

**BUSINESS
NSW**

**SUBMISSION
TO THE NATIONAL
SKILLS PASSPORT
CONSULTATION PAPER**

February 2024



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Summary

Business NSW welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission in response to the consultation being undertaken by The Department of Education and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations. The *National Skills Passport Consultation Paper* provides an opportunity to affirm the value of qualifications and training in building and sustaining a skilled economy. Business NSW is the state's peak business organisation, with close to 50,000 member businesses. Tracing our heritage back to the Sydney Chamber of Commerce established in 1825, we work with businesses spanning all industry sectors, the majority of which are small or medium enterprises. Business NSW advocates for the interests and needs of business at a local, state and federal level.

Business NSW recognises the critical role of qualifications and credentials in ensuring businesses have the workers they need now and into the future. They serve a vital role in broadening and sustaining workforce participation, and the capabilities required to meet current and future industry needs. Our submission in response to the consultation paper considers issues pertinent to the recognition of qualifications and credentials of various kinds as we look ahead and see new and emerging industries, evolving skills needs and enormous opportunities for skilled workers in coming years.

The metaphor of a passport is appropriate in this context. Passports support mobility. They facilitate crossing borders. They open opportunities for participation in life and work. They support mobility from one place to another. They support personal and professional development whereby one opportunity leads to the next. They are also instrumental in supporting pathways to learning. A *National Skills Passport* should provide a practical solution that helps individuals make the most of their opportunities in education and work. The fundamental purpose should be to support the recognition of prior attainment, supporting career mobility in a global context. It should support a diversity of pathways for participation in education and work the broadest possible sense.

Knowledge, skills and experience are highly prized by employers. At their best, qualifications are a reliable means of assuring these. Qualifications provide an indication of achievement in a way that assumes the validation of certain skills and abilities. There are many fields where certification assures that graduates are able to work reliably and safely. Qualifications are both retrospective and prospective. They are retrospective in the sense that they reflect prior attainment. They are prospective in the sense whereby they reflect the forward-facing capabilities of the

graduate. They provide an indication of what a graduate should reasonably be expected to know, be able to do, and be able to learn now and in the future.

Formal qualifications should feature as part of the mix of learning opportunities, including new forms of learning through online certificates and micro-credentials. We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the evolving idea of a skills passport. We look forward to working with government and stakeholders across education and training sector in helping to make the most of opportunities for supporting and enhancing participation and mobility in education and work.

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'D. Harding', enclosed within a circular scribble.

David Harding

Executive Director, Business NSW

Summary of Recommendations

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A passport that makes sense

The Australian Government is consulting widely in developing a business case for a National Skills Passport. Development of a skills passport was flagged in the 2022 *Employment White Paper*, and again in the Australian Universities Accord *Interim Report*. This submission responds to the Consultation Paper circulated by the Commonwealth Departments of Education and of Employment and Workplace Relations. Aims for a National Skills Passport described in the Consultation Paper include:

- Streamlining access to information;
- Make it easier for individuals to have their qualifications recognised; and
- Make it easier for employers to recruit suitably trained employees with the skills and capabilities they need.

The 2022 *Employment White Paper* outlined the Australian Government's vision for a dynamic and inclusive labour market. To this end, a National Skills Passport aims to help workers showcase their skills, abilities and achievements in a way that aligns with the expectations and needs of employers. This, in turn, should make it easier for employers to recruit the skilled workers they need. A skills passport has the potential to support better labour market outcomes for both individuals and employers as a result.

This submission outlines opportunities for a National Skills Passport to align with existing efforts in promoting and supporting participation in education and work, and in building and sustaining a capable and qualified workforce. It highlights considerations in scope, opportunities for better integration and emphasises the value of making the recognition of prior attainment easier.

Recommendation 1: The fundamental purpose of a National Skills Passport should be to support the recognition of prior attainment across borders, in a global context.

From an employer perspective

1.3.a.i. How do you currently access, assess and verify skills and credentials?

From an employer perspective, qualifications reflect knowledge and skills. They provide an indication of capability and expertise. They reflect development and specialisation in a given field, while also providing an indication of how those skills

and capabilities could be applied across different contexts. At their best, qualifications are a reliable means of assuring graduate attainment.

Many employers have embraced the use of digital platforms for sharing information about qualifications, licensing and professional registration. However, inconsistencies remain between systems, between industries and across borders. Many businesses are still reliant on paper-based and static-document recognition, certification and validation. There remains substantial scope for extending the use and benefits of digital platforms in conveying information of this kind, particularly among small and medium enterprises.

A National Skills Passport should provide a practical solution that helps individuals make the most of their opportunities in education and work. From an employer perspective, evidence of prior attainment needs to be accessible, intelligible and reliable if it is going to be useful. It should be easy to use, convenient and provide a functional platform for learners, jobseekers and employers alike. It must be an economical, easy-to-use solution that ‘makes sense’ from an end-user perspective. This is particularly the case for employers and students.

Recommendation 2: A National Skills Passport should ‘make sense’ from the perspective of its principal stakeholders, including both employers and students.

In a global context

1.3.a.ii *Does this process differ for international skills and credentials?*

A National Skills Passport should align with existing local, national and international good practice in qualifications recognition. In doing so, it has the potential to yield significant benefits for employers and graduates in terms of both inbound and outbound graduate mobility. Data standards describe common rules and protocols for structuring information. At present, there is no common national or international standard for structuring and communicating information about qualifications between institutions and across borders. However, some useful precedents do exist.

The European Union commenced development of what would become the *Europass* in 2004. Re-launched in 2020, the *Europass* was developed as a tool for promoting cross-border mobility in education and work across the European Union. It incorporates skills, qualifications and experience in an organised way. The enhanced *Europass* also offers information and guidance on career development, providing resources for navigating the increasingly diverse range of learning

opportunities on offer. Singapore also has a digital platform for sharing information about skills and qualifications. Launched in 2017, the *MySkillsFuture* website conveys information about qualifications, certification and licences along with information on skills in demand.

These examples have the potential to inform the development of a National Skills Passport in Australia. They also highlight the implications of a National Skills Passport for both inbound and outbound graduate mobility. Graduates from Australian providers would benefit through making it easier for their qualifications to be recognised overseas. Conversely, a National Skills Passport that conformed with international protocols for sharing information about qualifications may also make it easier for qualifications earned offshore to be recognised in Australia. This is particularly important when connecting qualifications earned overseas with Australia's current and future skills needs.

Recommendation 3: A National Skills Passport should align with international good practice in the recognition of qualifications, supporting both inbound and outbound graduate mobility.

Recommendation 4: Qualifications earned overseas should be included for consideration in the business case for developing a National Skills Passport.

Across borders

Does this process differ when considering credentials earned in different states and territories?

The fundamental purpose of a National Skills Passport should be to inform the recognition of prior attainment. At a minimum, it should capture relevant information across the full range of formal qualifications. The consultation paper noted challenges in the way that qualification recognition, verification and communication is currently done. For example, there is no trusted information source for credentials spanning both higher education and vocational education and training, making it difficult to navigate, inefficient and costly.

Several online platforms for sharing information about qualifications and credentials are already available in Australia. These support sharing qualifications, transcripts and credential verification. These include authenticated transcripts for vocational qualifications and digital badges specific to particular skills and achievements offered by a range of providers. These platforms join global efforts dedicated to improving the recognition of qualifications and global graduate mobility.

The NSW State Government has recently developed a cross-border initiative involving a new *Automatic Mutual Recognition* system where plumbers, gasfitters, drainers, architects, electricians and veterinarians will be able to work across state borders based on their state of origin licensing, provided they are able to meet current local registration and regulatory requirements. While these efforts are certainly welcome, opportunities remain for improving the mobility of skilled workers across Australian State and Territory borders, particularly in licenced trades.

Recommendation 5: A National Skills Passport should facilitate the recognition of qualifications in licensed trades and professions across Australian States and Territories.

Recognition

3.2 What challenges do you currently face aligning information and qualifications across VET and higher education? What do you need to overcome these challenges, and how could a National Skills Passport assist?

The Federal Government is exploring opportunities for leveraging existing digital infrastructure in evaluating the utility of a national digital platform for sharing information about qualifications. This includes existing credentialing platforms, the Unique Student Identifier (USI), VET and higher education reporting platforms and transcript services. This may include leveraging existing local and international services, such as those provided by HES in partnership with *Digitary*¹ for higher and vocational education providers, and other platforms already in use for vocational education and training across state and territory borders.

Vocational and higher education

My eEquals is a digital platform used by universities in Australia and New Zealand to issue and authenticate transcripts, diplomas and graduation statements in a secure digital format. The platform was conceived in 2015 in support of the commitment to student data portability outlined in the *Groningen Declaration*.² The initiative

¹ HES, a non-profit subsidiary of Universities Australia, manages *My eEquals* in partnership with *Digitary*. Ireland-based *Digitary* was acquired by US-based *Parchment* in 2021. A range of digital qualifications platforms, including *MyEquals*, *MyCreds* and *MesCertif* are currently supported by *Digitary* across Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

² The *Groningen Declaration* advocates for fair recognition of qualifications, and promotes opportunities in education and work through global graduate mobility. The *Groningen Declaration*

provides graduates with a permanent, portable, and tamper-proof record of their achievements that can be shared with employers and other providers. Documents issued through *My eQuals* are encrypted using security features that help ensure the reliability of qualifications information. Graduates have control over who can view their documents, and for how long, via a user-friendly web-based interface. More than 9 million documents have been issued on the platform as of 2024, with over 87 participating providers and more than 2.5 million students and graduates registered across Australia and New Zealand. The *My eQuals* platform is also seeing strong uptake among TAFEs. More than half of the TAFE providers across Australia have already signed up to make their qualifications available via the *My eQuals* platform, with more set to join. This is one of the key areas where the VET and higher education sectors intersect.

The VET sector has mature data standards, however, the *National Credentials Platform* project found inconsistent data collection and standards in higher education. There remains scope for better integration based on the robust reporting infrastructure already in place, including the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) and associated reporting framework administered by The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) and the Higher Education Information Management System (HEIMS).

There is scope for better integration between the well-established reporting platforms of the kind noted above and new innovations, such as the Skills Passport associated with the Western Parkland *New Education and Training Model* initiative in Western Sydney. This Skills Passport already provides a digital platform for recognising an individual's qualifications and skills, with an emphasis on making it easy for employers to use. It has been developed with the aim of facilitating pathways between vocational and higher education, while also providing an opportunity to showcase micro-credentials, workplace-based training and other forms of attainment. Comparable initiatives already in place for sharing qualifications and tracking workplace attainment include the *eProfiling* service supported by Exemplar Learning, the *Disability Skills Passport* supported by Pegasus Solutions and the *MyPass* skills passport tailored to a range of industries including manufacturing, energy and renewables, mining and resources, health and aged care.

Network does this by bringing together stakeholders with an interest in supporting a global digital student data ecosystem, with a view to working toward a common international standard for information about qualifications.

Recommendation 6: A National Skills Passport should leverage both established reporting systems and new innovations in supporting articulation, recognition and mobility within and between vocational and higher education.

Licensing and professional registration

Many professions require licensing or registration. These requirements ensure those in the licenced trades and professions are able to work responsibly, reliably and safely. Only *qualified* individuals can work in those field. Pathways for doing so typically require formal qualifications. However, *licensing and registration* exists independently of the qualifications they require. This is necessarily the case since state and territory regulatory authorities will typically maintain ongoing registration requirements in addition to formal qualifications. These requirements vary by industry, and may be governed by national or state regulations.

Healthcare professionals, for example, are required to be registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) and its respective National Boards. Teachers must be registered with the relevant state or territory teaching board, authority, college or institute. Legal professionals need to be admitted by a State or Territory Supreme Court and hold a current practising certificate issued by a legal professional body. Electricians, plumbers and builders can only work where they meet the relevant state or territory licensing requirements. These typically include completion of a relevant vocational qualification and competency-based attainment. Licensing authorities typically also specify requirements for ongoing professional development with the aim of keeping pace with evolving industry standards.

Recommendation 7: Current unit-level licensing and registration information should be included for consideration in the business case for developing a National Skills Passport.

Recognition of prior learning and other forms of attainment

The consultation paper suggested that a National Skills Passport could look further than formal qualifications and transcripts, mapping other forms of attainment to skills and competencies. The rationale underpinning this is to enable recognition of the full range capabilities and, potentially, other achievements and experience. The submission to the 2023 NSW VET Review by Business NSW highlighted the need for improving articulation opportunities and the recognition of prior learning in tertiary education. This includes recognition of prior attainment through formal

qualifications, short courses, micro credentials and other forms of learning. Other forms of attainment might include workplace experience, workplace training, recognition of achievement (such as awards, prizes, scholarships) and other activities (such as volunteering, board and committee service and recreational pursuits). These could be supplemented by information pertinent to seeking employment, such as letters of recommendation and referee contact details.

Recommendation 8: Opportunities for facilitating the recognition of prior learning should be included for consideration in the business case for developing a National Skills Passport.

Scope

4.3 *Do you see value in a National Skills Passport that includes skills and qualifications that are not verified, validated, regulated, or accredited? For example, work experience, unaccredited micro credentials, and industry or other training?*

Many of the questions raised in the consultation paper are a function of scope. The consultation paper suggests that a National Skills Passport could look further than formal qualifications and transcripts, mapping other forms of attainment to skills and competencies. This could potentially include information from an array of sources, including certificates of participation, workplace experience, referee details and recreational pursuits. Setting the scope broadly would mean a National Skills Passport would look less like a platform for sharing validated information about qualifications attained, and more like an online digital resume conveying a substantial amount of information from a variety of sources. The question of scope is considered here in terms of four distinct alternatives for the kind of information a National Skills Passport ought to convey, as described below:

- 1) **Lean:** Provider data on completed AQF and equivalent qualifications only;
- 2) **Economical:** Graduate-administered model from a curated list of options and data sources;
- 3) **Expansive:** An un-curated, all-inclusive approach by category; and
- 4) **Ecosystem approach:** A framework connecting existing platforms.

A conservative or 'lean' stance on qualifications criteria has the potential to simplify otherwise complex considerations in the role and function of a digital platform for sharing information regarding an individual's qualifications and attainment. If the scope of the information shared via a National Skills Passport were limited to formal

qualifications, then it follows that the scope of what should (and what should not) be shared on the platform should be relatively narrow. A conservative or 'lean' stance may lead to a skills passport that conveys the completed attainment of AQF qualifications only.³

Table 1 Lean, Economical and Expansive approaches to the scope of a National Skills Passport

Group	Information	Lean	Economical	Expansive
I	All completed VET+HE AQF quals attained across Australian States and Territories	Include	Curated options	Graduate choice
II	Completed Senior Secondary Certificate of Education			
III	All completed AQF-equivalent post-secondary qualifications attained internationally	Include?		
IV	Recognised non-AQF qualifications and credentials (e.g., listed micro credentials)			
V	Unlisted certificates and credentials	Exclude	Graduate choice?	
VI	Completed senior secondary certificate or equivalent attained internationally			
VII	Non-certificate school attainment			
VIII	Transcript-level information (individual courses, completions & grades)			
IX	Incomplete qualifications			
X	Workplace training			
XI	Workplace experience			
XII	Other recognition of achievement (e.g., awards, prizes, scholarships)			
XIII	Other forms of attainment (e.g., volunteering, board and committee service, recreational pursuits)			
XIV	Letters of recommendation and referee details			
XV	Freeform option			

An expansive view, by contrast, would accommodate the growing diversity of qualifications and credentials on offer. It would provide greater scope for keeping pace with the changing nature of qualifications, learning and attainment in a 21st

³ The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) describes standards for certificate and degree-level qualifications attained in Australia. It has been designed to facilitate the recognition of qualifications across-sectors in line with international good practice. It distinguishes ten qualification levels based on the knowledge, skills and applied capabilities a graduate is expected to have attained, from certificate-level programs through to doctoral degrees.

century workforce. On this view, a skills passport would function more like a digital resume, allowing students the flexibility to curate their own skills profile. An expansive view of the role of a National Skills Passport may lead to a digital platform that looks more like a structured resume or curriculum vitae than a platform for communicating information about qualifications in the 'lean' sense described above.

A skills passport narrow in scope would be easier to administer and simpler to use. However, it may also mean excluding opportunities for job seekers to showcase relevant skills, abilities and prior experience. It may mean excluding information that may be relevant and valuable for both employers and job-seekers. Conversely, an expansive view would provide potentially endless opportunities for showcasing skills, abilities, achievements and experience. However, this may come at the expense of usability, and limit the validation function of the platform.

An economical view would be somewhere between the two perspectives described above. It would provide a platform that reflects a record of attainment of only those qualifications listed in the Australian Qualifications Framework. It might also include equivalent qualifications attained overseas, provided there were a reliable source of guidance on *equivalence*. It could include recognised non-AQF qualifications and credentials, where they can be referenced against other reliable sources of information. It could also include 'unlisted' qualifications, credentials and other forms of attainment where they are nominated by the graduate. The three alternatives described here are compared in Table 1 above.

A fourth alternative may be for the Federal Government to simply provide a digital platform that connects existing sources of information in a coherent and useful way. This could support an 'ecosystem' where a variety of services and resources could be connected together to achieve some or all of the aims of a unified digital platform.

Recommendation 9: The Federal Government should adopt an economical view on the scope of a National Skills Passport, with the aim of achieving the right balance between opportunities for demonstrating attainment and relevant validation requirements.

Administration

The consultation paper observed how current arrangements impose transaction costs on job seekers, students, employers and education providers in accessing, supplying, reviewing and verifying information about qualifications. While simplifying these demands features among the core aims for a National Skills Passport, a digital platform for sharing information about qualifications will nevertheless still require the involvement of each of these groups in different ways. Students should be able to curate the information available via their own unique skills passport. They should be able to 'manage the message' in tailoring their approach for specific roles with different prospective employers, and for opportunities of various kinds, regardless of the scope of the information available, or the model used for conveying it.

A lean model along the lines of that outlined in Table 1 above would rely predominantly on provider administration and validation. This would require that providers be able to share information about both qualifications and graduates in a structured and organised way. It could also support student choice through giving graduates the option to select which qualifications or credentials ought to appear. This would provide employers with a relatively concise summary of qualifications attained, basic information about the educational programs completed, and the awarding institutions involved.

An economical model along the lines of that outlined in Table 1 above would rely on providing job seekers and graduates with the opportunity to 'curate' a broader range of content for their own unique skills passport in an organised way. This could involve the opportunity to select from an organised list of validated information sources. Individuals could then select those records deemed most relevant for a given set of circumstances – be that applying for a job, or applying for admission to a program of study. Employers and providers will have access to more customised information as a result, organised in a structured way.

An expansive view of the scope of the information that ought to be available via a National Skills Passport would involve an even greater emphasis on graduate choice. An expansive approach is likely to improve the richness of the information available. It is also likely to increase the complexity involved in navigating the system for both job seekers and employers, and increase the complexity faced by education providers in ensuring they are able to reliably convey the information required.

Recommendation 10: Job seekers, students and graduates should be able to ‘curate’ the information conveyed via a National Skills Passport based on structured, clearly defined and clearly presented options.

Validation

4.1 *Who would you expect to provide the validation? For example, would you expect qualifications to be validated by a university, Registered Training Organisation or regulating body, and skills verified by an employer or third party?*

There are many fields where certification assures that graduates are able to work reliably and safely. Qualifications provide an indication of achievement in a way that assumes the validation of certain skills and abilities. They provide an indication of what a graduate should reasonably be expected to know and be able to do. At their best, qualifications serve as a reliable means of assuring graduate capabilities. The *reliability* of that assurance adds to their value. A sound qualification provides a reliable indication of attainment. Defining what constitutes a trusted source features among the main challenges identified in the Consultation Paper. The validation required by individuals, employers and providers may differ. Different standards may be required based on the type of qualification or skill, the nature of the interaction, and the activities, requirements and risks associated with the roles employers are recruiting for.

It is important that a National Skills Passport is trusted by all users. It should convey up-to-date information that is both reliable and secure. In line with this, it is important that the right information is captured, and that information is verified, stored and maintained in a stable and secure manner. There is also potentially a role for industry bodies in this process whereby registration for work in relevant trades and professions can be validated and assured in an organised way.

Recommendation 11: Further consultation on licensing and registration will be required with industry bodies and relevant government agencies in developing a business case for a National Skills Passport.

Retrospectivity

Qualifications are both retrospective and prospective. They are retrospective in the sense whereby they reflect prior attainment. They are prospective in the sense whereby they provide at least some level of assurance regarding the current capabilities of the graduate. In other words: they provide an indication of what a

graduate should reasonably be expected to know, be able to do, and be able to learn now and into the future. Digital platforms for sharing information about qualifications are a relatively new innovation. Existing platforms often only convey information about qualifications attained in the last five years. While noting the importance of current qualifications, the prospect of including retrospective data from education providers should also feature as part of the business case for the development of a National Skills Passport.

Recommendation 12: The inclusion of retrospective records of formal attainment should be included for consideration in the business case for developing a National Skills Passport.

Integration

3.1 What systems do you operate or interact with that may be impacted by a National Skills Passport, and what systems would you like to see integrated?

The consultation paper outlined how employers, students and providers could share qualifications information across Vocational Education and Training (VET) and higher education through a trusted and integrated digital system. Existing digital infrastructure and data standards can help to make this possible. A National Skills Passport could connect relevant services in facilitating lifelong learning as part of a learning and skills ecosystem. The Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) is a national data standard for ensuring the consistency and accuracy of data reported by providers of vocational education and training. Development of a National Skills Passport should build upon existing systems and protocols of this kind in line with international good practice in the recognition of qualifications, as highlighted through recommendations in this submission.

Privacy and security

Privacy and security must be at the heart of a National Skills Passport. A National Skills Passport must protect the privacy of those who use it. It must enable the right level of information sharing. For example: a job applicant should be able to select which qualifications they choose to share with a prospective employer. A National Skills Passport should inspire the confidence of its users in both the security and the integrity of the information it conveys, and how it is communicated.

Information on workforce trends

Jobs and Skills Australia is a relatively new agency charged with informing the alignment of skills and training efforts with changing labour market needs.⁴ They identify trends, challenges, and opportunities in Australia's evolving labour market. This includes analysing employment rates, industry growth, and the impact of technological advancements on jobs. They also work closely with agencies providing employment services. There is scope for including information on skills needs and workforce trends as part of, or in alignment with, a digital platform for sharing information about attainment, either in conjunction with a National Skills Passport, or through related initiatives.

Career development and employment services

Formal qualifications are not the be all or end or when it comes to knowledge, skills and experience. There is more than one way of demonstrating what we know and can do. The Federal Government has undertaken to assess opportunities for leveraging existing digital resources in evaluating the utility of a national skills passport, including the *Your Career* website supported by the National Careers Institute. Digital career development platforms of this kind join a range of other resources, including the *Skillsroad* platform supported by Business NSW in partnership with Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Victoria and Western Australia. There is scope for resources of this kind to leverage information at the level of individual skill sets and capabilities.

The idea of a national skills passport raises the prospect of capability development resources and 'how-to' guides for career development featuring as part of a digital learning and skills ecosystem. Resources of this kind could be organised in a way that provides a menu of options for career advice and guidance on education, training and career pathways. In addition to documenting existing qualifications, a Skills Passport could serve as a portal for advice and guidance on matching skills with opportunities for advancement through education and work. It is critical that the agency responsible for administering this aspect of any such platform avoid a 'scattergun' approach to the deployment of learning resources for career development. Such approaches tend to be overwhelming for those who are in the early stages of forming their career aspirations. A deluge of information can sometimes do more harm than good, particularly where it is of questionable quality. Careful consideration is needed in engaging with job seekers and achieving the right balance in providing resources for career development.

⁴ Jobs and Skills Australia took over from the National Skills Commission in 2022.

An 'ecosystem' approach to skills and mobility

There remains tremendous scope for innovation in developing a National Skills Passport. On the one hand, this innovation may take the form of a unified platform administered at the national level by a responsible government agency. However, there is also scope for innovation of a different kind. The idea of a 'skills ecosystem' captures many of the aims outlined in the consultation paper, including streamlining access to information, making it easier for individuals to have their qualifications recognised, and making it easier for employers to recruit suitably trained employees with the skills and capabilities they need. Meeting these aims through an integrated approach, leveraging existing infrastructure and protocols while also allowing scope for continued innovation would be a world-leading contribution by the Australian Government. One that is certainly worth exploring.

Recommendation 13: A 'skills ecosystem' approach should be included for consideration in the business case for developing a National Skills Passport.

Conclusion

The national skills passport consultation paper provides an opportunity to consider what a good outcome from an initiative of this kind might look like. It also provides an opportunity to consider what an adverse outcome might look like. The latter would be complicated, unwieldy, expensive, and, ultimately, one that fails to meet its aims. A good outcome would provide an integrated solution supporting the recognition of prior attainment in an economical way. It would make sense for both employers and graduates. It would be easy to use. It would be a trusted source of information for employers. It would be a valuable asset for graduates in exploring new opportunities. We look forward to working with government and stakeholders across the education and training sector in supporting initiatives for enhancing participation and mobility in education and work.



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