary school (government and non-government), they will also interface with Koorie Liaison Officers in TAFE to ensure that TAFE students are accessing the full range of pathways into employment and higher education generated by initiatives such as LLENs, WLCs and the Australian Employment Covenant. Being a regionally located resource, they will drive a more strategic and integrated approach to developing pathways into employment, further education and training in schools, TAFEs and ACE.

Implementation Risk Assessment

Risk description	Likelihood	Impact	Risk rating	Proposed strategy and key actions
Unable to recruit appropriately trained staff in required timeframe	1	2	Low	Through the development of a comprehensive recruitment campaign targeting Koorie people with the required background and skill sets

Performance Assessment

The following KPIs will be used to assess this programs performance:

KPI 1 – Increase the number of Koorie young people attaining a Year 12 or equivalent qualification

KPI2 – Increase the retention rates of Koorie students for Years 8, 9 and 10

The Coordinators will be working to align effort to increase young Koorie people’s aspirations to complete school. Retention rates and Year 12 or equivalent completion rates will be a clear measure of whether this benefit is delivered.

These key performance indicators will be measured annually through existing DEECD data collection.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and review of these KPIs will occur through DEECD Regional Offices and the Wannik Implementation Board. Overall implementation will be overseen by a high level advisory group comprising members from the Koorie community, private sector, philanthropy and government.

A review of the role and effectiveness of the Coordinators will be commissioned after one year and overseen by the Wannik Implementation Board.

Impact on Koorie young people

The Coordinators will play a central role in driving efforts to close the gap by raising aspirations to complete education from the early years of secondary school and strengthening pathways to employment and further education.

Funding

\$3.511 million dollars will be made available for the period 2010-2013 for 7 Koorie Transitions Coordinators to operate across DEECD regions.

This funding constitutes the following resources:

- 7 Koorie Transitions Coordinators and associated support at the level of VPS5 employed by DEECD Regional Offices, and
- Program review.

Timeframes

Milestone	Date to be achieved
Koorie Transitions Coordinators employed across DEECD Regions	1 February 2010

Involvement of non-government sector – Maximising Engagement, Attainment and Successful Transitions

A sub-group of Commonwealth Funding Allocation Taskforce (CFAT) has been established to consider the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions. This subgroup, which includes representatives from the Catholic Education Office and Independent Schools Victoria, has indicated general support for these programs and initiatives.

The Advisory Committee (outlined in the governance section of the Victorian implementation plan), which includes representation from the non-government school sector and will have ongoing oversight of implementation and management of programs and initiatives as part of the Maximising Engagement, Attainment and Successful Transitions reform area as well as ongoing monitoring of outcomes.

Reform Area: School, Business and Community Partnerships

44.b. School Business Community Partnership Brokers (Community and Education Engagement)
i. A program will be put in place under this Agreement in collaboration with the States and Territories. School Business Community Partnership Brokers will improve community and business engagement with schools and registered training organisations to extend learning beyond the classroom, increase student engagement, deepen learning experiences, lift attainment and improve educational outcomes.

Refer to National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions, Part 3, p9

SCHOOL BUSINESS COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP BROKERS

In Victoria, the Commonwealth recognises that the existing Local Learning and Employment Network (LLEN) program broadly reflects many of the key objectives of the School Business Community Partnership Brokers program (Partnership Brokers). On this basis, and in keeping with the principles outlined in the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions the Commonwealth and the Victorian Governments have agreed that the Partnership Brokers program in Victoria will be delivered along existing LLEN boundaries, through an enhanced LLEN model.

A number of the Partnership Brokers' program goals and objectives require the LLENs to expand their role and increase their emphasis in certain fields of activity. This includes:

- A broadening of stakeholder groups to include primary schools, in particular the transition from primary to secondary. As a result this means that the young people who should benefit from Partnership Broker activity will be in the age range of 10-19
- A stronger focus on career development
- A stronger focus on engaging with parents and families, and
- A requirement for the new Brokers to work in close collaboration with Youth Connections providers.

The program will be delivered in 31 regions with funding weighted towards regions with higher numbers of 10 – 19 yr olds and further weighted towards those regions with higher numbers of disengaged young people.

Support for Indigenous Young People

The enhanced LLENs will also recognise groups and locations where young people 10 -19 in a region can be identified as experiencing particular disadvantage. LLENs' strategic goals will include a focus on young people most at risk. Across Victoria LLENs will pay particular attention to Indigenous young people.

State and National Provider Networks

As part of the Partnership Brokers program, DEEWR will fund and maintain a State and National Provider Network. Each LLEN Committee of Management will determine their nominated Network delegate to represent their interests at Network meetings. The State Network members will in turn elect the office holders for the Network. The office holders of the Network will be an Executive Committee and will comprise of 2 metropolitan and 2 regional delegates from the Contract Holders. Two of the Executive Committee will then be elected as Chair and Deputy Chair. The Chair & Deputy Chair will act as delegates to the National Provider network.

Contract period and Program Administration

Contracts will be put in place by way of a variation to existing LLEN funding contracts which will be extended to December 2013.

The LLENs will be contracted by DEECD and DEECD will have primary responsibility for all contract compliance issues.

DEEWR will manage the Commonwealth's investment in the program in collaboration with DEECD through a range of mechanisms to guide the implementation of the Partnership Brokers Program in Victoria including:

- regular program management meetings
- joint delivery of program induction and Professional Development workshops
- reporting mechanisms that will capture key data on program performance and allow for comparison across providers, states and territories and nationally
- joint visits to providers (at least one per year)
- access to providers at other key meetings such as State Provider Network meetings, LLEN Chair meetings and other key events such as conferences etc, and
- establishment of a State Advisory Committee to guide the implementation of the School Business Community Partnership Brokers, Youth Connections Programs and programs funded under Maximizing Engagement Attainment and Successful Transitions in Victoria

Funding

The agreed Victorian allocation of project funding for **Partnership Brokers**³³ is outlined in the table below.

2009-10	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	4 year total
\$6.2m	\$12.4m	\$12.4m	\$12.4m	\$6.2m	\$49.6m

³³ Project funding for Partnership Brokers includes investment from the Victorian Government

Reform Area: Individualised, Personalised Support for Young People at Risk

c. Youth Connections

i. A program will be put in place under this Agreement in collaboration with the States and Territories. Youth Connections will provide an improved safety net for youth at risk through the provision of tailored case management and support to help young people to re-connect with education and training and build resilience, skills and attributes that promote positive choices and wellbeing.

Refer to National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions, Part 3, p9

YOUTH CONNECTIONS

In Victoria the Youth Connections program will be implemented in collaboration with relevant local partners including Local Learning and Employment Networks, School Networks and Youth Transitions Support Initiative providers where these exist, and will build on existing transition or re-engagement plans a young person may have developed (for example a MIPs plan).

The Youth Connections program will be provided to young people aged 13-19, however, Youth Connections providers will have the flexibility to offer services outside of this age range where required. In addition, the service offered by the Youth Connections providers will cater to the specific needs of the significant and increasing number of young people without Year 12 who are participating in the VET sector.

Type One Service Delivery: assisting young people at most risk of disengaging

In relation to Type One delivery, Youth Connections services in Victoria will work collaboratively with schools and other education or training providers. Youth Connections activities will complement the efforts of education and training providers and assist in improving their capacity.

In Victoria, schools carry the principal responsibility for maintaining engagement of their students, and will remain the primary vehicle to cater for young people who are at risk of disengaging. Actions from the Blueprint for Education and Early Childhood Development include improving the transition from school by strengthening school responsibility for monitoring young people's pathways until they complete Year 12 or equivalent. The Accountability and Improvement Framework for Victorian Government Schools focuses on achieving improved student outcomes, which specifically include pathways and transitions outcomes.

Other education and training providers in Victoria also have responsibilities to ensure successful outcomes for their students, and are working to increase the completion of Year 12 or equivalent and to improve support for young people to complete their qualifications. In Victoria, 5 per cent of the funding allocation for Youth Connections will be directed towards Type One services.

Type Two Service Delivery: assisting young people who are disengaging or who are severely disengaged

In Victoria, under Type Two Service delivery, Youth Connections providers will primarily focus on those young people who are severely disengaged.

In providing services to those young people who have recently disengaged from education and training, Youth Connections providers will ensure prompt action is taken to re-attach them to maximise the likelihood of a successful outcome.

In Victoria Youth Connections funding is not able to be used for registration and delivery of new alternative/flexible education programs. Where existing alternative/flexible education programs exist, including existing programs run by interested organisations that are registered providers, the Youth Connections provider will link to these for service provision. Where no such provision is available, Youth Connections providers will work with Partnership Brokers to develop partnerships with education and training providers who meet Victorian registration and quality requirements to develop suitable programs, using funding available for education and training provision provided by the Victorian government.

The Youth Connections program will deliver access for young people, where required, to qualified careers counsellors to help support transition to long term sustainable education, training and employment outcomes.

In Victoria, the Youth Transition Support Initiative (YTSI) operates in 12 service regions providing a service to disengaged young people similar to that which will be provided by Youth Connections, through to September 2010. Youth Connections providers operating in these designated regions will work collaboratively with the YTSI provider through to September 2010 and develop arrangements for young people to be transitioned smoothly from YTSI to Youth Connections. A special purpose Wannik YTSI initiative has been established, to work specifically with indigenous young people. Youth Connections will work collaboratively with this initiative where relevant.

In Victoria, 70 per cent of the funding allocation will be directed towards Type Two services.

Type Three Service Delivery: re-engagement and outreach activities.

In Victoria, Youth Connections providers will ensure that in delivering these services that they are aware of the Victorian context and consider network or school initiatives currently in place to support this type of service. In particular they will focus on establishing strong collaboration with Partnership Brokers and supporting Regional Youth Commitments, the Managed Individual Pathways program and the Youth Transition Support Initiative where it exists.

In Victoria, 15 per cent of the funding allocation will be directed towards Type Three services.

Type Four Service Delivery: strengthening services in a region

In relation to strengthening services in regions in Victoria, Youth Connections providers will work within the Victorian context and consider network or school initiatives currently in place to support this type of service. In particular providers will focus on establishing strong

collaboration with Partnership Brokers and supporting Regional Youth Commitments and the Managed Individual Pathways program.

In Victoria, 10 per cent of the funding allocation will be directed towards Type Four services.

On Track Connect

In Victoria, Youth Connections providers will also be required to conduct the On Track Connect program, currently delivered through Local Learning and Employment Networks. On Track Connect, as part of the Victorian Government On Track annual destinations survey, aims to assist young people who have left school and are not studying or in full time work, by connecting them with an appropriate pathway. On Track Connect occurs once each calendar year, immediately following conduct of the survey, and usually assists approximately 2500 young people state-wide. Responsibilities under On Track Connect include brokering appropriate referral arrangements to provide advice to young people about options for re-engagement with post compulsory education, training or employment, and reporting outcomes back to DEECD.

Support for Indigenous Young People

Youth Connections providers need to be responsive to the needs of all communities. Providers should pay particular attention to Indigenous young people particularly in service regions identified with an Indigenous flag. In these flagged regions, staff should have cultural competency and demonstrated experience in working with the relevant communities. It is anticipated that providers in regions with an Indigenous flag would employ staff in Identified Positions in accordance with Victoria's Identified Position policy.

State and National Provider Networks

As part of the Youth Connections program, DEEWR will fund and maintain a State and National Provider Network. Each Youth Connections provider will determine their nominated Network delegate to represent their interests at Network meetings. The State Network members will in turn elect the office holders for the Network. The office holders of the Network will be an Executive Committee and will comprise of 2 metropolitan and 2 regional delegates from the Contract Holders. Two of the Executive Committee will then be elected as Chair and Deputy Chair. The Chair & Deputy Chair will act as delegates to the National Provider network.

Contract period and Program Administration

In Victoria, the Youth Connections program will be tendered for four years (2010-2013), with an initial contract put in place for two years and managed by the Commonwealth (DEEWR) in partnership with the Victorian State Government (through DEECD).

At the end of the two year period, performance of the provider will be reviewed and, if satisfactory, a further two year contract will be put in place. It is anticipated that this second contract will be managed solely by the Victorian Government subject to agreed outcomes being achieved. Changes to the service to be delivered may be negotiated at this time, based on experience from implementing Youth Connections in the first two years and any evaluation which may have taken place.

Whether the Victorian Government elects to continue the Youth Connections service beyond four years is a decision that the Government will make at that time.

The Youth Connections providers will be contracted by DEEWR and DEEWR will have primary responsibility for all contract compliance issues.

DEECD will work in collaboration with DEEWR through a range of mechanisms to guide the implementation of the Youth Connections Program in Victoria including:

- regular program management meetings
- joint delivery of program induction and Professional Development workshops;
- joint visits to providers (at least one per year)
- access to providers at other key meetings such as State Provider Network meetings, and other key events such as conferences etc, and
- establishment of a State Advisory Committee to guide the implementation of the School Business Community Partnership Brokers, Youth Connections Programs and programs funded under Maximizing Engagement Attainment and Successful Transitions in Victoria.

Funding

The agreed Victorian allocation of project funding for **Youth Connections** is outlined in the table below.

2009-10	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	4 year total
\$8.4m	\$16.8m	\$16.8m	\$16.8m	\$8.4m	\$67.2m

Conditions for transfer of program responsibilities and funding

51. The funding for these two programs will be transferred to States and Territories following demonstrated achievement of outcomes. Table 2 lists indicative outcomes. The outcomes for each State and Territory will be negotiated as part of the implementation plan and will reflect the reform areas being targeted by each State and Territory.

Refer to National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions, Part 3, p 10.

In accordance with Clause 51 of the National Partnership Agreement for Youth Attainment and Transitions, the funding for Partnership Brokers and Youth Connections will be transferred to States and Territories following demonstrated achievement of outcomes. These outcomes include significant reform to achieve the agreed COAG participation and attainment targets outlined in the National Partnership and to ensure that more young people make a successful transition from school into further education, training or employment. This wider reform, coupled with the reforms to be undertaken using the project funding under the maximising engagement, attainment and successful transitions component of the National Partnership, will form the basis of the demonstration of agreed outcomes.

In Victoria, funding for Partnership Brokers is being transferred immediately by the Commonwealth as this program is being delivered by enhancement to existing Victorian LLENs. The program will be managed operationally by Victoria but the Commonwealth will retain oversight of its management and will receive reports of progress for the first two years of operation.

Victoria will consider providing the Australian Government with a submission that satisfies the requirements outlined below at the end of 2011, to apply to have the project funds for the Youth Connections program transferred to Victoria and to assume exclusive management of the Partnership Brokers program. Confirmation of this intention will occur during 2010, based on Victorian government priorities at the time and progress of activities under the National Partnership.

The submission process provides an opportunity for Victoria to provide to the Australian Government clear evidence of achievement of significant reform in the youth attainment and transitions agenda that has resulted in an improvement for young people. The submission process will also ensure a smooth transition of the above programs from the Australian Government to Victoria and provides an opportunity for Victoria to outline the wider reforms that have been undertaken which support an improvement in participation, engagement, attainment and transitions.

The submission must include detail on:

- the context of the reform, including previous effort (up to approximately five years) that demonstrates a commitment to the agenda and includes evidence such as growth trends
- implementation and achievement of wider reforms that contribute to achieving the participation and attainment targets and outcomes specific to jurisdiction reform areas
- information about the implementation of the jurisdiction reform areas under the maximising engagement, attainment and successful transitions - chosen from

- multiple learning pathways, career development and mentoring including:
- performance indicators
 - evidence of achieving outcomes (participation, attainment, engagement and transitions), and
 - future activity
- specific jurisdiction support for the implementation of the two programs – Partnership Brokers and Youth Connections
 - implementation and achievement of reforms specifically relating to Koorie young people with evidence of improved outcomes
 - implementation and achievement of reforms that support specific groups, such as young people with special needs, and
 - if the jurisdiction has achieved the agreed outcomes, and the Australian Government were to hand over the project funds:
 - whether the jurisdiction will continue the programs
 - if so, whether the jurisdiction plans to change the programs and how they will continue to improve them; and
 - arrangements for program transfer; or
 - if not, the jurisdiction would be required to outline how schools will have ongoing partnerships with key stakeholders in the community and how a safety net for disadvantaged youth will be provided; and
 - arrangements for cessation of programs.

In the event that the Australian Government assesses the submission as not providing evidence of reform significant enough to warrant the transfer of the program funding, Victoria may follow the Dispute Resolution process outlined in the National Partnership Part 7 Governance Arrangements clause 99-102, and as a last step "the dispute . . . may be referred by a Party to COAG for consideration".

The specific performance indicators and outcomes for Victoria are outlined within the descriptions of each of the reform areas being targeted by Victoria under the Maximising Engagement, Attainment and Successful Transitions component of this National Partnership.

Evaluation and Audit Arrangements

Evaluation

58.i develop and implement a formative evaluation of the initiatives covered by this Agreement to support further development and continuous improvement.

Refer to National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions, Part 4, p13

Victoria will work in partnership with the Commonwealth to develop and implement a national formative evaluation of the initiatives covered by the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions and contribute to this evaluation as required.

Planned evaluations of Victoria's existing Youth Transition Support Initiative (currently underway) and pilot Career On Track program (to occur during 2010) may also provide relevant information.

Evaluations of initiatives funded under the Reform Area 'Maximising Engagement, Attainment and Successful Transitions' will be included as part of the overall evaluation of efforts under this National Partnership.

Audit arrangements

Appropriate auditing arrangements will be put in place by Victoria as required to ensure compliance with the terms of this implementation plan. This will take account of any relevant instructions from State and Federal Treasury.

Communications Strategy to support Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership

All parties to this Agreement Commit to the delivery of a communication strategy to support implementation of this National Partnership

Refer to National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions, Schedule A, p24

Commonwealth Communication Strategy

To support the implementation of the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions, the Commonwealth will, in line with key messages outlined in Schedule A of the National Partnership, develop, implement and maintain a Youth Attainment and Transitions website. The website will be the primary source of information in relation to Youth Attainment and Transitions related material including all elements being implemented under the National Partnership. It will also include information and links to other relevant Commonwealth and State and Territory government websites.

Other Communications Channels

The Commonwealth will also look for opportunities to promote the key messages outlined in Schedule A of the National Partnership through a range of other communications channels, these will include:

- media releases
- presentations at conferences and other forums
- program providers including through Provider State and National Networks, and
- fact sheets.

Stakeholder Consultation

In the development of the Youth Attainment and Transitions Website and any other related communications activities the Commonwealth through DEEWR will collaborate with States and Territories via the multilateral governance group established to oversee the development, implementation and ongoing management of all elements of the National Partnership (further detail outlined below).

Where appropriate the Commonwealth may also consult with other relevant peak groups and key stakeholders in the development and implementation communications activities.

Victorian Communication Strategy

The following are key messages being promoted by Victoria:

- the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions is the next step in major system reform of careers, transitions and youth services support
- Victoria is in an excellent position to contribute to the achievement of a national target of 90% of 20-24 year olds completing Year 12 or equivalent by 2015
- improving on our current achievement of 88.7% will require continued effort from all stakeholders and targeted investment to areas of need
- provides an opportunity to remove existing duplications between Commonwealth and State youth transition programs, address gaps in services delivery, and target investment to support further increases in Year 12 or equivalent completion
- stakeholders will be part of one network in their local area that focuses on brokering partnerships that improve education outcomes, minimising confusion for schools, employers and other stakeholders
- support will be available for young people who are likely to disengage from education and training or have already disengaged, regardless of their location
- opportunity for Victoria to further support workplace learning for school students, support for apprentices, Koorie students and effective career development, and
- encouraging young people to stay in school or alternative education and training for longer, through the new participation requirement, will improve their skills, experience and employment outcomes in the long term.

Major communication channels being used are:

- the DEECD Education website, offering information to a range of groups including parents, teachers, students and the general community
- school bulletins, a key way of communicating details of changes to all government schools
- copies of school bulletins to other relevant groups (e.g. Independent Schools Victoria, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria, Parents Victoria)
- other communication channels relevant to non government schools as identified by

- Independent Schools Victoria and Catholic Education Commission of Victoria
- the DEECD magazine 'Shine', offering a more 'general interest' treatment and aimed primarily at school staff, and
 - media releases to the general press where appropriate (e.g. re change of legislation increasing age participation requirement).

Stakeholder consultation

In development of all Victorian proposals for the implementation of the National Partnership, consultation has occurred with relevant peak groups and stakeholders.

Governance Arrangements

The Commonwealth and State and Territory Governments will have joint responsibility for overseeing the development, implementation and ongoing management of all elements of the Youth Attainment and Transitions National Partnership.

This will be achieved across two governance structures, as follows:

- a multilateral group to consider issues that are common to all jurisdictions, and
- a governance structure for each jurisdiction.

Governance structures will be flexible, and membership may change depending on the issue(s) being considered.

Multilateral Governance Group

The Commonwealth will manage a multilateral governance group, who will consider issues related to the implementation and ongoing management of all elements of the National Partnership.

The Commonwealth will develop terms of reference and membership for this multilateral group; however membership will consist of representatives from each state and territory.

The multilateral group will consider issues which are of interest and consequence across all jurisdictions. Issues which only relate to an individual jurisdiction will be considered through that jurisdiction's governance structure.

State Governance Structures

The Commonwealth represented by DEEWR will work with Victoria to establish a State Advisory Committee to guide the implementation of the Partnership Brokers, Youth Connections Programs and projects under Maximising Engagement Attainment and Successful Transitions in Victoria.

Advisory Committee Membership

The Advisory Committee will be made up of representatives from:

- the DEEWR Victorian State Office
- the Victorian Departments of: Education and Early Childhood Development; Innovation, Industry and Regional Development (Skills Victoria); Planning and Community Development (Office for Youth, and Adult Community and Further Education)
- the following peak bodies: Victorian Association of State Secondary Principals; Independent Schools Victoria; Catholic Education Commission of Victoria; Career Education Association of Victoria; Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Australian Industry Group

Role of the Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee will have responsibility for:

- strategically overseeing the implementation of the Partnership Brokers, Youth Connections Program and projects under Maximising Engagement Attainment and Successful Transitions in Victoria, ensuring implementation is consistent with the overarching strategic direction of the National Partnership and the outcomes being sought
- high level oversight of provider strategic , environmental and service plans (as applicable) and monitoring the achievement of outcomes
- ensuring the implementation of the programs aligns with the requirements of key stakeholder groups
- formulating advice, guidance and protocols for program providers in relation to the implementation on relevant matters as they arise
- identification of any issue that have major implications for successful implementation of the programs
- providing feedback and advice to DEEWR and DEECD program managers on program implementation issues as they arise, and
- reviewing any proposed changes to the programs and making recommendations to DEEWR and DEECD program managers.

A sub-committee of this group with cross-sectoral representation will be established to consider the detail of the Victorian implementation of the National Partnership and address any issues that arise.

Role of individual Committee members

The role of the individual members of the Committee includes:

- understanding the programs and outcomes they are seeking to achieve
- identifying and making linkages with other initiatives across the State/Territory
- appreciating the significance of the programs for some or all major stakeholders and representing their interests when appropriate
- being an advocate for the program outcomes, and
- being committed to, and actively involved in pursuing the program outcomes.