



Aus4Skills

Annual Plan 2017 - 2018

July 2017

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Abbreviations

AAF	Australia Awards Fellowships
AAS	Australia Awards Scholarships
AAV	Australia Awards Vietnam
AP	Annual Plan
ADIS	Alumni Development Impact Survey
AIP	Aid Investment Plan
AVID	Australia Volunteers for International Development
DET	Department of Education and Training
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
EMT	Executive Management Team
ESL	English as a second language
FMT	Financial Management Team
GDVT	General Department of Vocational Training (Vietnam)
GEDSI	Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
GeLead	Vietnam’s Centre for Gender and Women’s Leadership
GoA	Government of Australia
GoV	Government of Vietnam
GPFD	Government Partnerships for Development
HCMC	Ho Chi Minh City
HRD	Human Resource Development
ILO	Informal Learning Opportunities
JSC	Joint Selection Committee
LTAs	Long Term Awards
MC	Managing Contractor
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEF	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training (Vietnam)

MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (Vietnam)
NCP	New Colombo Plan
PCSP	Promotions and Communications Strategy and Plan
PWD	People with Disability
QUNIS	Quality in North Western Universities
SCA	Short Course Awards
SCO	Student Contact Officer
SoR	Statement of Requirements
TWG	Thematic Working Group
VAHRDP	Vietnam-Australia Human Resource Development Partnership
VGAC	Vietnam's Graduates from Australia Club
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VWU	Vietnam Women's Union
WHS	Work Health and Safety
WiPPA	Centre for Women in Politics and Public Administration
WIL	Women in Leadership

1. Introduction

The Aus4Skills Program (formerly Vietnam-Australia Human Resource Development Partnership) reflects the Australian Government's continuing commitment to support Vietnam's human resource development (HRD). This commitment is emphasised in the Australia-Vietnam HRD Strategy 2014-2020, which outlines the direction for Australia's support for and engagement with Vietnam to achieve its HRD objectives, thus contributing to the country's sustainable economic and inclusive development and enduring links with Australia.

Aus4Skills is the main vehicle to realise the HRD Strategy objectives together with other existing global program investments, such as the Australia Awards Fellowships and Australian Volunteers for International Development (AVID). Aus4Skills aligns with the directions of the Australian Government's investments in Vietnam set out in the Aid Investment Plan (AIP) Vietnam 2015-2016 to 2019-2020.

Aus4Skills focusses effort on ensuring the application of new skills and knowledge acquired by participants supported by the Program, and thus also the enabling environments for use of new skills and knowledge. The Australia Awards Scholarships continue as one of the tools, with areas of study aligned with the sector and geographical priorities in the AIP and Australia's broader interests.

To realise the HRD Strategy objective Aus4Skills has developed a Design of Non-Scholarship Components which was approved by Post in February 2017. The Design contains five components which align with AIP priorities and broader Australian interests in Vietnam. These are outlined in Section 4. Preparations have been undertaken for implementation of activities in the five components to commence in the FY 2017-2018. A range of flexible delivery modalities, described as a toolbox, will be used to implement these activities and these are outlined in Section 3.

A key component of Aus4Skills is to provide support to Australia Awards alumni and other alumni of Australian education to enhance their skills and knowledge learnt in Australia. This will enhance alumni capacity to contribute to the development of their sector, community and more broadly Vietnam and strengthen their links with Australia. Alumni support will align with the Australia Alumni Global Engagement Strategy 2015-2020 and the Australian Alumni in Vietnam Strategy 2016-2021 developed with Aus4Skills assistance to implement the Global Strategy. The Vietnam Strategy aims to establish a vibrant Vietnamese alumni network within the global alumni community that engages with and promotes Australia.

The Vietnam-Australia Aid Framework

Aus4Skills is covered under the Subsidiary Arrangement between the Government of Australia (GoA) and the Government of Vietnam (GoV) signed on 15 December 2015 and is pursuant to the terms of Clause 5 of the Memorandum of Understanding on Development Cooperation between the GoA and the GoV that came into force on 27 May 1993. The Coordinating Authorities for Aus4Skills are DFAT and the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training (MOET). Aus4Skills is a five-year program which commenced on 1 February 2016 and will finish on 31 December 2020.

Purpose and Structure of this Annual Plan

This Annual Plan presents the broad support priorities of Aus4Skills and supplies a narrative about the work to be done over the FY 2017-2018 to implement the Program's complex range of activities. The Annexes provide strategic, planning and operational details and build on the strategies and plans developed for the 2016-2017 Annual Plan. These documents are able to be read as stand-alone documents, and they will continue to be advanced through future iterations during the delivery of this Annual Plan and will inform future Annual Plans.

After outlining the program priorities and focus areas in Section 2 below, Section 3 describes the toolbox that Aus4Skills has at hand. The clusters of activities are described, in general, in Section 4, and for each major cluster an Annex provides a strategy and plan to explain the context and the specific objectives and the details of activities and timing. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), operational planning and financial resource allocation are in Sections 5, 6 and 7 respectively. Annex 10 Summary Budget provides resourcing information. These will be reviewed for consensus agreement as One-Team, and adjusted as One-Team, as required, during implementation.

2. Program Priorities and Focus Areas

The priority focus areas and activities in this Annual Plan are driven by focusing on the Program Outcomes to be achieved:

Outcome 1: Male and female alumni use new skills and knowledge to make positive contributions to selected priority areas

Outcome 2: Stronger workplace enabling environments for skills utilisation in selected priority areas

Outcome 3: Australia and Vietnam have stronger, sustainable links in selected sectors/agencies.

In planning the Aus4Skills activities, alignment with the AIP for Vietnam is also intended. The AIP sets three mutually reinforcing objectives:

Objective 1: Enabling and engaging the private sector for development

Objective 2: Assisting the development and employment of a highly-skilled workforce

Objective 3: Promoting women's economic empowerment, including ethnic minorities.

The Aus4Skills program outcomes directly serve AIP Objective 2, and the Aus4Skills design also provides for a Women in Leadership (WIL) investment which will additionally serve Objective 3. Engaging with the private sector – Objective 1- is not a primary objective of Aus4Skills, but such engagement will be a feature of component activities designed to strengthen private sector involvement in training and curriculum development in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector to meet private sector labour needs.

Approaches

The Aus4Skills team will continue with the recognised effective approach for selection, placement, mobilisation and support of the Australia Awards Scholarship awardees. A new strategy for on-award engagement for these awardees has been developed.

The Design of the Non-scholarship HRD Components sets out the approach to be undertaken in implementing the non-scholarship HRD activities with the following eight implementation principles:

- Maximise linkages and complementarities between GoA investments
- Promote partnership between Australian and Vietnamese organisations
- Assess readiness of organisations
- Promote Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
- Engage with the private sector
- Build on and promote Australian strengths
- Ensure value for money

- Seek innovative solutions

The approaches to the delivery of alumni engagement have been updated to align with the Global Alumni Engagement Strategy and to include close cooperation with and support for the Australian Alumni in Vietnam Strategy. Reintegration has been integrated more closely into the Alumni Engagement Strategy and no longer appears in the strategy name. The Program's focus is on activities to strengthen the workplace enabling environment.

The promotions and communications approach has been adjusted to give stronger focus on the non-scholarship HRD components of the Program and the Program impacts. The approaches to monitoring and evaluation and GEDSI set out in strategies for the 2016-2017 Annual Plan continue to be appropriate for the FY 2017-2018. All approaches have been reviewed to ensure that the intended Aus4Skills outcomes will be effectively and efficiently delivered and can be measured and communicated.

Non-scholarship HRD Components

Five major HRD non-scholarship components have been identified and outlined in the Design approved by Post in February 2017. These are based on the Scope of Requirements (SoR), AIP priority sectors and geographical areas, and the broader Australian interests in Vietnam.

1. Promoting Industry Linkages with Vocational Educational Training
2. Improving Quality in North Western Universities
3. Advancing Women in Leadership
4. Supporting Australia's Aid Investment Plan, and
5. Supporting Australia's Broader Interests

These five components will be discussed in Section 4 with detailed activities in Annex 2 HRD Strategy and Plan.

Categories of organisations that will receive assistance

The Embassy has agreed on a simple categorisation of organisations that are targeted for assistance in the Program. There are three categories as described below:

HRD targeted organisations. These include selected universities, and organisations from selected industry sectors and their VET partners. This category encompasses the organisations that can receive the fullest package of assistance in this Program, through the integrated use of a range of HRD tools and modalities.

Other AIP partners. The second category is organisations or work units that are priorities for other AIP programs. The organisations in this category are identified by other AIP programs, and the HRD team at the Embassy will determine the level at which this Program will serve identified needs. The assistance provided includes prioritisation for Australia Awards and, based on identified needs, will include other modalities.

Australian broader interests. These are organisations or groups of individuals that reflect broader Australian foreign policy interests in Vietnam outside the AIP sectors. Apart from being targeted for Australia Awards Scholarships, this category of organisations will not be engaged in other component activities, except as directed by the Embassy.

The combination of all three categories equates to those organisations included in the 'at least 30%' target for 'non-open' Australia Awards Scholarships in the 2018 intake.

The types of assistance and modalities that Aus4Skills can choose as appropriate to provide support are referred to as the Aus4Skills toolbox which is described below.

3. The Aus4Skills Toolbox

The Aus4Skills toolbox, referred to as the HRD toolbox, is designed to include a wide range of tools or modalities that are available and can be deployed, depending on need and target group, to meet Program Outcomes.

The toolbox consists of three main categories of tools:

Formal Australia Awards

Australia Awards consist of Australia Awards Scholarships, Australia Awards Short Courses and Australia Awards Fellowships. Coffey, as the Managing Contractor (MC) will remain cognisant of the relevant definitions, standards and requirements that apply for each of these types of Australia Awards.

Australia Awards Scholarships will be available, either directly, through targeted provision to an organisation as agreed with the Embassy, or indirectly, by default through 'open' application processes. The use of Australia Awards Scholarships and processes for delivery are set out in detail in the main Aus4Skills (VAHRDP) design.

Australia Awards Short Courses can be substantially more flexible and responsive than the long-term Australia Awards Scholarships, but they still provide some forms of recognised academic credit or statements of competency (to Australian Qualifications Framework standards) to participants who successfully complete the course requirements. They involve engaging an Australian university or Registered Training Organisation to conduct the short course. Short courses may be delivered in Vietnam or Australia, or a combination of both. Applications for Australia Awards Scholarships and Short Courses (SCAs) will be received and managed by the MC.

Australia Awards Fellowships are available for current and future leaders and mid-career professionals from Vietnam. Australian sponsoring organisations in conjunction with relevant Vietnamese partner organisations and/ or individuals submit proposals to DFAT for Fellowships. The MC's role includes: i) promotion of the Fellowships, ii) facilitation of links with Australian sponsoring organisations, and iii) in each round coordinating comments/ assessments from across the various sector teams at Post, undertaking necessary follow-up, and collating the information into the required format.

Australia Awards Complementary Assistance

Australia Awards Complementary Assistance is limited to forms of assistance that directly improve the ability of individuals to access, or maximise benefits from Australia Awards. This assistance may be preferentially provided (based on guidelines to be developed) to an organisation with agreement or direction from the Embassy.

Informal Learning Opportunities

Informal Learning Opportunities (ILOs) are a highly flexible means of providing a wider range of HRD-related assistance to an organisation. They do not need to meet the definitions or standards set by

formal Australia Awards¹ and therefore cannot be counted as such. They are purpose built to meet HRD needs and demand aligned to Program Outcomes.

ILOs may include such modalities as non-Australia Awards short courses of any form, seminars/workshops/conferences/study tours, technical assistance in any relevant field, mentoring and coaching exercises etc.

In appropriate circumstances, with agreement or direction from the Embassy, Australia Awards Complementary Assistance and ILOs may be offered to groupings of individuals not associated with a single organisation. This may be necessary to provide access to this set of tools for special types of individuals, such as program managers, female alumni, people with disability, ethnic minorities, rural populations, professional subgroups of alumni etc.

It is important that all HRD tools are deployed with clear targets, responsive to the context and strategic intents, so that the desired outcomes are likely to be achieved.

4. Aus4Skills Approach and Implementation 2017-2018

This section outlines the proposed work to be undertaken in the FY 2017-2018, and the approach and the resources necessary to conduct that work.

The Aus4Skills implementation starts from the understanding that a critical number of appropriately skilled people is necessary to deliver organisational change. However, Aus4Skills also recognises that numbers may not be sufficient and that organizational change also depends on more than skills and knowledge. Sustainable organisational change and development depend on how skills and knowledge are used, in particular the effective and efficient use of skills and knowledge² to deliver organisational goals.

The local enabling environment has an influence on the use of skills and knowledge, in particular the support from the line supervisor and the local leadership's vision for change and their skills in leadership and management. Aus4Skills activities will aim to create impact at the level of the local enabling environment of an organisational unit, rather than change conditions and practices in entire GoV ministries or large universities and colleges.

The Design of Non-Scholarship HRD Components outlines the implementation approach of the Program's five HRD components. Aus4Skills will support agencies and organisational units targeted in these components for the improved use and application of skills and knowledge. The various tools in the Aus4Skills toolbox will be applied as appropriate according to the target group and the objectives and content of the activity.

Working with existing and forthcoming alumni will be a key to achieving the outcomes of better enabling conditions for sustainable inclusive development in Vietnam and enduring links with Australia. Many alumni are already in prominent and influential positions and have been able to demonstrate impact of the skills and knowledge they have gained from Australia.

¹ If they can meet such definitions or standards, they should be provided under Category 1.

² While Australia Awards Scholarships are highly regarded in Vietnamese organisations, they are directed at individuals and awarded according to individual merit. The provision of awards has not, hitherto, needed to be strategically linked to organisational HRD priorities (assuming they exist), although higher-level management has needed to provide a supporting letter.

Aus4Skills will work in the framework of the new Global Alumni Engagement Strategy and Australian Alumni in Vietnam Strategy, engaging with the wider cohort of alumni of Australian universities who work in Vietnam, especially the alumni of GoV scholarships. Aus4Skills will liaise closely with and support the Coordinator of the Australian Alumni in Vietnam Strategy, located in the Aus4Skills office but reporting to the Embassy.

Aus4Skills continues to manage the promotion and provision of Australia Awards Scholarships. The communication strategy will continue to highlight the impact of alumni in their contributions to Vietnam's development for public diplomacy purposes through effective use of social and other media.

In the FY 2017-2018, Aus4Skills will approach the achievement of the intended Program Outcomes by implementation of the following clusters of activities and strategies:

1. Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
2. Implementation of five HRD components
3. Selection, placement, mobilisation and support of Australia Awards Scholarships awardees, including on-award engagement activities
4. Alumni engagement
5. Promotion and communication of Aus4Skills activities and outcomes

These clusters of activities are outlined further below. Monitoring and Evaluation is described in Section 5.

Prioritising gender equality, disability and social inclusion

Australia places very high priority on efforts to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment³ and to provide equal opportunity for other disadvantaged groups. Accordingly, to ensure women, people with disability, and the rural disadvantaged, including disadvantaged ethnic minority peoples in Vietnam, (referred to hereafter as 'GEDSI groups') benefit equally from this investment, Aus4Skills has both i) specific activities whose dedicated purpose is to tackle persistent challenges and barriers that are holding these disadvantaged groups back from achieving their full potential, and ii) crosscutting activities to mainstream inclusivity and equality across all Aus4Skills work, as equality and empowerment in human resource development cannot be achieved with only standalone activities.

Specific measurable GEDSI targets are agreed for Australia Awards Scholarships (at least 50% awardees for women and 20% awards for disadvantaged groups), with the same target for female participation in all other HRD activities. Aus4Skills will also seek to achieve the informal 20% target for disadvantaged groups (persons with disability and the rural disadvantaged, including ethnic minorities) in aggregation across the Program.

The revised guidelines of the **Equity of Access Fund**, a key support mechanism for disadvantaged groups to have equity of access to and benefits from Aus4Skills activities, will be applied to cover participants in non-scholarship HRD activities.

The **Business Case for Gender Equality and Diversity**, tailored to foster support for this area amongst Aus4Skills partner/targeted organisations and/or organizational units, will be finalised and used as appropriate in gender sensitising leadership/management of selected organisations, and deployed more generally as a gender communication tool.

³ DFAT Gender equality and women's empowerment strategy February 2016 and the Australian Alumni in Vietnam Strategy 2016-2021.

The first activities will be implemented in the **Advancing Women in Leadership** component which aims to increase opportunities for women to provide formal input to organisational decision-making. This component will be integrated in all Aus4Skills activities. A key activity in this package of assistance is a short course award called the “Women in Leadership Journey” which will develop skills and knowledge in gender equitable leadership over a 10 month timeframe. This activity and other elements in this component are described in Section 4.

A key issue is to ensure that choice of organisations, topics and foci of other Aus4Skills activities do not institutionally exclude GEDSI groups. The usual discourse of ‘needs based and demand driven activities’ can conflict with equality and inclusion goals, and desired outcomes. For example, demand for GEDSI is usually very low in most mainstream organisations and/or organisational units. In addition, the playing field for the expression of need and demand is not equal. Some organisations are better placed and resourced to express and advocate their HRD demands than other organisations (see Section 5. Risks in the GEDSI Strategy and Plan).

The HRD team therefore will collaborate with the GEDSI Adviser to find ways to incorporate means of including perspectives of GEDSI groups when analysing and ascertaining HRD needs of any organisational unit. The Small Grants Fund has been revised to strengthen gender and social inclusion considerations in proposal assessment and to encourage access by and for the benefit of GEDSI groups.

Within the Aus4Skills team, **checklists of opportunities to increase GEDSI opportunity and equality have been generated for most activities.** These checklists can be found in the strategies and plans in the annexes to this Annual Plan. The Aus4Skills staff performance appraisal process has been reviewed to ensure that it assesses GEDSI efforts and achievements.

A full Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Strategy and Plan is included at Annex 1.

Non-scholarship HRD Components

From July 2017, Aus4Skills will have more activities in non-scholarship components than the other areas of activities combined. These activities are divided among five components as approved in the Design of Non-scholarship HRD Components:

1. Promoting Industry Linkages with Vocational Educational Training
2. Improving Quality in North Western Universities
3. Advancing Women in Leadership
4. Supporting Australia’s Aid Investment Plan
5. Supporting Australia’s Broader Interests

Each component is summarised below with an overview of the approach and activities planned for the coming FY 2017-2018. More details are provided in Annex 2 HRD Strategy and Plan.

Promoting Industry Linkages with Vocational Educational Training

This component addresses the identified problem in Vietnam that **VET quality of training and graduates does not meet the requirements of the employers and the labour market.**

Aus4Skills plans to work closely with the General Directorate of Vocational Training (GDVT), selected partner vocational college/s and industry⁴ organisation(s) to develop skills for managing college-industry relationships, the capacity of vocational teachers to deliver effective competency-based

⁴ In this context industry refers to any industry sector, not only manufacturing. In Vietnamese, ‘doanh nghiệp’ is the relevant term in this context.

training to address skill gaps in the labour market, and/or adjust training curriculum to ensure relevance to future labour market needs. Endorsement by GDVT and the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) of the industry linkages model developed will enable future transfer of the model and application of lessons learned.

The Logistics sector has been identified as a suitable industry sector with which to begin working based on the willingness and ability of a key industry body i.e. Vietnam Logistics Association (VLA) to participate, priority areas of economic interest to Australia, and priority needs for human resource development to improve industry competitiveness in Vietnam. Choosing logistics also enables the program to build on previous Australian investments in the development of occupational standards in logistics for APEC⁵. In future other sectoral foci may be considered, for example Tourism.

VLA is in a prime position to provide access to employers who are willing to engage, and several colleges report that they already have engaged employer partners in logistics. Most of the activities in the FY 2017-2018 will focus on promoting engagement of employers in vocational education, and industry-linked training provided by the VET providers. The evidence of good practice in linking employers into the process of improving training outcomes will be presented to GDVT and VCCI, as well as shared with development partners of interest, in order to achieve recognition and approval by the Government of Vietnam at the national level.

Aus4Skills is currently investigating partnering with Australian Industry Standards (AIS - formerly the Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council of Australia). Current staff members of AIS were deeply involved in formulating the five sets of logistics occupational standards for APEC (including consultations with Vietnamese industry and MOLISA). AIS has confirmed its interest in providing resources such as short term technical advice, subject to funding and agreement about the mechanisms, to assist the success of these activities which focus on industry-linked vocational education for the logistics industry in Vietnam.

For the FY 2017-2018, Aus4Skills will confirm with DFAT the selected partner colleges with whom to begin work following the consultative forum held in the final quarter of the FY 2016-2017. Planned activities with colleges include supporting the implementation of competency-based curriculum with competency-based teaching and assessment skills training. One SCA on strategic planning and leadership for vocational college senior staff is planned, and multiple ILOs – as detailed in Annex 2 HRD Strategy and Plan.

A two-week study tour to Australia, involving key senior stakeholders from colleges, employers and GDVT, is proposed to ensure these key people have a vision about what is achievable in an industry-linked system of vocational education for logistics. To deeply understand different educational philosophies and practices underpinning choices about vocational education management, it is hoped that some actors in the vocational education sector may also pursue long term Australia Awards. Where aspirants are identified Aus4Skills will consult with DFAT about the appropriate level of complementary assistance that might be provided.

This is a complex component with stakeholders at various levels whose support is needed to achieve the desired outputs and outcomes. To bring the key stakeholders along with the process as it develops, Aus4Skills will ensure they are kept abreast of the diversity of activities in this component and communicates updates regularly to all relevant parties about how the activities are proceeding, reporting requirements, and what needs to be done next.

⁵ APEC Transportation and Logistics Project 2014-2016

Improving Quality in North Western Universities

This component addresses the identified problem that **universities cannot meet market demand in terms of quality or quantity of education and research.**

The approved design is to focus on the universities in the mountainous areas of northern Vietnam that report directly to MOET. Activities will focus on improving leadership and management, strengthening curriculum, and increasing the effective support for academic success of ethnic minority students at Tay Bac University, Thai Nguyen University and one of the latter's subsidiary universities Thai Nguyen University of Agriculture and Forestry in the first instance. Aus4Skills will establish a working group with a representative from each of the three universities ensure that the component progresses smoothly with clear, timely, relevant communication to the key stakeholders about how the activities are proceeding, reporting requirements, and what needs to be done next.

In the FY 2017-2018, SCAs for senior university leaders and managers are planned to provide the basis for future activity planning. These SCAs are: a) two tailored SCAs on strategic planning, governance and leadership with different target groups, and b) a tailored SCA on principles of curriculum development and renewal. The target group for each is different. The application of skills and knowledge from these courses should allow senior administrative and academic managers to make strategic choices about priorities and implement steps to drive those priorities forward in their respective areas of responsibility.

In light of selected priorities over time, participants and content of future SCAs can be chosen, i.e. SCA on quality assurance, and in future years on curriculum in particular disciplines, building research skills, etc. In this way Aus4Skills can build impact over its remaining three and a half years.

The universities have agreed to support up-and-coming leaders from the cohort of current mid-level managers with professional management training. It is proposed to deliver this training using blended methods as an SCA. Depending on the cohort profile in terms of current English language capability, complementary English language preparation may be appropriate. The universities have also agreed to release mid-level women for the pilot and inaugural WIL Journey SCA. This first WIL Journey will have no English language prerequisite.

The universities have agreed to cooperate to strengthen the ways that they provide disadvantaged groups, especially ethnic minorities, with access to skills development for academic success and employment outcomes. Initially a short research project will be conducted to clarify what skills are sought and likely to be sought by employers in the region. This work can provide the basis for further ILOs with university teachers on how to support students, especially from ethnic minority groups, to develop skills. The focus here will be on generic skills for academic success and employment outcomes rather than occupation specific skills.

Australia Awards Complementary Assistance in the form of English language training may be provided when needed for participants selected for Australia Awards activities. It is hoped that an AVID with expertise in English language training (ELT) will be placed at Tay Bac University.

DFAT and Aus4Skills teams will use networks with the Embassy and Australian universities to leverage opportunities for more Australian academics to visit Tay Bac and Thai Nguyen universities. These opportunities can be found when Australian academics are coming to Hanoi for other purposes, and Aus4Skills can support their internal travel and accommodation so they can stay a few more days and offer a workshop or seminar of interest at the participating universities. This kind of initiative will help increase the potential for linkages between Australian and Vietnamese academics. Likewise, Aus4Skills will collaborate with the Education Counsellor and Trade Commissioner at the Embassy to ensure these partner universities are well aware of funding opportunities for support of linkages and how to strategically position to win that funding.

The universities themselves will be encouraged to produce and disseminate communications about all these activities and the related achievements so they are widely recognised. Aus4Skills will work with the universities to ensure the communications use branding appropriately and give credit where appropriate to the GoA.

Advancing Women in Leadership

This component addresses the identified problem that **women do not have equal opportunities to be promoted to top leadership positions in business and politics.**

Activities for the FY 2017-2018 will focus on a pilot SCA - Women in Leadership Journey - and Aus4Skills engagement with Vietnam's Centre for Gender and Women's Leadership (GeLead) as a partner for this cross cutting component.

The SCA provides a variety of learning opportunities to encourage mid-level women to understand leadership and take it up. As mentioned above, the first cohort will consist primarily of university women from north western Vietnam, though future cohorts will be from different target groups, and the details of the SCA may be varied depending on the success of and feedback about the pilot.

A memorandum of understanding between Aus4Skills and GeLead/Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics will cover the collaboration principles and broad scope of activities to be undertaken in partnership with GeLead to support the achievement of desired outcomes and outputs of this component. It is intended the cooperation will expand throughout the life of Aus4Skills but initial efforts will be small, built for success and scaling up over time.

Apart from the GeLead contributions to the WIL Journey, Aus4Skills intends to recruit a short-term technical advisor for advancing women in leadership (AWIL STA). This AWIL STA will provide assistance to GeLead to update their curriculum for the Advanced Diploma in Politics at the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics, and pilot inclusive curriculum training in both universities and VET colleges. Continuing the success of the WIL forum in 2016, Aus4Skills proposes to support GeLead to facilitate an alliance building in the FY 2017-2018.

Supporting Australia's Aid Investment Plan

Activities in this component will deliver specific human resource development assistance to the other Australian Aid Programs, where they are unable to make those provisions under their own program. The activities will proceed in accordance with direction from DFAT as the other programs are implemented.

In FY 2017-2018, at the time of writing this plan there are no specific directions. It is anticipated that one generic short course may be offered. Budget provisions will be provided to cover activities that might emerge during the FY 2017-2018.

Supporting Australia's Broader Interests

This component provides for specific human resource development assistance to organisations (and potentially individuals) outside the group of organisations targeted in the other four Aus4Skills components. This form of assistance will stem from broader Australian interests in Vietnam beyond the priorities in the Vietnam AIP and will be determined by the Embassy.

For the FY 2017-2018, activities under this component will include i) a MOFA staff member awarded an Australia-Vietnam International Law Scholarship focussing on Law of the Sea to continue his studies, ii) specialist technical assistance to update the Master of Human Rights curriculum and improve teaching and research on international human rights at Vietnam National University (VNU) Hanoi, iii) provision of training on abattoir management and for abattoir workers processing

Australian live cattle and red meat, iv) skills training for newly elected female Deputies of the National Assembly, and v) English language training for Danang leaders and officials in preparation for APEC.

The Embassy may identify individuals or agencies in whom it wishes to invest in order to strengthen linkages or improve an enabling environment in a specific way that is not already included in other Aus4Skills initiatives. In this scenario, depending on the available budget, the Aus4Skills team can draw on the ILOs in the toolbox to provide smaller, ad hoc, short term assistance. Budget provision is available for this purpose, and it will be drawn upon as needed at the direction of DFAT.

Preparation for short course award delivery

In the last quarter of FY 2016-2017 a Short Course Award Manual for Aus4Skills was developed and approved by DFAT. All Scope of Requirements for SCAs will refer providers to this Manual. It provides the principles expounded and agreed from the Design for non-scholarship HRD components, global Australia Awards policy, and other practical requirements for all contracted short course providers.

Preparation of draft Scope of Requirements for each SCA or group of SCAs will be the responsibility of the MC and presented to DFAT for approval before finalisation and commencing the process of selecting the best available provider.

Selection of participants in SCAs will be conducted transparently in accordance with participant profiles and processes that are agreed with DFAT and other relevant organisations (e.g. as far as possible the likely employers of intended participants). The MC will manage the selection process to ensure its integrity as far as possible within all guidelines for privacy etc.

Selection, placement, mobilisation and support of Australia Awards Scholarship awardees

Applications closed on 31 March 2017 for the Australia Awards Scholarship 2017 selection round/2018 intake. Following the screening and assessment of applications and shortlisting of candidates at the first JSC meeting, candidates were interviewed and recommendations made to JSC 2.

The **selection of conditional awardees from the 2017 round** will take place at the JSC 2 meeting in July 2017. The Aus4Skills team will then proceed with the established efficient and effective procedures for **placement and mobilisation**, with the awardees who meet the academic and English language requirements of their selected course commencing their Australian studies in first semester 2018.

The first groups of awardees who need to improve their English language skills will commence **pre-course ELT at RMIT Vietnam** (sub-contracted by the MC) in August 2017 in Hanoi and HCM City.

Promotion for the Australia Awards Scholarships 2018 selection round, all at Masters level of study, will begin in the last quarter of 2017. The promotion plan for the 2018 round is set out in Annex 3 Promotion and Communication Strategy and Plan and will be adjusted if required to take into any lessons learnt in the 2017 promotion round. According to the SoR there will be 50 scholarships available in 2018. The SoR allows for approximately **30 per cent of Australia Awards Scholarships in the Program to be tied to awardees employed in targeted organisations**, but this figure is subject to review annually by the Program Coordinating Committee. The remaining scholarships are open but they still need to be aligned with AIP priority sectors and geographical locations and Australian broader interests.

The open category is no longer divided into Profiles but applications in this category are grouped according to English language requirements and work background. Eligibility has been expanded to include Vietnamese enterprises at the national level and International NGOs. The list of targeted

organisations and the priority areas of study were revised and agreed with the Embassy for the 2017 round and may be revised again for the 2018 round.

A second target is 20% for disadvantaged awardees (persons with disability and the rural disadvantaged, including ethnic minorities, who meet the definition of the rural disadvantaged). This disadvantaged group does not have to submit an IELTS certificate at application and only needs one year work experience, compared to two years for all other applicants. They also have a lower GPA requirement of 6.0. These disadvantaged groups will be specifically targeted under the 2018 promotion plan.

Annex 7 Australia Awards Implementation provides details about the timing of screening and short-listing applicants, selection processes, provision of ELT in Vietnam, ensuring equity of access, and placement and mobilisation of Australia Awards Scholarship awardees.

Cases of fraudulent applications, in particular applicants who do not disclose they already have a Master degree and apply for a second degree, will be monitored closely and strict controls against fraud maintained.

The Aus4Skills Placement and Mobilisation team will continue to **liaise closely with the Student Contact Officers (SCOs) at each university** to ensure the timely provision of on-award support and appropriate follow-up for special adjustments when needed for persons with disability, unsatisfactory academic progress, and welfare incidents.

On-award Engagement

New activities will be developed for enriching the on-award experience of the scholarship awardees while they are in Australia. On-award enhancement activities form part of the Australia Awards Complementary Assistance offered by Aus4Skills to directly improve the ability of individuals to access, or maximise benefits from, Australia Awards.

Aus4Skills aims to offer scholarship recipients more than an academic qualification, and to ensure that they have opportunities to get to know Australian organisations (beyond the university they attend), engage with Australian people and Australian cultural and organisational practices. This exposure and experience are intended to be positive and significantly contribute to the fostering of linkages between Vietnam and Australia.

An innovative approach has been proposed in designing these on-award activities in the form of a Pilot of Australian Organisation Survey to identify Australian organisations that are willing to provide relevant on-award experiences in Australia to Australia Awards Scholarship awardees, with the potential to generate ongoing professional links between Australia and Vietnam. The details of this new approach can be found in Annex 4: On-Award Engagement Strategy and Plan.

Alumni Engagement

Taking into account developments in the GoA and Embassy policy towards alumni and other contextual and Program changes, the current Alumni Engagement Strategy and Plan (AESP) set out in Annex 5 has been revised and updated from the 2016-2017 Reintegration and Alumni Engagement Strategy and Plan.

In the first instance, Reintegration has been removed from the Strategy title to reflect the closer integration of reintegration activities into Australia Awards alumni support activities and the discontinuation of several specific reintegration activities, such as the series of in-Australia workshops and Reintegration Action Plans following **a review of the reintegration strategy**. The key finding of the review was the difficulty in measuring the impact of the strategy and its activities. However, Aus4Skills

will continue its support for the Australia Awards alumni to reintegrate into Vietnamese workplaces and wider society, especially through Welcome Back reintegration workshops in Vietnam (see below).

The AESP relates to the Australia Awards alumni and its intent is to continue to allow Aus4Skills to identify, implement and expand options for Australia Awards alumni engagement in ways that help achieve the intended Program Outcomes. The AESP does not cover alumni of other Aus4Skills activities, although there could be specific events to which they may be invited because of an event's relevance.

Aus4Skills intends to maintain the wide range of activities to sustain and stimulate the Australia Awards alumni and the wider alumni community's connections with each other and Australia for mutual benefit. These activities are aligned with **the Australia Global Awards Engagement Strategy 2015-2020** and the Embassy's **Australian Alumni in Vietnam Strategy 2016-2021** launched in December 2016 to implement the Global Strategy in Vietnam. The key actions in the AESP are structured to match the Global Strategy model of **Connect, Mobilise and Celebrate**.

Australia Awards alumni can be important resource persons and can be agents of change to support the achievement of Aus4Skills outcomes. Many Australia Awards alumni are leaders or emerging leaders in their field. By **connecting and mobilising the alumni**, the resultant professional and special interest networks can assist alumni find ways to use their skills and knowledge most effectively in their own context. These networks are fostered by the range of professional development and social networking events supported by Aus4Skills in cooperation with the Vietnam Strategy activities.

With the Vietnam Strategy encompassing all alumni graduating from Australian education institutions, Aus4Skills will no longer take the initiative in establishing **special interest, professional groups** of Australia Awards alumni as outlined in the 2016-2017 Strategy and Plan. Instead, Aus4Skills will support the formation and the invigoration of such groups, which are being established under the Vietnam Strategy and are open to all Australian alumni. Aus4Skills support will include suggesting potential leaders or 'champions' of such groups and mobilising where possible Australia Awards alumni to participate in such groups. Ideally, these groups could advocate on relevant GoV policies and be reference groups for Vietnam-Australia bilateral issues and in selected priority areas.

Further support for the professional groups is provided through the **revised Small Grants Fund (SGF)** which provides grants for these groups to develop their own activities, such as events or online social networks. It is hoped that alumni in Vietnam will also be able to take advantage of the networking opportunities promised by the Global Alumni Networking portal which fosters professional links with other international alumni of Australian institutions.

The revised SGF guidelines have expanded applicant eligibility to include alumni of GOV scholarships and post-graduate, self-funded alumni (as well the professional groups above). The first SGF round with its record number (101) of submissions demonstrated both the relevance of the Fund in meeting alumni needs and its suitability as a mechanism for alumni to contribute to the three Aus4Skills Outcomes. It is planned to hold one SGF round in the 2017-2018 AP.

Newly graduating alumni are celebrated by the Australian diplomatic representatives in Vietnam through **Welcome Back events**, such as the Welcome Back reception at the Embassy hosted by the Ambassador or at Welcome Back events combined with **networking workshops** in HCM City, where the Consul General will normally officiate, and in other major cities. The workshops have been revised to strengthen networking and **linkages with Australia** by inviting AusCham representatives, local Australia Awards alumni core groups and locally-based AVIDs to participate. The alumni are introduced to benefits they can enjoy under the Australia Awards alumni support program, the Global Alumni portal and the activities of the Vietnam Strategy.

A key purpose of the Welcome Back networking workshops is to provide a platform for the new alumni to explore how they can apply in Vietnam their skills and knowledge gained in Australia and share experiences on some of the workplace challenges they face and the possible approaches and solutions. These workshops prompt and facilitate **peer to peer support** for the reintegration process and help participants be articulate about the skills they have gained beyond their academic courses.

The workplace environment, to which new alumni return, can range from supportive and welcoming to indifferent and even resentful. Much depends on the organisational work culture and the attitudes of managers and supervisors. The supervisors and organisational unit leadership are key actors in removing constraints from the workplace environment. **Involving managers/supervisors positively in the reintegration processes remains the biggest challenge**, yet meeting this challenge is essential if an enabling environment is to be established for alumni to apply their skills and knowledge. In the first instance, managers/supervisors can be invited to the Welcome Back events where achievements of their staff members are publicly acknowledged and celebrated.

The non-scholarship HRD component will provide further opportunities for engaging with supervisors/managers of targeted organisations. Aus4Skills aims to work with organisations whose supervisors/managers are open to discussing and exploring how enabling environments might be improved so that the organisation can obtain maximum benefit from existing alumni and future alumni beneficiaries of HRD interventions. Initial discussions can occur when assessments of target/partner organisations and planning of HRD interventions are being made. This has already occurred in respect of consultations with the universities involved in the Improving the Quality of North Western Universities component.

Lessons learnt in this approach could lead to more structured engagement with supervisors. For example, fora may be organised for supervisor/managers from target/partner agencies to discuss such topics as workplace best practices or innovations in the workplace. This will be further explored when Aus4Skills is asked to respond to requests for assistance to target agencies in the other AIP programs during the FY.

Aus4Skills will continue to give **priority to GoV scholarship recipients** in its alumni supported activities, as many GoV alumni share common study and employment experiences in academia and government with Australia Awards alumni. This has been demonstrated by the interest shown by GoV alumni in accepting Aus4Skills invitation to register for **academic databases** to which the Program has subscribed. The large number of alumni subscribers (over 1,300), surveys and informal feedback indicate access to the two academic databases is highly regarded by alumni as a means to further professional development. The subscription to the databases will continue in the 2017-2018 Annual Plan.

Self-funded and other scholarship alumni who are VGAC members or graduates of RMIT Vietnam will also be engaged in Australia Awards alumni support activities, where this is feasible and the budget allows (e.g. however, no access to the academic databases).

As mentioned in Section 4 above, it is proposed to undertake a **pilot Australian organisation survey** with the purpose of exploring opportunities for professional links between Australian organisations and awardees. It is expected that this could additionally lead to establishing new links between alumni and Australian professional organisations, civil society and enterprises (see Annex 4 On-award Engagement Strategy and Plan for further details).

In the coming year, the Alumni team will **explore options for expanding cost sharing**, taking into account previous cost sharing practice. Cost sharing is a means to contribute to greater alumni financial autonomy and responsibility and to strengthen alumni commitment to attend events. Cost sharing has proven to be a means for sharply reducing no-show rates once alumni have registered for an event thus enabling more accurate budget forecasting and logistic arrangements.

Cost-sharing is particularly relevant to local activities organised by the regional Australia Awards alumni core groups. These local activities should aim to be self-financing as much as possible to encourage local ownership. The Australia Awards alumni support can assist by contracting and paying for venues where necessary, especially for local professional development activities.

As the option of the Australia Awards alumni joining VGAC as a chapter is no longer viable, the Alumni team will **increase its nurturing support and advice to the core groups**. Aus4Skills has sought to invigorate the core groups by facilitating new elections for three of the four core groups and will explore whether core groups can be established in Can Tho and Thai Nguyen. The regional core groups provide broader opportunities for local alumni initiatives and involvement in activities beyond the alumni Professional Groups being established under the Vietnam Strategy and provide local logistic support for activities funded under the Australia Awards alumni support program

The Alumni team is aware that continuing and consistent efforts need to be made to keep the **database of alumni details accurate and current**. The database can provide information about where there are clusters of alumni and whether the alumni are holding influential leadership and management positions and are potential 'champions' for professional groups, and thus have demonstrated capacity for impact using their skills and knowledge gained in Australia.

Analysis of where alumni work can also provide information of where linkages with Australia are likely to exist or where there is potential for such linkages. Effective mapping of alumni is essential in providing specific alumni data for the Embassy's greatly expanded engagement with Australia Awards and other alumni. For the alumni database to serve effectively the Program's activities it requires constant updating and adequate staffing resources. This is further complicated by the need to duplicate updating of the Global Awards database. The Program budget thus provides for a part-time person for inputting/updating contact details for both databases.

Strategic Communication of Aus4Skills activities and outcomes

The Aus4Skills Promotions and Communications Strategy and Plan (PCSP) in Annex 3 has three main areas of focus in supporting the AIP's objectives and Aus4Skills Program Outcomes.

1. Outreach⁶: To engage with Aus4Skills key stakeholders (current and potential alumni, Government of Vietnam, implementing partners and others) to attract, inform or change perceptions of the usefulness of HRD initiatives in assisting Vietnam to meet its current and future development needs. Outreach communications will include promoting and attracting high-quality applicants to Australia Awards opportunities, engaging with implementing partners and influencers to support the messaging of Aus4Skills and using communications activities as a tool for change.
2. Knowledge management: Communications have an important role to play in synthesising data, content and supporting evidence of what is working and what is not. Developed content that can take the forms of videos, infographics, case studies or other products can be used by Australian or Vietnamese Governments to influence policy, or by other Australian aid investments as part of Aus4Vietnam to improve their program outcomes.
3. Public diplomacy: As the Program's activities develop and grow, its audience and influence will also increase. People-to-people links, the ongoing partnership between the two Governments and the impacts that Aus4Skills is having in sharing skills and knowledge between Australia and Vietnam are relevant and can be evidenced through communications activities. This will assist in

⁶ focuses on engaging target audiences rather than providing one-way communication. It is designed to influence opinions and start conversations. As an evaluation of previous year's promotion activities show, word-of-mouth is a significant opportunity for Aus4Skills, not just in scholarship attraction but in the HRD components of the program too. Social media, influencer strategies and panel events are all tactics of an outreach campaign.

raising Australia's profile as an active partner for Vietnam across political, security, economic and people-to-people links.

Aus4Skills is operating in the context of a range of HRD components involving new and innovative activities. The strategic communications need to be creative and flexible in responding to the opportunities presented by these activities to maximise impact in the three focus areas: outreach, knowledge management, and public diplomacy. To that end – the question must be asked – what do we want to achieve with this communication activity and is this the most efficient and engaging way of making it happen? Communication activities will continue to be reviewed for their effectiveness and value for money.

Digital communications – one of the benefits of digital communications is that it is easy to measure. Increasingly it is becoming a preferred method of engagement for Aus4Skills target audiences. It will be continued to be used as a platform for Aus4Skills, and new digital initiatives will be introduced.

Collateral – Despite printed materials becoming less used as an information tool Aus4Skills will continue to produce products that can be provided at meetings, in mail-outs and distributed on behalf of Aus4Skills by other organisations or institutions. These printed products do still serve as a valuable tool to ensure that Program components and activities are easily understood and are kept top of mind.

A comprehensive message bank will be developed that will assist the Program, DFAT and other stakeholders to provide consistent and coherent visual and written messages about the impact of the Program in relation to components, activities, scholarships, fellowships, alumni and cross-cutting issues such as GEDSI.

A range of communications tools will be developed which will assist in the delivery of the communications strategy. These tools will include: a database of influential persons, database of post-activities feedback, media plans, message bank, writing and editing style sheet, online communications activities, opinion pieces and panel conversations, and visual and written products.

The resourcing for this comprehensive strategic communications plan will consist of: the newly appointed Communications Manager, inputs from a short-term Communications Adviser, outsourcing to communications agencies and suppliers, support from the Coffey communications team and guidance from the HRD Senior Program Manager (Communications).

Professional Reorganisation and Development of Aus4Skills Staff

Coffey is committed to transfer the staffing structure and resources of Aus4Skills to deliver both scholarships and non-scholarship activities. This restructuring was completed by the end of the FY 2016-2017.

The Head Contract has been amended allowing the establishment of three new positions: Contracts and Services Director (an ARF position), a Manager for the Improving Quality in North Western Universities component, and a second HRD Officer position. Positions descriptions have been revised for those staff whose duties have changed and have taken up new and amended duties. The work space and seating in office have been rearranged reflecting practical program operating needs. The Contractor Representative will lead the EMT and managers to conduct four monthly reviews to confirm and adjust position descriptions, as required

Staff Personal Performance Review and Personal Development Plans will be undertaken with their line managers once staff have settled in their new positions. Through the confirmation of the Annual Plan the MC and DFAT will review team resourcing for 2017-2018.

In regard to the on-going professional development of the Aus4Skills team, all training, mentoring and support needs will be identified through Personal Development Plans and four monthly reviews.

One comprehensive training and reinforcement activity that will occur for all the team is in the application of the Coffey Procurement Framework. This Framework ensures full compliance with commonwealth procurement rules when establishing and managing all contracting and procurement. This training will be led by Coffey's Contracts and Procurement Specialist and will involve DFAT staff and take place in July.

Training of both Aus4Skills and DFAT staff in the use of SmartyGrants will be undertaken in July by a DFAT officer with financial support from the Program.

5. Monitoring and Evaluation

A Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (MEF) was developed as part of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Strategy and Plan in the FY 2016-2017. The collection of related M&E activities is integrated throughout all Aus4Skills activities and scaffolds all Program activities and outcomes.

The following is an overview of the M&E activities that are planned for the FY 2017-2018 and are detailed in Annex 6 M&E Strategy and Plan (MESP).

Key activities

Review MESP (MEF) in Line with Progress on HRD Strategy and the Revised Performance Assessment Framework (PAF) Requirements

Now that more detail is available about what specific forms HRD activities will take, it is possible to simplify/clarify language within the MESP (including indicators in the MEF) through introduction of a standard program definition for 'activity', based on the Program Implementation Toolbox. In addition, the language of the revised PAF needs to be reflected and further defined, as needed, so that Program indicators feed directly into PAF indicators. These amendments have been made in the revised version of the MESP attached as Annex 6.

Administer two Alumni Development Impact Survey (ADIS) rounds

The ADIS aims to collect information on the contributions of Australia Awards alumni in Vietnam. The survey involves conducting interviews, transcript and analyse data for the purpose of reporting outcomes of the Australia Awards program. Aus4Skills will hire a sub-contractor to provide interviewers for the two rounds to be conducted.

Conduct Three Case Studies

The ADIS Case Study Methodology is essentially a Micro-Evaluation format. Case Studies focus on a particular development contribution or type of development contribution (including linkage establishment), not the 'story' of the individual alumnus or alumni involved. The case studies will be based on topics identified and agreed between Aus4Skills and the Embassy. The administration and reporting of ADIS will be developed based on a small number of key research questions (5 or less).

Administer Two Perception Surveys

The Perception Survey is conducted to obtain information on the opinions of new returnee alumni about their positive and negative experiences in Australia. There will be two Perception Surveys: one for December 2016 returnees and the other for June 2017 returnees.

Develop and pilot additional measures in relation to new HRD Activities and Tools

The M&E Team will provide technical support to the HRD team to develop and pilot additional measures for new HRD activities and HRD tools, especially in relation to monitoring progresses/achievements against Program Outcome 2. It is recommended that the standard tools be utilised wherever applicable. Where the standard tools cannot be fitted to measure the outcomes/outputs, the M&E team will provide technical support to design appropriate activity-specific M&E, but it will be the responsibility of the respective HRD manager to implement the M&E for the activity.

Ongoing activities

In addition to these above-mentioned core M&E activities in FY 2017-2018, other M&E activities will also be implemented to ensure a stronger M&E system and evidence-based programming practices. They include:

- Review M&E Framework annually
- Assist other activity managers to implement activity-specific M&E requirements
- Assist with the conduct of Global Tracer Facility ‘tracer Studies’ (scheduled for 2017-2018)
- Train activity managers in relevant data gathering and analysis techniques
- Assist in required program reporting
- Investigate improved data management and tracking options
- Investigate the development of a new ADIS database

Gender-sensitive M&E will be embedded in all M&E activities in the Aus4Skills program, including pre-departure activities, on-award activities, alumni support activities, HRD support and sub-program activities.

6. Operational Planning

Program Management and Coordination

Coffey, as MC, provides strategic, management, technical and implementation support to Aus4Skills. Since Aus4Skills inception Coffey has established four management structures for the Program: the Executive Management Team (EMT); the Financial Management Team (FMT); the Thematic Working Groups (TWG); and the One-Team structure (with the Embassy).

These four management structures are a new and innovative way to operate an Australia Awards and HRD program. They have evolved from the lessons learnt on similar programs. Experience to date indicates that the structures are working well to provide the strategic engagement, thinking and decision-making necessary. The One-Team structure, which has been refined to include six-monthly Health Checks, has contributed to the establishment of an effective partnership between the Embassy and the MC, enabling regular consultations on key operational and strategic issues.

The TWGs allow Aus4Skills line managers to lead and coordinate discussions among relevant Aus4Skills staff, short-term advisers and Embassy officers, when appropriate, on the respective theme areas. This structure was particularly useful in developing the Design of the Non-scholarship HRD Components, allowing continuing dialogue with the Embassy throughout the Design’s detailed formulation. These management structures will continue to be operational in the 2017-2018 Annual Plan.

The EMT is responsible for all deliverables. Review and reporting is a critical function of the EMT and allows the monitoring of any expected, or unexpected, variance from plan, and to adjust and coordinate implementation accordingly, in full consultation with the Embassy team. Of specific note, the EMT (with Coffey) is focused on the professional development of all Aus4Skills managers to improve their budget planning and forecasting management capability.

Working through the One-Team structure it is important that a sensible approach to variance analysis and any necessary operational and budget adjustments are discussed and agreed. This is the only way Aus4Skills can manage delivery within budget limitations and between summary budget lines. This is particularly important as additional, unforeseen tasking, is requested by the Embassy.

Risk Management

During Aus4Skills implementation, managing risk is a fundamental process for good governance; it is a process through which management identifies future difficulties in order to adopt relevant treatments and mitigate risks. Coffey manages risk for Aus4Skills through a Risk Register management process.

The Aus4Skills Risk Register is a living project management and team reference document. Successful risk management depends upon a program culture that is risk conscious and a program environment that applies the principles of good governance. Successful risk management leads to good practice that defaults the Aus4Skills team to appropriate risk treatments at all times.

Each Strategy and Plan in this document has an updated section on Risk Management. The program-wide Risk Management Plan and Risk Register was updated following the One-Team meeting in early April and further revised in June to meet DFAT’s required quarterly reviews. It is attached as Annex 8.

Progress Reporting

Compliant with the Contract the following will be delivered through the 2017-2018 Annual Plan:

Ref	Report Type	Due Date
1	Quarterly Financial Reports and Monthly Financial Updates	Quarterly & monthly for April, May, June
2	Annual Selection Report	30 September 2017
3	2nd Annual Report	31 December 2017
4	Australia Awards ELT reports	Quarterly
5	Exception Reports	Within three days
6	Annual Academic Output Report	Due with Annual Report

Ref	Report Type	Due Date
8	Joint Selection Committee (JSC) Reports	One week prior to JSC meetings
9	Risk Management Plan (Updated Risk Register)	With Annual Plan
10	Annual Plan 2018/19 including updates of: HRD Strategy and Plan Gender Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion Strategy and Plan Promotions and Communications Strategy and Plan Alumni Engagement Strategy and Plan On-Award Engagement Strategy and Plan Monitoring & Evaluation Strategy and Plan	31 March 2018
11	Finance and Operational Manual (Updated)	With Annual Plan