

The Professional Standards Councils
Scheme Application Redesign Project Reference Group

Terms of Reference

Introduction and background

The Professional Standards Authority (PSA) delivers statutory requirements for the Professional Standards Councils in the approval and supervision of professional standards schemes under Professional Standards Legislation. The Authority is redesigning the application process for Occupational Associations applying to join the Professional Standards Scheme.

We are doing this because the current way of applying is over nine years old. Laws and regulations have changed during that time, and regulatory practice has moved on. We now want to make consumer protection and public interest a bigger part of the process. We also want to establish a more engaged relationship with associations from the start, facilitating strong ongoing regulatory relationships and encouraging a focus on improving standards and risk management through participation in the scheme.

The new application process, guidance, templates and evidence requirements will ensure we meet these objectives. The redesign is taking a human-centred approach that will ensure the process focusses on the human/user perspective in all stages. Meaningful and structured engagement with our stakeholders is therefore a key element in the process.

The Reference Group

The Reference Group is an important component of our stakeholder engagement. It is an overarching body responsible for reviewing and providing opinion and advice in relation to proposals and other related work in the design of the new application process. Membership includes associations who are members of the scheme, regulatory experts, other organisations with comparable regulatory functions and Authority staff.

Roles and responsibilities

The role of the Reference Group is to:

1. Attend meetings and contribute their experience and expertise to the redesign.
2. Provide strategic advice on how to most effectively design and implement the new application process
3. Act as a 'sounding board' to the Councils and project team to discuss and advance the more complex elements of the project, that are relevant to their area(s) of expertise or experience.
4. Provide input to develop documents and resources that are of high quality, 'fit for purpose' and useful to relevant stakeholders.

Key tasks

The members of the Reference Group will:

1. Review and comment on papers circulated by the project team
2. Provide comment in relation to the design approach and methodology
3. Provide comment in relation to roles and responsibilities for various design and implementation activities
4. Provide advice regarding sector expectations and related risks and opportunities that may inform the development and delivery of the plan
5. Provide comment on drafts of key documents and resources.

Term

The Reference Group shall operate for the duration of the project.

Meetings

It is expected that the Reference Group shall meet on four (4) occasions for the duration of the project, coinciding with major milestones in the program.

Venue

The location and time of the meetings will be determined by the Reference Group.

Confidentiality

If any aspects of discussions and documents tabled at meetings are to be treated as confidential, this will be highlighted by the Project Team.

Quorum

The Reference Group shall operate, when required, according to a consensus model.

Agenda

The Project Manager is responsible for preparation and circulation of meeting agendas and attachments. The agenda and attachments will be distributed at least five (5) working days prior to the next scheduled meeting.

Meeting Minutes

Minutes of meetings will be recorded and prepared and circulated by the Project Manager. The minutes will be circulated to all Members as a draft seeking comment / amendments within five (5) business days following the meeting. Requested amendments will be incorporated into the final Minutes for circulation. Minutes will be accepted at the beginning of the subsequent meeting.

Reporting to Councils

Recommendations of the Reference Group that are considered to have significant bearing on the project will be reported to Councils by the Chair as part of reporting linked to project milestones. Resolutions of Councils will be reported back to the Reference Group by the Chair.

Delegation

Members have been selected on the basis of their individual experience, expertise and influence within the sector and as representatives of their organisation and/or association. For this reason, membership on the reference group or attendance at particular meetings should not be delegated.

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