



Contents

- [New Web Manager](#)
- [Learning Communities Catalyst](#)
- [You can too](#)
- [Training Packages](#)
- [Equity in Higher Education](#)
- [Adult Learners' Week](#)
- [ANTA appointments](#)
- [New training Minister for Queensland](#)
- [Insurance advice for RTOs](#)
- [Reframing the Future](#)
- [NCVER publications](#)

New Web Manager

This month's Current is being brought to you thanks to the technical skills of our new web manager, Steve Christie. Steve has been appointed to the position vacated by Jacqui Levan who, after her sterling efforts on the Learning Communities Catalyst (LCC) website, decided to take up a full-time job at the Australian Institute of Criminology. Steve has a wealth of experience both in web design and photography.

Learning Communities Catalyst [\[www.lcc.edu.au\]](http://www.lcc.edu.au)

For those of you in Adelaide, you'll get a chance to meet Steve when he and Mary come to conduct the first Learning Communities Catalyst - Participatory Workshops. The details for these are:

- Wednesday 10 March Venue TAFE SA 120 Currie Street, Adelaide Room E408 Time 12.00pm (a light

lunch will be served) Workshop commences 12.30pm; and

- Thursday 11 March Venue TAFE SA 120 Currie Street, Adelaide Room E408

Time 9.00am (followed by a light lunch at 12.00pm)

Duration approximately three hours.

Together with staff from the EdNA VET project, the workshops will demonstrate the features of the Learning Communities Catalyst and show how this website can support your learning community. You will have the opportunity to:

- Learn what the concept of a "learning community" means;
- Discover where learning communities are in Australia and the stories behind them;
- Explore a repository of research papers, policy documents, links and other materials;
- Use resources and practical tools designed to assist both developing and established learning communities;
- Interact and share your community's experiences with others; and
- Create an online presence for your community.

We have developed a Learning Circle resource kit to support a free flowing discussion on learning communities. For more information contact Mary Hannan 02 6274 9508.

You can too

Adult Learning Australia members are asked to send one clear message to the Department of Education,



Science and Training (DEST) during the consultations on *You can too*. That is: to promote a learning culture, we need a national policy on adult learning with the backing of a secretariat to encourage joined-up approaches and with funds attached to market learning, introduce incentives and support learning communities. In short: a national policy.

Thank you to NSW members who devoted a morning last week to discussing the questions raised in the DEST paper. Some of the key points to emerge were:

- Let's keep the submission crisp and focussed on the high-level issue of fostering a learning culture.
- The national policy on adult learning should facilitate cross-sectoral approaches to learning (ie should be broader than ACE) and have an emphasis on inclusive policies which provide incentives for disengaged learners. The policy must be national in order to rise above constraints caused by jurisdictional and institutional difference.
- Our submission must sell ALA's strengths--in promoting learning -- ALW and Learn @ Work Day -- and in doing research. It should include some stories of successes and constraints but not by just profiling individual learners and thus creating a gulf between the anecdote and policy.
- We must ensure the workplace agenda is covered.
- Now is the time to give Cinderella her glass shoe, although this does not have to cost vast sums of money. Better coordination and collaborative rather than competitive funding models will bring gains to adult learning. At the same time, facilitation of learning will cost money, as will marketing learning and meeting demand.

To find out when and where the public consultations are being held visit:

www.dest.gov.au/ucan2/consultations.htm

Also visit the members' section of our website at www.ala.asn.au to see the paper we have prepared to assist members wanting to contribute to the consultations. Please note this is not our submission. The deadline for written submissions has been extended until late April. If you are planning to lodge a separate submission, please let us know so that we can synchronise our approaches and make the biggest impact possible. If you have points you wish included in the ALA submission, send them to me at: f.beddie@ala.asn.au

Training Packages

Did you see our submission to ANTA's high level review of training packages? It can be found under listed Submissions on the ALA website homepage at www.ala.asn.au.

Equity in Higher Education

A new report, *Analysis of Equity Groups in Higher Education 1991-2002*, conducted by the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE) at the University of Melbourne, reviews the equity groups used for the Australian Government's Higher Education Equity Program (HEEP). The report found that the most significant equity gaps continue to be in access and participation, particularly for students from low socio-economic status and rural and isolated backgrounds and students with disabilities.

DEST has produced a discussion paper, informed by the CSHE research, to stimulate discussion about the



future directions of HEEP.

The deadline for submissions in response to the discussion paper is 29 March 2004.

Analysis of Equity Groups in Higher Education 1991-2002, is available at:

www.dest.gov.au/highered/programmes/heap.htm.

The HEEP Review Discussion Paper, is available at:

www.dest.gov.au/highered/programmes/heap.htm.

The Minister's press release is available at:

www.dest.gov.au/Ministers/Media/Nelson/2004/03/n636020304.asp.

Adult Learners' Week

The theme for ALW 2004 is 'sharing between the generations'. See the forthcoming edition of *Quest* for an article on this theme. This year we are hoping to get stories placed in a variety of magazines, including the Australian Women's Weekly and Take 5 magazine. To do so we'll have to act quickly! So if you know of an inspirational story about learning contact Jane Speechley by email now at:

j.speechley@ala.asn.au.

The website of the month has been chosen to fit into this theme. It is the National Center for Family Literacy based in the USA. at: www.familit.org/

ANTA appointments

Mr David Hind has been appointed as Chair of the Board of the Australian National Training Authority

(ANTA) and Mr John Smyth has been appointed as a Board member. Mr Hind is the managing Director of Process Gas Solutions, South Pacific for The BOC Group – a global company with a long and successful track record in supporting Australian industry. Mr Smyth is Chief Executive Officer of TAFE Tasmania.

New training Minister for Queensland

Tom Barton is the new Queensland Minister for Employment, Training and Industrial Relations. He replaces Matt Foley. Scott Flavell was recently appointed the Director-General of the Department of Employment and Training. More details at:

www.det.qld.gov.au

Insurance advice for RTOs

ANTA has released a practical new guide to provide registered training organisations (RTOs) with advice on insurance. The guide will help RTOs understand their insurance obligations, including public liability and professional indemnity insurance. It provides advice from insurance professionals on buying insurance and contains an RTO insurance checklist. To download a copy of the guide, go to: www.anta.gov.au.

Reframing the Future

Funding applications for the Applying Information and Research grants close on 19 March. The guidelines and application form can be downloaded at:

www.reframingthefuture.net.



For further information contact Wendy Perry from the Reframing the Future national project team on 08 8207 9747 or email:

wendy.perry@regency.tafe.sa.edu.au

NCVER publications

The funding of vocational education and training for students with disabilities: Volumes 1 and 2 by Chris Selby Smith and Fran Ferrier. This report looks at how the vocational education and training system currently allocates funds to support students with a disability, and suggests other funding models to promote their participation. The report is published in two volumes. Volume 1 is the main report and volume 2 contains the appendices and is available in PDF format only. They are available at:

www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1382.html (Volume 1)

www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1407.html (Volume 2)

Stepping stones: TAFE and ACE program development for early school leavers by Johanna Wyn, Helen Stokes, Debra Tyler. ACE providers and TAFE institutes provide programs for young people which re-connect them to education. The researchers found students (e.g. early school leavers) are attracted to these programs by the nature of relationships between students and staff, flexible modes of delivery, choice of study areas and opportunities for personal autonomy. It is available at:

www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1384.html

Francesca Beddie
Executive Director
Adult Learning Australia