Adult Learning Australia

Implementing the 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE

A scan of research

Kaye Bowman
ALA visiting research fellow

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For more information

Adult Learning Australia Inc.
GPO Box 826 CIT Southside Campus
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Phone: 02 6215 9500
Email: info@ala.asn.au
Website: www.ala.asn.au

Preface

Adult Learning Australia (ALA) Incorporated has commissioned this environmental scan of research as a resource for use by Adult Community Education (ACE) providers when planning actions to implement the 2008 Ministerial Declaration ACE which calls on providers to build their vocational capability.

The scan brings together recent flagship research on relevant topics including:

- Roles of non-accredited and accredited education and training in providing pathways to work
- Successful learner engagement strategies
- Bridge building activities to vocational learning
- Vocational learning to work pathways strategies

The scan has also found several useful frameworks. These are included in a section entitled:

- Frameworks for ensuring quality and sustainability

The 2008 Ministerial Declaration ACE envisages greater collaboration across state jurisdictions as a means of building ACE provider vocational capability. ACE providers operate within State bound systems which affects their focus and has led to a diversity of practice that can usefully be shared across the nation.

In addition to the preparation and dissemination of this resource through the support of DEEWR ALW 2009 funds ALA will encourage state jurisdiction collaborative workshops in the second half of 2009.

Because this scan brings together some of the best research perspectives in the country as they relate to Adult Community Education, ALA believes it provides a strong foundation for further discussion within the sector about its current and future capabilities.

ALA is committed to having the work done in ACE fully recognised. This goes beyond the roles identified in the 2008 Ministerial Declaration ACE and hence the last section of this report is entitled:

- **The full value of ACE.**

Acknowledgements

I am most grateful to Adult Learning Australia for providing me with the opportunity to undertake this scan of research on topics relevant to the implementation of the 2008 Ministerial Declaration ACE; and especially to the acting Executive Director of ALA, Ron Anderson, for the support he has given this project.

There is a vast amount of research that could have been included. I apologise to every one whose research has not been mentioned. It was not an easy task to decide what to include. I have focused on research reports that provide practical information and references to further detailed research. I have not included any specific examples of ACE providers undertaking specific initiatives. I leave these to unfold at provider level during planning discussions on implementing the 2008 Ministerial Declaration ACE for which I hope this research scan proves a useful resource.

Kaye Bowman

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National ACE policy and its implementation

This chapter outlines the goals of the 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE and the starting point capabilities of ACE providers to implement the goals and related strategies.

Key points

- ACE providers are being called on to build their vocational capability.
- ACE providers fall into three broad groups regarding their current vocational capability.
- ACE providers have distinctive qualities to be maintained whilst positioning themselves vocationally.

Desired outcome

Scene setting on national ACE policy and its implementation

The 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE[1]

The 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE[2] focuses on optimising the national capacity of ACE providers to deliver vocationally focused programs which lead to further training and/or workforce participation with a particular focus on engaging the disadvantaged and disengaged from learning in such programs and economic life.

Context

In an economy where technologies and skill needs are constantly changing, Australians must have access to learning opportunities throughout their lives. This is reinforced by concerns about the ageing of the workforce. With declining labour force growth, it is important that everyone has a chance to contribute fully to the economy and to their communities. It is particularly important that those with lower levels of educational attainment have this opportunity:

- There is entrenched disadvantage in Australia that education can help overcome[3]
- 4 million adults who have low, less than year 12 or equivalent, qualifications and skills, and many of these people are not participating in learning.

Over the 12 months to July 2007, one in five adults (21%) had not undertaken any form of intentional learning (ABS).[4]

- 48.7 per cent of working age Australian adults have literacy and numeracy levels too low to cope with the everyday demands of life and work in today's complex and technologically advanced society. This survey also confirmed that people with low levels of literacy and numeracy are less likely to participate in job-related education and training.[5]
- Adults who are disadvantaged and disengaged from learning are more vulnerable to unemployment for a protracted time. The current recession is causing unemployment and the longer term outlook is that more and more of the available jobs will require post school qualifications at Certificate III level or higher.[6]

1 I acknowledge John McIntyre for his co-authorship of a background report and proposal that forms the basis of this introduction: *Social inclusion and workforce participation: how adult and community education can contribute; Program proposal for ALA* (Unpublished).

2 MCEETYA, 2008, *Ministerial Declaration on Adult and Community Education* Ministerial Council on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs, Canberra.

3 Vinson T, 2007, *Dropping off the edge: the distribution of disadvantage in Australia*, Jesuit Social Services/Catholic Social Services Australia.

4 ABS, 2007, *Adult Learning in Australia*, Cat 4229.0, Canberra.

5 ABS, 2007, *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey: Summary Results Australia 2006*, Cat 4228.0.

6 CEET, 2006, *The Future Labour Market and Qualifications in Australia*, Melbourne.

Positioning ACE

The ACE sector has a proven track record in reaching disengaged adults and building their learning confidence, skills, qualifications and employment outcomes.

The ACE sector now has a significant involvement in recognised vocational education and training.

The ACE sector is well placed to play a greater role at the interface between the two national agendas of Human Capital Reform and Social Inclusion but there is further capacity building to be done if ACE is to realise its full potential in regard to both national agendas.[7]

The 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE recognises ACE providers collective ability as:

Platform builders—re-engaging adults with learning

Bridge builders—providing basic education and support services as pathways into formal tertiary education and paid work

Work-skills developers—offering accredited vocational training in their own right

Community networks facilitators—forming partnerships to increase relevant local education, training and employment opportunities.

The 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE states unequivocally that ACE can contribute to the national productivity agenda for skills and workforce development and identifies the sector as a 'key player' in the government's social inclusion agenda.

> 'ACE offers highly supportive pathways into learning, further education and training, and work and, as a result, is well-placed to engage those with low levels of educational attainment. Participation in non-accredited education and training for example, can serve to build the self-esteem, motivation and confidence many struggling to engage require to move into further education and training or employment. The non-threatening adult environment also makes ACE an attractive option to those marginalised from the more formal education system, and provides opportunities for the development of the foundation skills that are critical for effective educational, labour market, and social participation. This capacity of ACE to support the re-engagement of Australians from disadvantaged backgrounds in learning and work is the key to its crucial role in supporting the Australian Government's Social Inclusion agenda.' (Declaration, p3)

Four goals and associated strategies chart the new directions for ACE organisations within the 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE. Table 1 opposite summarises. These desired outcomes and strategies have informed the scope of this environmental scan, as has the desire to find fresh new innovative approaches, which includes a focus on small businesses as many of them are not engaged with formal vocational training.

Table 1 Ministerial Declaration on ACE goals and strategies

Goal	Key strategies (summarised)
Strategically position ACE Work together to strategically position ACE to deliver vocationally focused courses by optimising the contribution of community education and training providers towards increasing vocational education and training and employment outcomes	Ensure policy regulatory and funding frameworks recognise and enable the vocational contribution of ACE providers Promote the pathways and bridging role of ACE through partnership and auspicing arrangements
Optimise capacity Optimise the capacity of community education and training providers to deliver vocationally focused courses, leading to increased workforce participation and building personal, social and economic capital	Promote best practice among ACE providers, share resources maximising vocational intent and examine flexible learning options such as e-learning
Extend participation Extend the participation of individuals in vocationally focused courses in ACE, which will enable individuals to participate in the labour market and lead active and productive lives	Increase participation in ACE by socially excluded groups Leverage existing research effort to further explore key issues/barriers to participation and issues arising from service delivery Strengthen the delivery of services within ACE—career development and employment, recognition of prior learning, and skills assessment
Demonstrate quality Demonstrate the quality of ACE in developing vocational skills and human and social capital	Develop a framework to establish a stronger evidence base for the contribution of the ACE sector to the national VET effort

Source: MCEETYA, 2008 *Ministerial Declaration on Adult and Community Education* Ministerial Council on Education, Employment and Youth Affairs. Canberra

7 Bowman K, 2006, *The value of ACE providers* Adult Learning Australia, Canberra.

ACE provider capabilities to implement the 2008 Ministerial Declaration

Australian ACE providers are a diverse group and operate within state bound systems that affect their focus. A conceptual framework of ACE providers for the purposes of vocational education and training and employment development has been developed by Bardon. The Bardon National ACE Capability Framework[8] divides ACE providers into three groups:

Group 1 *Community learning providers* are generally small-scale organisations and offer informal learning opportunities.

Group 2 *Community participation providers* usually are a bit larger than group 1 and offer some non-formal learning opportunities (structured but not accredited learning) particularly in adult literacy and numeracy and mixed field employment skills programs as well as informal learning opportunities.

Group 3 *Community VET providers* offer formal vocational education and training leading to recognised qualifications as well as non-accredited learning programs.

Best estimates developed in 2006 are that there were over 1200 ACE providers nationally of which 770 were Group 3 providers[9]. There is no national data base of ACE providers. The key characteristics of each of the three ACE provider groups, or tiers as they are referred to by Bardon, are summarised in Table 2.

Table 2 ACE Capability Framework (for human capital development purposes)

Provider type	Group 1 Community learning	Group 2 Community participation	Group 3 Community VET
Learning offered	Non accredited learning	Some accredited but mainly non-accredited	Accredited VET leading to qualifications and offerings of group 1 and 2 and have characteristics of both groups
Outcomes focus	Personal and community development purposes	Bridging employability skills programs or single accredited VET subject	
Learner market focus	Market to the whole community	Target groups of learners	Target (small) business links as well as groups of learners
Relationships focus	Collaborate in order to optimise learning opportunities for disengaged learners	Collaborate to optimise learning opportunities but also compete for funds to provide literacy programs, or employability or prevocational courses	Active in contestable VET markets

The use of the term 'tiers', and the way Bardon depicts them as running from low (1) to high tier (3) suggests that an ACE provider needs to move up the capability tiers and to tier 3 to implement the 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE.

This certainly is one option and states and territories are being asked to allow mobility of providers between tiers if this is the provider's wish. (Goal 2 Strategy 2.1: Review jurisdiction policy and regulatory and funding frameworks to ensure that they are consistent with and assist the implementation of the 2008 ACE Ministerial Declaration).

However, mobility between tiers is only one way to achieve the 'organic growth of ACE provider capabilities' towards implementing the 2008 ACE Declaration. Networking is another approach whereby an ACE provider continues to be a Group 1 or 2 provider and brokers recognised vocational education and training through partnerships formation with accredited VET providers (see section on *Pathways development models to VET).*

Staying true to type

ACE providers have distinctive qualities that form them into a fourth sector of education, the maintenance of which requires consideration as ACE position themselves vocationally. Characteristics that epitomise the essence of ACE have been well documented.

ACE providers exist to meet the learning priorities of members of their community and to:

- be accessible to everyone in the community—culturally, geographically, financially
- be responsive to local needs and start where their learners and communities are at
- be wholly learner centered in style (see Table 3 below)
- provide learning in ways that engage people in the process
- provide positive experiences in themselves, and in a manner that may lead to other forms of learning, employment and stronger communities
- be flexible, innovative, and adaptable
- always consider proposals from the viewpoint of the benefits to their community.

The distinctive learner centered style of ACE providers has been captured in research by Sanguinetti et al (2004)[10]. A list of over 20 pedagogical approaches was distilled to yield four broad pedagogical dimensions. These dimensions were:

- the teacher (the personal, social, and attitudinal values and characteristics)
- the teaching (i.e. the practices, approaches, methods, strategies and purposes)
- the plACE (the geographical, social and institutional contexts of ACE)
- the curriculum (including content, purposes and approaches to assessment).

These four elements have been developed into a framework of ACE pedagogy as set out in Table 3 below. This framework offers a wholly learner-centred pedagogy that recognises there is no 'traditional student' but only a spectrum of learners with needs and preferences to be taken into account in learner-responsive pedagogical design that Fernbach,[11] 2007 argues the framework is the key to ACE as an adaptive and flexible learning system.

8 Bardon B, 2006, *Community Education and National Reform*, Discussion Paper for the Department of Education, Science and Training, November 2006.

9 Choy S, Haukka S, Keyes L, 2006, *ACE's role in developing Australia's human capital: a meta-analysis*, Adult Learning Australia, Canberra.

10 Sanguinetti J, Waterhouse, P, Maunders D, 2004, *The ACE Experience: Pedagogies for life and employability*, Final Report, Adult, Community and Further Education Board, Melbourne, Victoria.

11 Fernbach, 2007, *How the National Reform Agenda is changing adult pedagogy and practice in Engagement and Participation in a Learner Centred System*, Four papers Adult Learning Australia, Canberra.

Table 3 A framework for ACE pedagogy

Principles of ACE pedagogy	Dimensions of ACE pedagogy			
	The Teacher	The Tearching	The Place	The Curriculum
Focus on learners and their needs	Is engaged with learning and their learning on a personal level	Is developmental (starting from where learners are at and consciously helping them to progress)	Embodies collective values: commitment to education, to community service, to sector itself	Prioritises learner needs through creative assessment
Continous learning for work and life	Is reflective and open about own practice and professional learning journey	Is largely (but not exclusively) experiential	Is a strongly networked community of teaching and learning practice	Is oriented towards generic skills for employment, life and further study
Building learning on and within real-life context	Is able to improvise and take risks	Fosters skills of critical literacy	Is community-owned and is engaged in community building locally	Is contextualised (local, community, individual issues, interests and needs)
Sharing power—empowering people and communities	Is aware of relations of power	Includes various strategies to empower learners	Led by management committed to enabling learning and staff needs	Is negotiated wherever possible
Many roads to learning	Is patient and able to put trust in the learning process	Is multi-layered and eclectic	Creates a sense of belonging	Opens pathways through accredited, non-accredited and enrichment programs

Source: Based on the work of Sanguinetti J, Waterhouse P, Maunders D, 2004.

Other frameworks for ACE providers that aid quality activity are provided in a separate chapter.

Discussion points

Forms of learning as pathways to work

This chapter considers the roles of the various forms of learning as pathways to further learning and employment.

Key points

There are three forms of learning:

- there has been a tendency for formal accredited learning to be valued over non-formal and in-formal non-accredited learning
- the reality is that all forms of learning have value and contribute to work outcomes: adults and businesses choose the form that best meets their needs and dispositions
- formal learning and qualifications attainment is important however towards improving work outcomes especially for those who do not have qualifications or only low level qualifications.

Desired outcome

Goal 1 Strategic positioning of ACE (all forms of learning), vocationally

Forms of learning

Three forms of learning are commonly referred to:

- **formal learning**, that takes place through a structured program of instruction which is generally recognised by the attainment of a formal qualification or award (eg a Diploma or Degree—accredited learning)
- **non-formal learning**, that takes place through a program of instruction but does not usually lead to the attainment of a formal qualification or award (e.g. in-house professional development programs conducted in the workplace—pre- or non-accredited learning)
- **informal learning**, that occurs through all kinds of activities and in a wide range of social contexts such as families, workplaces, communities and leisure activities through the daily lives of every person (unintentional and not accredited learning).

The tendency has been for formal learning to be valued over non-formal and in-formal learning. This has been challenged [12].

A recent UK white paper on informal learning suggests:

> The reality is that informal adult learning can transform individual lives and boost the nation's well-being. At its best, it can bring people and communities together, challenge stereotypes and contribute to community cohesion. It can unite the generations and help people remain active and independent into old age. At its simplest, informal learning can help build people's confidence and add to their personal fulfillment. For the low-skilled and those with a bad personal experience of formal education, an informal approach can provide a way back. In some cases it can be an important stepping stone to further learning, qualifications and more rewarding work.[13]

The scale of the three forms of learning in Australia also suggests that the relevance of the learning and its flexibility is of more importance than whether or not it is accredited.

12 For example see Barry Golding, Mike Brown and Annette Foley, 2008, *Informal learning value in its own right!: A discussion around defining and researching its breadth and importance,* Paper presented to Adult Learning Australia Conference 'Social inclusion: engaging the disengaged through life-wide learning' Perth, Australia 30 October–1 November 2008

13 UK, 2009, White paper, *The learning revolution: Informal Adult Learning Matters*, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, www.dius.gov.uk

The scale of the three forms of learning in Australia

a) Among adults

The significance of all forms of learning to Australian adults has been captured by the ABS.[14]

Of all Australian adults over 25 years of age the ABS has estimated that over the 12 months to July 2007:

- 3 in 4 (75 %) had undertaken informal learning activities
- 1 in 3 (33%) had undertaken some non-formal learning and
- 1 in 8 (12%) had done some formal, qualification related learning.

Of the 1 in 3 adults who engaged in non-formal learning the ABS found that the majority did so for work related purposes (78%) compared to for 'recreational' learning (16%) and for self development (6%). The non-formal learning was provided by a range of organisations—higher education (5%), TAFEs (9%), ACE (6%), professional and industry associations (26%) and other organisations (54%)—schools, businesses, government and private organisations.

Regarding informal learning, a recently released research *At A Glance* publication explains its value to all and particularly to older workers, migrant groups and refugees, and people who are disengaged from learning. It is also of great benefit to small business who lack the resources to formally train staff and plays an important role in the workplace.[15]

b) In businesses

Research suggests that all forms of learning are significant to businesses and to small businesses in particular:

- the 2007 Survey of Employer Use and Views of the VET System[16] found that just under a quarter (22.1%) of employers used nationally recognised training and mainly larger employers
- the same 2007 Survey found that about half (49.0%) of employers used unaccredited training (outside the VET system).

Mainly larger employers used nationally recognised training and the reasons for this were for legislative, regulatory or licensing requirements (33.2%), to provide skills required for the job (29.8%), or to maintain professional or industry standards (27.8%).

The unaccredited training used was provided by a range of organisations including private training providers (43.5%), supplier/manufacturers of equipment/products (16.0%), industry associations (14.4%), professional associations (9.2%) and government departments /agencies (8.8%).

Of those employers who used unaccredited training the 2007 Survey found:

- the main reasons for using unaccredited training were to provide skills required for the job (49.7%), or to maintain professional or industry standards (27.0%)
- 15.2% indicated that comparable nationally recognised training was available, with 27.0% not exploring the availability of comparable nationally recognised training
- where comparable nationally recognised training was available, the main reasons for choosing unaccredited over nationally recognised training was that the employers thought it was more cost-effective (29.6%) and that its timing was more convenient or flexible (23.3%)
- 92.5% were satisfied with unaccredited training as a way of meeting their skill needs.

How the three forms of learning link

The adult learning continuum

Adults who are disengaged from learning find the notion of taking up formal accredited training daunting. They need assistance to gain confidence and develop foundation skills before they will consider accredited courses towards qualifications. They choose the informal and supportive atmosphere of community-based learning as a first step, and they often re-engage in informal or non-formal learning first, because it is flexible, low cost and non-threatening—and, in any case, it can be linked to formal training in the future through recognition of prior learning (see next chapter). This learning continuum pathway has been well documented.

From a starting point of non-engagement in any form of learning, a continuum of adult learning unfolds from the evidence base that includes four key milestone outcomes. Two accounts of the transition pattern frequently reported by ACE providers when reporting on outcomes for learners are outlined in table 4 below.

Of note is that many learning events may be needed for this development continuum to occur. Some adults may require several sequenced learning engagements to develop earlier outcomes before undertaking more directed learning for employment purposes —as shown by Dymock (2007) in relation to adult literacy and by Dawe (2004) in relation to enabling VET courses.[17]

Table 4 Milestone steps in the adult learning continuum

1. To be engaged in learning (and most likely informal or non-formal learning) 2. To develop self-confidence and self-concept as a learner 3. To develop generic employability skills—self management skills, literacy skills, communication skills, interpersonal team skills, problem solving skills and enterprising skills (informal and non-formal learning) and 4. To undertake study for specific job-related outcomes (formal vocational learning)	1. Re-engage in learning through an activity that targets an individual's personal interests 2. Participate in further learning following initial success as confidence continues to build 3. Volunteer for work in the community organisation, which provides them with work experience and continued skills development in a familiar, supportive setting 4. Achieve paid employment because of the gains in confidence, skills and work experience and mentoring provided by staff in the community organisation
A fifth outcome is positive health and wellbeing that results from achieving any and all of the above outcomes (and the social connections which they give rise to)	Re 4 above, opportunities to move from community organisations to employment remain rare because ACE providers have limited links with industry other than the community services industry
Source: Bowman 2007[18]	Source: SA ACE 2008[19]

14 ABS, 2007, *Adult Learning Australia,* Cat No 4229.0, Canberra.

15 Halliday S, Wynes, Beddie F, 2009, *Informal learning: At a glance,* NCVER, Adelaide.

16 Australian vocational education and training statistics: *Employers' use and views of the VET system 2007—Summary,* NCVER, Adelaide.

17 Dymock D, 2007, *Engaging adult learners: The role of non-accredited learning in language, literacy and numeracy* in Engagement and Participation in a Learner-Centred System: Four Papers, Adult Learning Australia Canberra
Dawe S, 2004, *Moving on from enabling courses: Why do some students remain in enabling courses?* NCVER Adelaide.

18 Bowman K, 2007, *Recognising the diversity of adult learners in performance measurement in Engagement and Participation in a Learner-Centred System*: Four Papers, Adult Learning Australia, Canberra.

19 *SA Adult Community Education Program,* 2008, Report.

Businesses and the various types of learning

A research summary on workplace learning of 2005[20] reports the following:

- small businesses are committed to training but lack the internal resources to undertake more formal approaches
  [At least 97% of all non-agricultural private businesses in Australia have fewer than 20 employees and these businesses employ around 3.6 million people. Two-thirds of small businesses do not provide structured training for their employees (ABS[21]).]
- small businesses rely to a large extent on informal learning as a way of achieving immediate business needs but in the future more attention should be paid to developing formal approaches
- formal and informal learning should be used together, with informal learning amplifying the value of formal learning. 'Informal learning by itself runs the risk of restricting people to old ways of thinking and working'; for example, family-owned and operated small businesses often struggle to survive if they do not take in new ideas
- combining the features of the more direct (formal) and indirect (informal) approaches to training works better for small workplaces, but 'conventional [formal] training delivery can borrow from the informal approaches of small business and become more flexible and business outcome focused'
- informal workplace learning is not merely an ad hoc process, but part of a deliberate strategy which takes into account the work which needs to be done and the skills needed to do the work. This may, for example, involve giving employees a variety of tasks or arranging the work in a manner which maximises learning opportunities.

To draw employers into education and training has been described as a three-stage process with the final stage requiring an 'evangelist' to sell the benefits of formal learning. The three stages are:

Engagement > Extension > Integration into formal education and training (Cully 2005)[22]

Stanwick has just reviewed the literature on how employers engage with the vocational education and training (VET) system in Australia [23].

Engaging clients is discussed further in the next chapter.

The value of formal learning and qualifications

Individuals and businesses choose the form of skills development that best meets their needs. The relevance of the training and flexibility of delivery are more important to them than whether or not it is accredited. However there are benefits to be gained from formal learning and qualifications.

a) To individuals

Individuals with qualifications have superior labour market outcomes.

They are more likely to be employed, more likely to be working full time and more likely to have higher earnings; the latter occurring if they hold vocational qualifications at Certificate Level III or above.

Holders of lower level vocational qualifications at Certificates Level I and II may, or may not, receive an associated wages premium. In fact it has been shown that some adults can be worse off in terms of wage premiums if they go on to complete a VET Certificate Level I or II after having completed Year 12 high school.

Year 12 levels appear to matter more in terms of wage premiums than lower level vocational qualifications (Cully 2005[24])

On the other hand, for adults disadvantaged in learning, qualifications of any sort can offer benefits in the labour market because of their higher marginal rate of return.

b) To employers

Employers might say that they do not value qualifications but they are prepared to pay for them, as already outlined.

The research suggests seven benefits to employers of nationally recognised training:

- a structured approach to training and career progression
- the opportunity to integrate training with normal work and customise training packages to enterprise needs
- confidence in the quality of work undertaken by employees and the ability to demonstrate this to external parties
- a competitive edge in attracting and retaining staff
- access to funding to help cover training costs
- the ability to reward and motivate employees and validate their working experiences
- a basis for reshaping human resource management systems around competency standards (reported in NCVER 2005)[25].

Discussion points

20 NCVER, 2005, *Workplace learning research at a glance*, Adelaide.
21 ABS, 2003, *Employer training expenditure and practices Australia*, Cat. No.6362.0, ABS, Canberra.
22 Cully M, 2005, *Employer-provided training: Findings from case studies*—At a glance, NCVER, Adelaide.
23 Stanwick J, 2009, *Employer engagement with the vocational education and training system in Australia*, NCVER, Adelaide.
24 Cully M, 2005, *Employer-provided training: Findings from case studies At a glance*, NCVER, Adelaide.
25 NCVER, 2005, *Workplace learning research at a glance*, NCVER, Adelaide.

Engaging the disadvantaged in learning

This chapter looks at what it takes to engage adults in ACE who may be reluctant to participate in formal vocational learning and face barriers to doing so.

Key points

The qualitative research evidence points to ACE as a friendly gateway to learning: the quantitative evidence shows high variability in the level of engagement of adults disadvantaged in learning among ACE providers.

Those disadvantaged in learning and vocational training include a diverse range of people: conceptualising clients according to their attitudes to and motivations for learning is a valuable approach.

Seven factors come up time and again from research regarding operational success for learning programs for adults disadvantaged or disengaged from learning.

Ten factors that work for small business engagement have also been identified from a systematic review of the research.

E-learning can be an effective engagement strategy.

The engagement process is about development of identify as a learner that needs to be captured as a legitimate outcome.

Desired outcomes

Goal 3 Extend participation of individuals in vocationally focused courses in ACE

Strategies
- Extend participation by socially excluded groups
- Explore key issues to participation and issues arising from service delivery
- Strengthen the delivery of relevant services

ACE as a gateway into learning

There are multiple dimensions to client choice of an education provider.

Three most frequently cited reasons for client choice for ACE are:

- a welcoming environment
- flexibility and responsiveness
- the pathways and holistic nature of programs offered.

There is no doubt that ACE providers can be an effective gateway back into learning for disadvantaged learners however it is clear that the role they play as an 'equity' provider differs significantly across states (and probably within states as well).

For example, Volkoff and Walstab (2007)[26] have compared the proportion of various disadvantaged learner groups in Community Education Providers across three states and with the rates in TAFE and Private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).

26 Volkoff, Walstab, 2007, *Setting the scene investigating learning outcomes with a view to the future* Report to the ACFE Board, Victoria.

The results were that:

- in NSW, the proportions of learners who were Indigenous, had a disability, who had not completed Year 10 or whose socio-economic status placed them in the lowest decile SES were lower in ACE providers than in TAFE or in Private RTOs
- in Victoria, the reverse was true: ACE providers had greater proportions than TAFE or Private RTOs of learners who were Indigenous, had a disability, had not completed Year 10, or whose socio-economic status fell within the lowest decile SES
- South Australian ACE providers also catered to greater proportions of some disadvantaged cohorts than TAFE and Private RTOs did in that state

There also is great variability in equity group participation rates between the 58 TAFE institutes across the nation (Volkoff, Clarke and Walstab, 2007)[27].

The research evidence overall is that education and training organisations need strong leadership and enthusiasm for the social inclusiveness agenda and for it to be embraced by all staff otherwise this agenda is at risk of being marginalised.

Those disadvantaged in learning and employment

There are many groups who are potentially disadvantaged in learning and vocational education and training and employment.

The 'traditional' equity groups include Indigenous Australians, people with disabilities, learners from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and women.

To these groups were added disengaged or at-risk youth, older workers, people in correctional services, and people with low literacy skills in a review of equity in VET in 2004[28].

Others who may be reluctant or hesitant to be involved in learning include those who have never been in the workforce, the inter-generationally unemployed and those wishing to re-enter work after a long period of unemployment.

Yet others include people with a highest school level of Year 9 or below and people without qualifications (without Year 12 or Certificate Level II).

Many small business owners also fit into the disadvantaged in learning category as do low paid workers.

Low paid workers are the latest group to be put under the research microscope by the VET sector.[29] Low pay (less than $15 per hour) is far from a trivial issue in Australia's labour market conservatively affecting 14%, or more than one in ten, full-time adult Australian workers. While low pay does not align with low household income for many, it is a long-term experience for the majority of low-paid workers and sometimes interleaved with periods of unemployment and/or underemployment.

Using a 'client differentiation' approach in terms of dispositions for learning

There has been debate in the VET sector about whether it is preferable to focus on target groups or to manage diversity and recognise that every client has needs. So why identify particular groups and treat them as more special than other clients?

Figgis et al[30] have overviewed these approaches within the research. They suggest that it may be more productive to think about the disadvantages which clients—or potential clients—face as learners as distinct from 'equity' or 'diversity' being associated with ethnicity, age, gender or other population characteristics and offer sound evidence for suggesting this middle ground approach:

> In fact, it may be better to discard both the concept of 'targeted equity groups' and that of 'managing diversity', since both, it could be argued, inadequately conceptualise the disadvantages faced by individuals. The equity groups approach tends to over-simplify and homogenise disadvantage; the managing diversity approach tends to sidestep the very concept of disadvantage (p15)

Two recent reports explore the range of perspectives that can inform client differentiation and engagement in learning.

McIntyre[31] has reviewed the social marketing approach of the National Marketing Strategy, a transactional perspective (participation as a decision weighed in terms of its costs and benefits) and a perspective on life transition and social risk.

He argues that the 'riskiness' of learning (its benefits relative to perceived costs) varies greatly across the segments of the adult population and that the social risks have increased with greater complexity of life-course transitions. For the most disadvantaged adults, the potential social costs may outweigh the perceived benefits.

McIntyre concludes that higher levels of participation will require much more 'client differentiation', more flexible and adaptive providers and a system that recognises and connects to a broader range of community and workplace learning opportunities—not 'more of the same' for those groups who already participate.

From her review of a number of perspectives on client engagement for NSW ACE Couldrey[32] recommends the following multiple dimensions to client analysis (p19).

National marketing segments →

Learner intentions and motivations →

Life course/labour market transitions →

27 Volkoff V, Clarke K and Walstab A, 2007, *The Impact of TAFE Inclusiveness Strategies*, NCVER, Adelaide.

28 Bowman K, (Editor) 2004 *Equity in VET: research readings*, NCVER Adelaide.

29 Centre for Work + Life at the University of South Australia *Low-skilled and low-paid workers in VET* is a major research project being undertaken by the over three years and still in progress for the NCVER. The project is looking at the low-paid people in particular in the workforce; whether VET can help and how ,and at the work–life issues.

30 Figgis J, Butorac A, Clayton B, Meyers D, Dickie M, Malley J, McDonald R,2007, *Advancing equity: Merging 'bottom up' initiatives with 'top down' strategies*, NCVER, Adelaide.

31 McIntyre J, 2007, *Perspectives on client engagement* in Engagement and Participation in a Learner-Centred System: Four Papers, Adult Learning Australia Canberra.

32 Couldrey M, 2006, *Market Segmentation in ACE* Report commissioned by the NSW Board of ACE, BACE, Sydney.

- The National Marketing Strategy initiatives and messages developed for each community and employer segment (ANTA 2000[33]) is potentially the most useful framework because it is based on a broad community and employer survey; it relates to attitudes, values and behaviours towards learning rather than training, it has developed strategies to engage each of the identified community and employer segments. It could be readily adapted to the ACE environment.

Overlaying the above could be

- the clients' motivation and intent segments developed by Victoria (OTTE 2005)[34]. This segments students into nine groups according to why they enter training and what they hope to achieve from it. Through analysis, it refines the nine segments into three key groups: employment seekers, career improvers and self developers, and maps them against characteristics which include age, employment status, gender, use of VET and study choices. This approach of understanding motivation for learning is a useful addition to the information about attitudes and values as well as the perceived barriers to learning available through the National Marketing Strategy. It potentially enables providers to target groups with particular motivations through their products and promotional materials

and

- life course and labour market transitions work (Anderson 2005)[35].This uses Transitional Labour Market theory and acknowledges the rise of non-standard and precarious forms of employment. It highlights the need for new policy settings which would actively support people through such transitions, including transitions that facilitate opportunities for learning and skills development.

Further information on Couldrey's work is in the Frameworks chapter.

On the next page are two tables from the Couldrey report that provide suggestions on how to engage various of the community and employer segments of the national social marketing framework.

33 Australian National Training Authority (ANTA), 2000, *A National Marketing Strategy for VET: Meeting Client Needs*, ANTA, Brisbane. 2004, *Client Focus: Guidelines for Good Practice*, ANTA, Brisbane.

34 Office of Training and Tertiary Education (OTTE) 2005, *A fresh look at the VET Student Market*, OTTE, Melbourne

35 Anderson D 2005, *Choice, Transitions and Learning Careers: Issues and Implications for Vocational Education and Training Policy*, Refereed paper presented to the *Transitions and Risk: New Directions in Social Policy Conference*, Centre for Public Policy, University of Melbourne 23–25 February 2005.

Table 5 Community learning segments and strategies for change

Stage 1: Indifferent	Stage 2: Aware	Stage 3: Ready	Stage 4: Doing it
Forget it Done with it	Make it easier Learning on hold	Almost there	Might give it away Learn to earn Passionate learners
			
Some possible strategies and actions			
Use community networks to promote messages about the benefits of learning for them and their children and counter previous negative experience of learning. Reposition learning as important for family and for changing work. Recognition of Prior Learning to show relevance of current skills. Courses targeting mature age men.	Flexible learning options and short programs. Address cost barriers through advice on government assistance, pay as you go. 'Taster sessions'. Use local papers and radio to target with positive messages about benefits of learning. Family and work friendly schedules.	Recognition of Prior Learning to build confidence. Address fear of technology. Learning supports. Address cost barriers through advice on government assistance, pay as you go. Schedules which take into account work and family responsibilities.	Know what they want. Make the benefits tangible and visable. Offer services linked to jobs. Provide learning supports and peer/ mentor support. Address past negative experiences and reinforce positive ones with quality teaching and value for money.

Source: *Adapted from National Marketing Strategy for VET,* p44 by Couldrey 2006 p15

Table 6 Employer learning segments and strategies for change

Stage 1: Indifferent	Stage 2: Aware	Stage 3: Ready	Stage 4: Doing it
Not interested Mainly small businesses which don't value training unless it increases productivity and reduces cost, see training as a cost, value informal training for their staff.		**Here and now** Also in the doing it stage of the behaviour change path. Large employers, rural/regional firms, focused on keeping ahead of the competition and dealing with turnover. Prefer on the job training.	**High valuers** Established medium-sized firms in the cities. Values all forms of learning, on and off the job, work related or not. Use learning to deal with challenges of globalisation, new technology and competition. *Here and Now*
			
Some possible strategies and actions			
Make training flexible, relevant, affordable, short. Take training to the market don't make the market come to training. Customised training solutions using community business networks. Use language they recognise—they are anti-training and pro-learning.		Develop programs customised to deliver training on site or before/ after work to minimise loss of productive time. Identify needs for short coures and enterprise specific products.	Use business associations and network to reach these businesses. Develop skills audits and training needs assessment products to assist them in identifying skill needs. Promote the link between employee learning and long term investment in human capital, money.

Source: *Adapted* by Couldrey, 2006, p17 *from National Marketing Strategy for VET,* p11

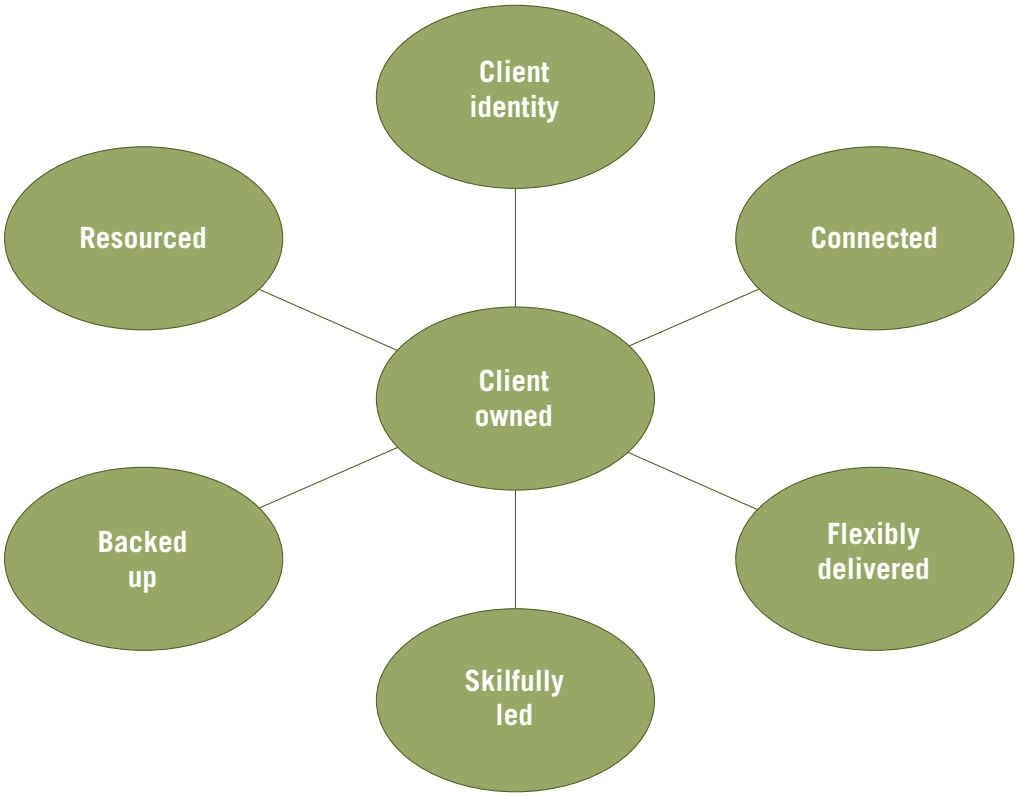
Seven factors for successful engagement of individuals in learning

There has been a large amount of research undertaken to determine success factors for engaging adults in learning who are disadvantaged or disengaged from learning. Seven factors come up time and again from the research.

The 7 dimensions are shown in Figure 1 below and are generic forms of the findings of Miller (2004[36]) who undertook a systematic review of all research available on Indigenous Australians in adult education in a highly scientific exercise.

Examination of 'equity in education' research for other groups shows that the same or very similar success factors continually arise for other groups disadvantaged with respect to learning. They may have different labels but they are essentially the same when examined further.

Figure 1 An operational framework for inclusive adult learning practice



The seven factors variously focus on the emotional (attitudinal), social, educational, technical, managerial, stakeholder relations and financial aspects of client engagement in learning. *They need all to be present all of the time.*

Many learners will have these factors 'covered' as part of their life circumstances. For equity clients these supports are often missing and so need to be made part of the learning experience. A few comments on each factor follow.

1. Client-owned

The central factor in achieving positive learning outcomes is that the learning is client owned. The individual client must be engaged and involved in the learning process. Forcing adults to learn rarely, if ever, works. Adults need to be motivated. The learning must be according to their aspirations and needs—it must be relevant to them with benefits that are clear to them. This may mean that some learners are best first (re-) engaged in informal learning and then encouraged to undertake more learning, of either a non-formal unaccredited nature or accredited, formal learning for qualifications related outcomes.

Learning circles are an effective engagement strategy whereby people are empowered to organise themselves to learn, with opportunities designed by communities for communities. Starting a group can be difficult. For expertise and tips on how to build a successful learning group refer to the Australian Study Circles Network (www.studycircles.net.au)

2. Client identity

The building of psycho-social outcomes-confidence, self-esteem, and the aspiration to engage in learning—as necessary stepping stones towards confident participation in adult learning is a common recurring theme in the wider 'equity in education' research literature. This is not to say that more and higher levels of learning do not develop further an adult's concept of self. It is to say that the building of (self) identity capital is a critical milestone outcome for those in the process of re-engaging with learning. To build identity capital the client needs learning programs and environments that reflect their cultures and values.

3. Connected

Developing partnerships with stakeholders is a way of making contact with specific client markets and ensuring education delivery programs are provided in the most effective and appropriate way for all involved parties. Relationships ecosystem mapping of organisation connections in the community is a useful exercise to undertake (a useful reference is Golding, 2002)[37].

4. Adaptable

Flexible learning course design, content and delivery are required. This is a central focus of adult learning providers. The ACE pedagogy framework provided in Table 3 in this report offers a wholly learner-centred pedagogy. Fernbach 2007[38] provides an over overview of key principles from a number of studies that identify excellent teaching that consistently delivers learner focused, flexible and adaptable training that addresses the needs of disadvantaged learners and their advantaged peers.

36 Miller C, 2004, *Aspects of training that meet Indigenous Australians' aspirations–a systematic review of research,* NCVER, Adelaide.

37 Golding B, 2002, *'Network mapping'*, workshop paper to Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association Conference, Melbourne, 20 M.

38 Fernbach, 2007, *How the National Reform Agenda is changing adult pedagogy and practice* in Engagement and Participation in a Learner Centred System, Four papers Adult Learning Australia, Canberra.

5. Skilfully led

There is clear evidence that program effectiveness is directly affected by the commitment, expertise, understanding and sensitivity of teachers, tutors, support staff and administrators**.** Five common ingredients of successful learning practitioners have been identified and discussed by the Ithaca group (2005[39]). They are—knowledgeable, adaptive, connected, supportive and tenacious.

There also is the issue of management. Managers need to support the efforts of the frontline teachers. The client focused equity inclusive approach needs to permeate the entire organisation to ensure enduring success. Figgis et al 2007 provide advice on successful equity initiatives in vocational education and training, and effectively joining bottom up with top down organisational initiatives.

6. Backed up

This is an important part of the framework in relation to disadvantaged learners where extra effort most often is required. Three types of support need to be present:

- educational support—such as tutoring
- personal support—such as social and cultural support or pastoral care
- financial support—to enable the undertaking of a learning program.

For equity clients these supports are often missing. They need to be part of the learning experience through joined-up agencies servicing. Partnerships with various human services organisations can provide this access using 'linked up' services. This requires individuals adept at 'boundary-crossing-connecting' with many groups within and beyond the education training enterprise.

7. Resourced

To achieve inclusiveness by involving those disadvantaged in learning, takes more than seed funding—the common approach to date. Many equity programs remain stuck in the seeding stage and fail to thrive and grow because current funding approaches place too much emphasis on starting initiatives and not enough on the development and scale-up of promising ones. Lack of sufficient funds to fully support disadvantaged learners is a commonly raised issue. A rethink of the funding mechanisms currently used is needed if we are to stimulate innovative equity practice (Figgis et al 2007).

Successfully engaging small business

Through a systematic review of existing research, Dawe and Nguyen (2007)[40] set out to uncover evidence about which intervention strategies encouraged the participation of small business managers and employees in education and that meet the needs of small business.

Strategies that meet the needs of the diverse range of small businesses demonstrated three essential elements:

- a clear focus on business-specific needs rather than one driven by government agendas and funding. Small business will pay for education and training if they see the value in it and it is inline with their interests
- flexible provision which carefully individualises training information, content and delivery to the needs of each small business
- a personal approach through a recognised local facilitator or business service organisation that is able to reach small business operators who may not be positive about training.

Strategies which utilise the way small business learns include business mentoring, networking, and collaborative or group learning with other businesses through such methods as clusters, alliances or action learning.

Other effective strategies include diagnostic services such as training needs analysis and benchmarking processes against other organisations. Programs which employ a number of these work better than those relying on a single approach.

Overall Dawe and Nguyen identified ten factors which contribute to strategies for vocational training that work for small business. Another research project by Newton, specifically aimed at assisting ACE providers to develop learning services that address small business needs and that fit within small business limitations, summed up by offering six guiding principles [41].These 10 factors and 6 guidelines are provided in table 7 on the next page.

39 Ithaca group, 2005, *Not exactly rocket science: Replicating good practice in meeting diverse client needs,* ANTA, Brisbane.

40 Dawe S, Nguyen N, 2007, *Education and training that meets the needs of small business—a systematic review of research,* NCVER, Adelaide.

41 Newton K, 2005, *Human capital and small business: the role of ACE* Adult Learning Australia, Canberra.

Table 7 Strategies for engaging small businesses

Factors	Guidelines
1. Provide opportunities to share skills, knowledge and experience with other business people 2. Link training to business performance—increased profit, growth or survival 3. Link training to specific stages in the business cycle (that is start-up, crisis and/or survival, growth and/or expansion and export and/or internationalisation) 4. Contact small business managers personally to analyse their business needs 5. Provide ongoing business-specific support through a business service organisation 6. Minimise time spent away from the workplace 7. Integrate formal training and learning with informal learning processes in the workplace 8. Lower costs of training by collaborating with other businesses or through financial incentives, such as a government subsidy or 'interest free' loans 9. Ensure that facilitators and trainers have the appropriate networks and experience to enable them to be trusted and respected by all business participants, especially in the case of Indigenous Australian small business operators 10. Plan the strategy with small businesses and business service organisations	1. Build on ACE providers' strengths by providing flexible, innovative, tailored, 'just in time', 'just for me' training 2. Provide genuine flexibility; which assists in identifying needs and tailoring delivery to match. Provide services in 'bite-sized chunks' that utilise recognition of past learning, where possible, as a value-add 3. Build relationships with small workplaces in the local area. Have 'a foot in the door', nurture and build on the relationship with the business and actively promote ACE services to small business 4. Become the 'bridge' between small enterprises and the formal training system. Work as a 'learning broker' and make linkages between learning and small business' support systems. Utilise local knowledge and expertise to assist in identifying and addressing training gaps as an integral part of local employment/training and regional development networks 5. Assist small enterprises to engage with the formal training system and help to de-mystify processes and eliminate jargon by using 'plain' English 6. Clearly demonstrate the return on investment from training to small business owner-managers. Work with the rapid pace of change as an opportunity for ACE to assist small enterprises to cushion themselves against future shock
Source: Dawe and Nguyen 2007	Source: Newton 2005 (Also see the *Small Business Scorecard* checklist for ACE providers in the Frameworks chapter).

E-learning as an engagement strategy

Technology is infiltrating all aspects of our lives and it seems nearly everyone is willing to give electronic devices a go, even those with a 'forget it attitude' to learning, according to the detailed reports associated with the ANTA VET National Marketing Strategy.

In her Review of the Community Engagement project of the Australian Flexible Learning Framework managed by ALA, Bowman found that disadvantaged learners of all kinds had been effectively engaged in e-learning and left wanting more. It all depended on having an individual client focus:

> Each pilot engaged learners on the basis of the learners' interests and starting point capabilities. All pilots reported on essentially a blended approach to e-learning, with lots of face to face support services being provided. All pilots were aware of the desire to lead their learners towards formal education options and mapped their non-accredited skills development programs to existing training packages to give non-accredited students the opportunity to apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in future. (p16).
>
> In the pilots, e-learning was offered for its own sake. Thus many of the 1000 learners involved in the pilots did not achieve accredited VET outcomes as was an objective of the Project but they were successfully engaged in, and left wanting, more e-learning…. This meant that some of the learners were best engaged in pre-accredited VET or taster e-learning programs. Other learners were engaged informally in accredited VET subjects meaning that they kept work portfolios so that the learner could pursue RPL and accreditation in future. Other learners knowingly enrolled in accredited VET subjects and courses. (p12) [42].

The 2006 Australian Flexible Learning Framework's study of e-learning in the building and construction industries also notes the positive attitude people have towards learning through technology:

> There were many motivations driving e-learning; the over-riding motivation was the teachers' desire to engage, motivate and reach the student. Most teachers found that students are 'switched-on' to the technologies and are excited about new forms of learning enabled through their use.

Technology enables more flexible personal and social learning. New technologies enable learning anywhere/anytime to be a realistic objective. Through technology, more individualised approaches to learning are being progressed. The social connection opportunities technology affords allows for learner 'learning circles' to be formed—on line but 'in person'.

42 Bowman K, 2007, Review of the community engagement project 2005–2007, ALA, Canberra for the Australian Flexible Learning Framework.

The Western Australian Telecentres are a testament to what information technology and telecommunication resources can do to provide community members with increased education, training, business and employment opportunities. The Telecentres are small enterprises in rural communities in Western Australia having emerged from the need to provide increased education access in rural regions[43].

There is a large amount of e-learning resources and research available on the Australian Flexible Learning Framework' website (www.flexiblelearning.net.au). E-learning is a never ending journey, The 'what and where' of e-learning is only limited by imagination. To counter the reaction 'It seems so overwhelming', the best advice that can be given is 'Just make a start'.

Recent research on the use of champions as strategy for developing e-learning might be of particular interest. The aforementioned Community Engagement project of the Australian Flexible Learning Framework employed a champions cascading model whereby educators with expertise in e-learning mentor others—these in turn engage learners. Indeed, champions have been used widely as a strategy to develop e-learning.

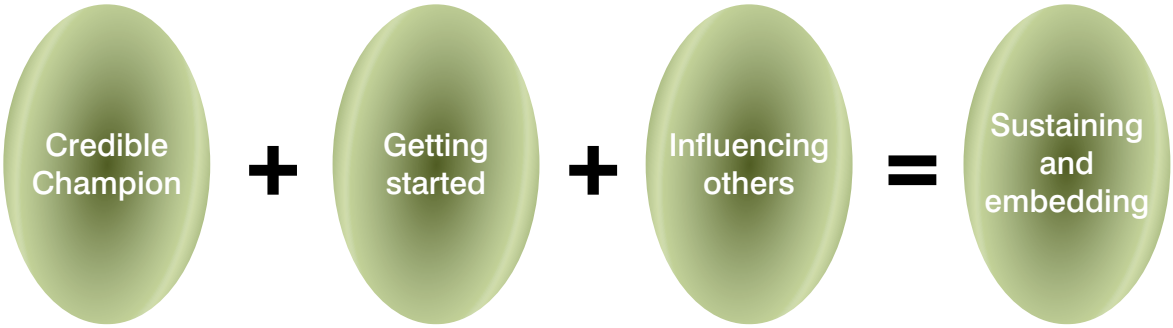
The lack of champions has been identified as a key reason for lack of uptake of e-learning among small businesses (Mack Consulting Group, 2007)[44].

The use of an external champion model is occurring in the current e-mentors Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) project in Victoria. Each ACFE region has appointed an e-mentor to work with interested ACE organisations in their region to provide support and mentoring as well as establishing a regional network. Each e-mentor was selected, among other reasons, for having had an impact on embedding e-learning in similar or other educational fields.

E-mentors is a follow on program built on experiences and guidelines developed from the 2007 AccessACE Program (Rose 2007). One of several key messages from the 2007 program was the strong need for a mentoring program as a 'just-in-time and just-for-me' peer support strategy for those teachers and coordinators in ACE seeking to adopt e-learning. (http://ementors.acfe.vic.edu.au/Induction.Workshop).

From a survey of e-learning champions and their peers, it has been identified that all display a common set of characteristics. They also employ a common set of activities facilitating the uptake of e-learning for teaching and learning purposes. To sustain e-learning, managers and policy makers must assist and show organisational commitment.

Figure 2 A champions' model for developing e-learning[45]



A credible champion is:

- skilled in e-learning
- shares knowledge, skills and resources
- passionate and tenacious
- client focused
- communicates well at all levels
- enterprising
- problem solves
- role models commitment

To get started a champion:

- provides tailored educationally sound solutions
- encourages teachers to explore
- works with teachers as they become ready and willing
- supports teachers one-on-one
- troubleshoots widely and reviews
- adapts as required

To broaden e-learning capability, a champion:

- builds capable e-learning teams
- creates communities of practice
- facilitates peer-to-peer learning
- recognises and showcases achievements
- nurtures influential advocates
- seeks to enable change at organisation level

To sustain e-learning managers need to:

- make e-learning part of the strategic plan
- ensure e-learning is appropriately resourced
- make e-learning part of teacher performance plans
- encourage participation in professional development activities
- provide opportunities and time to learn, experiment and review e-learning tools and products

43 Oliver R and Short G (undated), *The Western Australian Telecentres Network: Enhancing Equity and Access to Education in Rural Communities.*

44 Mack Consulting Group, 2007, *An investigation of the enablers and barriers to industry uptake of e-learning: small business*, Australian Flexible Learning Framework @ flexiblelearning.net.au

45 Bowman K, Shaw B, Jolly M, McCulloch C, 2009, *The Impact of E-Learning Champions on the Embedding of E-Learning in their organisation, Industry or Community*, Australian Flexible Learning Framework@flexiblelearning.net.au

Capturing the outcomes of engagement in learning

The outcomes of initial participation in ACE by people who are disadvantaged in learning can be difficult to measure using the standards of formal education as no formal assessment takes place.

Recognised outcomes include:

- significant recurrent involvement in learning
- more organised, better networked, better communicating adults
- greater confidence and improved attitudes.

These are characteristics frequently described by employers as being desirable in the workplace.

One problem with learning outcomes relating to areas such as confidence is that they are viewed as intangible and subjective and therefore difficult to record. The challenge is to clearly capture individual and group achievements in order to demonstrate to learners, tutors and funders what has been gained.

Ways of evidencing or capturing improved confidence has received limited attention. Self reporting by the learner through surveys using a 5 point Lickert scale have apparently been used to determine the degree of change experienced but no actual examples were found during the scan of research for this report.

The one exploratory study found was from the UK.[46] Findings included a consensus on the ways in which changes in confidence manifests:

- changes in body language as their movements and posture became less timid and self-effacing
- new or enhanced abilities to 'speak out' in many different ways and circumstances
- new views of themselves, as able to take on new challenges in different real life situations
- new dreams, aspirations and ambitions that are progression aimed
- ability to build new friendships more easily
- in increased levels of community involvement on a spectrum that ranged from accessing amenities, such as local libraries, to becoming active in campaigning for change.

A visual and interactive tool (not found) was designed to form a basis for discussion and dialogue with, and between, learners. This was a grid containing statements relating to perceived confidence in different life situations. Learners used the grid to reflect on and record their levels of confidence. It was a useful tool for learners to assess and recognise changes. For some learners and tutors it was a powerful tool as it recognised changes in confidence beyond learning situations. Perhaps the most powerful indicator of increased confidence and identity is that the person moves on to further study or work.

Discussion points

46 *Capturing Confidence Summary* 2004 Adult and Community Learning fund NIACE/DES UK

Extending learning and bridge building to formal learning

This chapter looks at ACE providers as foundation skills developers and bridge builders to accredited VET and work.

Key points

Ways of extending learning that is vocationally focused include:

- foundation education and skills development programs
- career advice, in which many Australian adults need assistance
- formal assessment services of non-accredited learning, that have significant potential for ACE providers
- a variety of pathways models to formal VET and paid work

Desired outcome

Goal 2 Increase vocationally focused programs and services and outcomes achieved:

- Coverage of strategies mentioned in the 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE

Foundation education skills development programs

Foundation education and skills development programs include literacy and numeracy and 'mixed field' employability skills training.

Literacy and numeracy

Many adults have poor basic literacy skills and problem solving skills.[47]

Adults with low levels of literacy and numeracy are less likely to participate in job-related education and training activities and more likely to have difficulty coping with the everyday demands of life generally. This includes understanding health related information.

ACE providers are being asked to help to meet the high need for adult literacy skills development. ACE providers already do a lot of work in the literacy area—in the form of unaccredited (non-formal) as well as accredited learning.

47 ABS, 2007, *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey: Summary Results Australia 2006*, Cat 4228.0.

In Australia at present the provision of adult literacy, numeracy and English as a second language education primarily falls into the following five types:

- 'front-end' (or stand-alone) programs which explicitly target language and literacy
- vocational education and training (VET) programs which provide integrated literacy or numeracy training as part of a vocational training package qualification
- workplace-based programs, including the Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) program, in which training can either be integrated into specific work-related training or offered as a parallel program
- provision through labour market programs for people who are unemployed via the Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP) and
- community-based programs, that are often informal non-accredited programs delivered in community environments[48].

ACE providers make up between 5.6 and 6.5% respectively of all adult literacy students and hours in the public VET system in 2005 (that is, 295,000 students in 2005 and 46 million hours). ACE providers record the highest numbers of VET literacy teaching hours after public TAFE providers who provided the bulk (89%), according to NCVER statistics obtained and reported in Bowman 2006).

Dymock's research of 2007[49] was the first attempt to gauge the extent of the provision of non-accredited adult language, literacy and numeracy training in Australia. Thousands of adults each year were found to receive non-accredited community language, literacy and numeracy assistance. Many choose this form of assistance because they either do not need, or would struggle, with accredited courses.

Dymock's study found that there is a strong continuing demand for non-accredited community language, literacy and numeracy courses in Australia and a need for:

- government recognition of the benefits of language, literacy and numeracy provision
- ongoing monitoring of the quality of provision by the providing organisations and
- reporting of outcomes in addition to that currently undertaken.

Dymock, with Billet,[50] have examined ways of assessing and acknowledging the range of outcomes in non-accredited community adult language literacy and numeracy programs and have determined that the assessment methods used can bring benefits both to the learner and the tutor, especially when they are completed jointly in ways that inform learning plans and aim at building self-confidence.

Dymock with Billet, in the practical component of their research, used six instruments to identify outcomes of non-accredited community adult language literacy and numeracy programs. No single instrument was identified as being the most preferred. Instead, each of the instruments had particular qualities and uses. A 'portfolio' of instruments is likely to be necessary to address diversity in learners' and tutors' needs. The six trial instruments are contained in Appendix 2 of their main report.

A resource for adult literacy practitioners has also been developed through the Adult Literacy Research Program (ALRP) managed by the NCVER on behalf of the former Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training [now Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)] from 2002 until 2006.[51]

Employability skills

Australian employers have emphasised their need for people with good employability skills and attributes since 2002 when the Employability Skills Framework was developed by ACCI/BCA[52] and employers have reinforced this need many times since.

The Framework includes the skills to manage oneself, solve problems, communicate effectively, manage information, work in teams, use the required technology and contribute to enterprising ideas (for example to produce new knowledge, products and services) and to have high work and ethical standards.

The desired employability skills are also desirable life skills: they underpin success in life as well as employment and are developed over a lifetime through all aspects of life.

Employers have now had these skills written into VET competency standards in Training Packages and their explicit development made a requirement from July 2008. This requirement has stimulated the exploration of effective teaching, learning, reporting and assessment processes for the employability skills.

A useful key report is *Employability Skills from Framework to Practice.*[53] It recommends active teaching and learning and assessment strategies that adhere to four adult learning principles for effective employability skills development. These are set out in table 8 on the next page.

Particular emphasis is placed on Reflective Learning which is seen as an irreplaceable component of the overall instruction of employability skills. Learners must be provided with an opportunity to reflect on the ways the skills contribute to job effectiveness as well as their own abilities in relation to each of the skill areas.

Another key report, *Assessment and Reporting of Employability Skills in Training Packages*[54]*,* suggests the use of portfolios to collect information on a person's employability skills and for assessment and reporting purposes.

A third report, *The Impact of E-learning on Employability Skills Development* [55]*,* discusses the use of e-portfolios for employability skills development, among other subjects.

48 Exhibit 11 in Exhibits relating to the presentation on Reading between the lines: Summing up adult literacy and numeracy research, NCVER Breakfast Briefings series mid 2006, www.ncver.edu.au/literacy publications

49 Dymock D, 2007, *Community adult language, literacy and numeracy provision in Australia: Diverse approaches and outcomes,* NCVER, Adelaide.

50 Dymock D, Billet S, 2008, *Assessing and acknowledging learning through non-accredited community adult language, literacy and numeracy programs*, NCVER, Adelaide.

51 (www.adultliteracyresource.edu.au)

52 ACCI/BCA, 2002, *Employability Skills for the Future*, Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST), Canberra.

53 Cleary M, Flynn R and Thomasson S, 2006, *Employability Skills from Framework to Practice* by, for the Department of Science, Education and Training, Canberra.

54 Allen Group, 2006, *Assessment and Reporting of Employability Skills in Training Packages*, DEST, Canberra.

55 Bowman K, Kearns P, 2009, *The Impact of E-learning on Employability Skills Development*, Australian Flexible Learning Framework.

Table 8 Employability skills development: Strategies and principles

Active learning **Strategies**	■ real work settings ■ simulated work settings ■ project-based activities ■ well constructed scenarios ■ case studies ■ role-plays ■ the undertaking of the above in teams, and ■ group discussion	
Adult learning principles	*Responsible learning*—encourages learners to take ownership of the learning process through more direct and active participation	Responsible learning emphasises *self-management and initiative and enterprise*
	Experiential learning—emphasises 'learning to do' and 'learning from doing' and real-time demonstration of skills	Experiential learning can be most useful to create opportunities for *problem solving* and *planning and organising* skills to be applied in real time
	Cooperative learning—encourages learners to learn from each other, share learning tasks and learn from a range of people including colleagues, mentors, coaches, supervisors, trainers, and others	Cooperative learning-based activities can be particularly useful to provide opportunities for *teamwork and communication* skills
	Reflective learning—is about consciously and systematically appraising experience to turn it into lessons for the future. This can be introspective, where learners are encouraged to examine changes in their own perceptions, goals, confidences and motivations	Reflective learning can be useful in directly addressing *problem solving, initiative and enterprise* and *self-management* skills

Source: Cleary M, Flynn R, Thomasson S, 2006

Table 9 Some useful technologies in use for employability skills development

Principle	Learning technologies in use
Responsible learning	web-based research, podcasts, other online educational resources, m-learning, e-quizzes/tests and online course content and learning objects from Toolboxes
Experiential learning	simulated material from Toolboxes; CDRoms that contain workplace and community simulations, and the use of virtual worlds such as 'Second life'
Cooperative learning	virtual classrooms, web conferencing, interactive whiteboards, chat rooms, wikis and other online communication and collaboration tools
Reflective learning	e-portfolios, blogs, wikis, audio/video self-recording, digital stories and other online self assessment tools

Source: Bowman K, Kearns P, 2009

Learning Assessment Services—Recognition of prior in/non-formal learning

There is significant potential for ACE providers to assist people to have the skills they have obtained from informal and non-formal learning recognised by offering *Recognition of prior learning (RPL)* services or through *Auspicing* which involves entering into a partnership with a registered training organisation (RTO).

However it is important to note that many adults making a first step back into the world of organised learning after time away prefer to participate directly in learning programs and take a 'second chance' at study, even if they are eligible for recognition of prior learning. They prefer training programs over RPL because they provide social interaction, a confidence boost and re-assurance that their work-related skill levels are truly up-to-date (Hargreaves, 2006).[56]

Then again, there are a lot of misconceptions regarding the policies and complexities of RPL. There are some outdated views and interpretations of RPL and these have led to greater complexity within the process than required.

Recognition of prior learning (RPL)

RPL is an assessment process of the individual's non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification.

The two major approaches to RPL can be described as:

- the developmental model where RPL is used to help students integrate the learning they have obtained outside a formal educational setting with the learning they have obtained inside the setting to improve their outcomes. The developmental model is generally used in senior secondary schools and in adult and community education
- the credentialing model is common in the higher education and vocational training sectors. It uses RPL to lead to the partial or full completion of credentials.[57]

Undertaking RPL for credentialing purposes is subject to the Standards of the Australian Quality Training Framework for Registered Training Organisations (Standards 6, 7, 8, 9).

There are a variety of methods for assessing RPL. Each approach has its own particular set of advantages and disadvantages. *RPL Done Well* is a resource developed by Reframing the Future for individual practitioners seeking to improve their knowledge and skills about contemporary ways to use assessment and recognition processes and/or examining a range of issues and solutions to implement contemporary RPL practice (www.reframingthefuture.net)[58].

E-Portfolios prepared by candidates document or portray the evidence provided in support of claims for RPL are increasingly becoming a common approach. The aim of the e-portfolio is to help students, unemployed people, volunteers, and workers record their experience and achievements using digital technologies (including photographs, video footage, music, sound and text). These can then be used to provide evidence of experience and achievement to prospective employers or to educational institutions for either admission or assessment purposes.

56 Hargreaves J, 2006, *Recognition of prior learning—research at a glance,* NCVER, Adelaide.

57 Misko J, Beddie F, Smith L, 2007, *The Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning in Australia* Country Background Report prepared for the OECD activity on Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning Commonwealth of Australia.

58 NCVER has a caretaker role in managing the Reframing the Future website and publications following the program's closure in March 2009, NCVER, will maintain the website www.reframingthefuture.net/ until the end of 2010 NCVER will continue to provide access to these resources through the VOCED database.—www.voced.edu.au

Table 10 Some examples of e-portfolios for RPL

- **myfuture.edu.au**—a joint Australian, state and territory government sponsored online career exploration service. It is specifically aimed at 16 to 24 year old students by exploring their skills and interests, identifying their career ideas, developing a career plan, and researching options for further study or training
- **E-portfolio for employability skills20**—DEST is funding a trial website for an e-portfolio or skills portfolio database and tool that will allow people to easily record their academic vocational and employability skills to support job applications, career planning, and entry into further education and training. It will also assist school graduates to document their academic and vocational training and employability skills gained through community activities, and assist mature-age people to document their skills against the eight employability skills
- **Electronic Skills Passports**—used for recording achievement of students and apprentices in the printing industry
- **Résumé Builder**—used to develop résumés for all job seekers by Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR)
- **Skillsbase**—used for students in Victoria
- **Skills Mentor**—used for students entering information technology
- **Industry.Skills Passport**—used for students and job seekers within the sport and recreation industry, and young people working for Volunteering NSW
- **Vocational Profile**—used for clients of individual Job Network Provider clients
- **Transferable Skills Portfolio**—used for students from Flinders University (refer 1.2b)
- **Your Skills Portfolio**—used for students at Victoria University [this includes a résumé maker, and focuses on core graduate skills]

Source: Misko J, Beddie F, Smith L, 2007

In 2008, ALA ran a pilot project entitled '*Evidence of Learning for ACE: An E-portfolio for Recognition of Prior Learning'* (for the Australian Flexible Learning Framework) to identify and trial, specifically with learners from the ACE sector, an e-portfolio system to support lifelong learning and a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process. The E-portfolio systems identified by trial sites [one in regional Victoria led by a major ACE provider, one in metropolitan and one in regional New South Wales] aimed to investigate ways of tracking learners' skills that might have possible applications with RPL processes at any level with any training provider [59].

To learn about RPL from the perspective of the person undergoing the process, Smith and Clayton present three autobiographic cases written in the first person that highlight the feelings and thought processes of each person at critical stages of their recognition of their prior learning journey [60].

Auspicing

Auspicing is referred to as a strategy in the 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE. It involves an organisation entering into partnership with a registered provider of VET in order to have the training and assessment it undertakes recognised under the National Training Framework for vocational education and training.

The one research study found on auspicing explains that the concept of auspicing stems from the Australian Recognition Framework (ARF) (ANTA 1999) but with the revision and re-labelling of the ARF to the Australian Qualifications Training Framework (AQTF), the term 'auspicing' has been replaced by the term 'partnerships'.

In partnerships for assessment arrangements, the registered provider of VET assumes responsibility for assuring the quality of the assessments conducted by the other organisation. The registered provider is required to set up systems for monitoring and evaluating assessment processes and judgments about competence and is responsible for issuing the qualifications and/or statements of attainment that ensue from that training.

Critical aspects to be addressed in the establishment and maintenance of partnerships include:

- the preliminary negotiations and the clarification of services covered by the arrangements
- the requirement to comply with the AQTF standards for registered training organisations such as:
    - a formal agreement
    - a register
    - quality assurance arrangements
    - the maintenance and review of such partnerships.

The guidelines presented in the research report address all of these aspects [61].

59 Mary Hannan was the Framework's National ACE E-Learning Co-ordinator. Another ALA contact for the project is Janie McOmish, the Assistant Director of ALA.

60 Smith L ,Clayton B, 2009, *Recognising non-formal and informal learning: Participant insights and perspectives,* NCVER, Adelaide.

61 Bateman A, Clayton B, 2002, *Partnerships in assessment: auspicing in action,* NCVER, Adelaide.

Career information and development services

The following has been extracted from a recent research summary of careers education and vocational education and training.[62]

- *Career information services* encompass a variety of resources that provide current, unbiased information about work roles, educational programs and work opportunities. Such resources include computer-based career information delivery systems, the internet, print and media materials, informational interviews, workplace speakers and more. This is the first step that an ACE provider can take.
- *Career development services* refer to a wide range of programs and services provided in many different jurisdictions and delivery settings. Their object is to assist individuals to gain the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviours to manage their life, learning and work in self-directed ways.

Beddie et al (2005)[63] found that existing career development services are primarily designed to cater for school and tertiary students rather than for older adults, many of whom cannot afford (or would not contemplate) private career counselling sessions, and that Centrelink career services are restricted to registered job seekers and is often a remedial or a 'band-aid' approach.

Beddie et al (2005) suggest:

- a culture of career development needs to be built in Australia which focuses on all age groups and encourages older adults to recognise that they, too, have career and learning options which will allow them to cope with changes in their working or personal circumstances
- career development for disengaged adults is best when it is community-based, affordable and impartial (that is, one step removed from agencies offering other assistance, such as welfare, job matching or training)
- career development needs to be 'actively' offered because most adults disengaged from the labour force are unlikely to be proactive in seeking career development services.

The Australian Blueprint for Career Development (Department of Education, Science and Training 2006) is based on new understandings of career development across one's lifespan. It identifies 11 broad career management competencies to help people to direct and manage their career path, beginning at school and continuing throughout their working lives.

There are new professional standards and qualifications for career service practitioners. Minimum qualifications for practitioners in accordance with the standards developed by the Career Industry Council of Australia will be mandatory by 2012[64]. Career Advice Australia is expanding its professional development opportunities for career advisors.

Pathways development models to formal VET

The best research found during the scan undertaken for this report on pathways development models is over ten years old but continues to be highly relevant. The 1997 Planning Pathways from ACE to VET report[65] provided a set of principles which might assist ACE providers.

Table 11 Guidelines for pathways planning to formal VET

ACE providers to:

- engage in responsive provision to their communities as the basis of pathway planning [community responsiveness]
- develop customised training packages at the local level to meet the needs of specific groups [localisation]
- understand pathway entry points in terms of a range of options and experiences available to learners, and do not limit pathways to linkages between formal courses [informality]
- assist learners to assess their educational and life experiences, needs and goals in defining pathway options [individualisation]
- design the timing, venue, process, activities and tutoring to reflect the needs and goals of individuals from the target group [adaptation]
- integrate adult literacy and vocational training, rather than make the completion of literacy a barrier to vocational learning [integration]
- develop training which targets the preferred local employment of a group of learners and offer relevant and practical training, including accredited courses [vocation]
- develop partnerships with VET providers to provide a greater range of accredited courses and maximise the vocational options for learners [collaboration]
- network with other community agencies to ensure that participation in courses is supported by appropriate services [networking]
- negotiate culturally appropriate pathways with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and for other cultural groups [cultural appropriateness that in fact was identified as an overarching pathway strategy in all instances]
- develop packages of funding from a variety of sources to create flexible, responsive pathways [resourcefulness]
- exploit the development of open and flexible learning approaches and technologies to promote pathway options particularly for remote communities [access]

The 1997 Planning Pathways from ACE to VET Report documents several models then in use among ACE providers that are provided in table 12 below. When the research report was originally published it was accompanied by a *Provider Handbook* that gave comprehensive information about the pathway models in the report.

62 Halliday-Wynes S, Beddie F, Saunders J, 2008, *Career development and VET: At a glance*, NCVER, Adelaide.

63 Beddie F, Lorey B, Pamphilon B, 2005, *Enhancing career development: The role of community-based career guidance for disengaged adults*, NCVER, Adelaide.

64 Career Industry Council of Australia 2006, *Professional standards for Australian career development practitioners*, CICA, viewed June 2008, <http://www.cica.org.au>

65 John McIntyre and Helen Kimberly 1997, *Planning Pathways from ACE to VET*, funded by the Australian National Training Authority through the Vocational Education and Training Women's Taskforce of the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MYCEETYA) and managed by Western Australia.

Table 12 Examples of pathways development models

Entry point or starting point model	An informal non-credit course is organised as a means of reintroducing learning through a positive experience in a supportive environment. This may be deliberately linked by the provider to other follow-on options. Confidence in learning can be an outcome of any course
The CGEA as entry point	*Certificates in General Education for Adults* was the single most important pathway in 1997. The more recent Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning also fits into this category of an entry point general education qualification
Path to employment models	In this model, targeting local employment is the main consideration. It offers programs of specific occupational training for the employment opportunity in a flexible, convivial and supportive way in a community setting rather than a less flexible and less supportive formal institution
Volunteer worker to VET training	Involvement in unpaid work with related non-accredited training can lead to changed views of individuals as well as opening up opportunities for future work and training for them
Integrated models	In this model pathways are planned and developed from an 'entry point' to another experience. An integrated model can have features such as: ▪ bringing together literacy, numeracy, vocational education and general adult education options for students in order to meet a range of needs and make best use of scarce resources ▪ supporting pathways through an organisational and learning culture in which there are strong relationships between teachers and students ▪ work experience content to ensure training is practical and relevant
Provider partnerships	This family of models refers to pathways from ACE to an accredited course in another VET provider, for example; ▪ a small ACE centre may act as a feeder for accredited courses or agree to be an extended campus of a larger regional VET provider)—the ACE provider role may be a 'broker' through inter-agency collaboration of educational options for the community by offering advice, referral andsupport for students at other education providers
Community development models	These models combine elements of both 'within ACE' pathways and 'ACE to other provider' pathways. Pathway planning is embedded in a well-developed community-based service that is in touch with its community and other agencies and brings various services together. in an 'integrated' approach to pathways based on an analysis of local needs—'community not course based'
Open learning	Telecommunications technology as an educational pathway

A critical success factor to partnership approaches is that they be equals which depends upon having effective working relationships. There is a good practice guide to ACE–VET partnerships based on research of such collaborations.[66]

Discussion points

66 Gelade, S, Stehlik, T, and Willis, P, 2006, *Learning Collaborations between ACE and vocational education and training providers: Good practice partnerships.* NCVER, Adelaide

Building formal vocational education and training capacity

This chapter looks at some capacity building options for ACE providers who are registered providers of vocational education and training.

Key points

Suggestions as to how to build further VET capability and business include:

- involvement in the Productivity Places Program
- offer higher level VET
- offer connecting employment services
- offer workforce planning services to (small) businesses and customised gap VET
- contribute to the training of Australia's Workplace Trainers and Assessors
- become an employment creator-social enterprises
- offer entrepreneurial education.

Desired outcome

Ministerial Declaration on ACE Goal 2: Optimise vocational capacity

Optimise the capacity of community education and training providers to deliver vocational courses leading to increased workforce participation and economic capital.

ACE providers and formal vocational education and training and employment

Some ACE providers have expanded their activities to include VET programs to such an extent that, of the total participants in ACE providers included within the NCVER data collection, about 50% now are VET-ACE students as opposed to non-VET-ACE students. A breakdown of these two groupings of students in Australia by region and shows the proportion of VET-ACE students is lowest in urban areas and highest in rural areas. (Source: Choy et al, 2006, Fig. 7)[67]

Another key source of data on ACE providers who are registered to offer recognised vocational education and training is that assembled by Harris et al (2006)[68]. They found that, by 2003, ACE providers were delivering nationally accredited VET programs in all the main fields of education and at all VET qualification levels but notably less at the higher end of VET and in the diploma and associate diploma areas.

67 Choy S, Haukka S, Keyes L, 2006, *ACE's role in developing Australia's human capital: A meta-analysis*. Canberra: Adult Learning Australia.

68 Harris R, Simons M, McCarthy C, 2006, *Private Training Providers in Australia: their characteristics and training activities*, NCVER, Adelaide.

Productivity Places Program

The VET system is undergoing further developments in order to provide training that meets the skills needs of industry. One of these is the Productivity Places Program. Under this program, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed in November 2008 to deliver about 500 000 training places to job-seekers and existing workers in identified areas of skills shortages over a four year period (Council of Australian Governments 2008).

Funding of places on the program will be informed by a priority list of industries, occupations and regions experiencing skills shortages. In terms of funding the existing worker places, the Commonwealth Government will fund 50% of places for existing workers, with state governments funding 40%, and industry the remaining 10% (Council of Australian Governments 2008).

It helps to develop some precision with regard to the nature of the skills requirements that are being identified. There are several different types of 'skills shortages' that tend to be lumped together in conversations on the topic. Understanding the different types of 'skills shortages' will help to determine the most appropriate skills supply solution(s) to pursue.

Table 13 Types of skills shortages

Level 1 shortage	There are few people who have the essential technical skills who are not already using them AND there is a long training time to develop the skills.
Level 2 shortage	There are few people who have the essential technical skills who are not already using them BUT there is a short training time to develop the skills
Skills mismatch	There are sufficient people who have the essential technical skills who are not already using them, BUT they are not willing to apply for the vacancies under current conditions
Skills quality gap	There are sufficient people with the essential technical skills, not already using them, who are willing to apply for the vacancies, BUT who lack some qualities that employers think are important.

(Source: Richardson, 2007)[69]

Table 14 Skills shortages supply options

Increase the number of people in training in requisite areas	Young people entering the workforce Existing workers—up-skilling People to re-enter
Increase in-migration of people with the requisite skills	Key determinants of where people choose to live and work include the availability of health services, education and training, housing, jobs and career opportunities and infrastructure, and people's perceptions of community and lifestyle
Reduce skills wastage—the number of people with requisite skills leaving the industry	Wage incentives, work conditions such as flexibility of hours and management practices influence skilled workers decisions to stay in an industry as do poor perceptions of the industry and a lack of appropriate training
Reduce workforce exits—the number of people leaving the workforce	Canvas older workers nearing retirement about taking on different work roles more consistent with their current life circumstances or starting their own part time business

(Source: Richardson 2007 and BTRE, 2006)[70]

Higher level VET

The highest future demand for work skills in Australia is at higher levels of VET, at the diploma levels (table 15 below).

Table 15 Future predicted gaps in the supply of persons with VET qualifications nationally in the ten years 2006 to 2016

Qualification level	Annual % increase to meet requirements
Adv Diploma	27.2
Diploma	14.1
Certificate IV	-1.9
Certificate III	2.4
Certificate II	-14.9
Certificate I	-9.7
All	1.9

Source: CEET, 2006, *The Future Labour market and Qualifications in Australia*

Certificate I and II qualifications yield a job outcome—such as florist, factory hand, sales assistant—however for most people they are best seen as stepping stones to higher level VET qualifications to ensure job security[71]. Low skilled jobs are becoming increasingly scarce.

Certificate III is the benchmark qualification for sustainable job outcomes and good wages. Certificate IVs offer advanced trades and equivalent jobs skills.There is unmet demand for workers with these VET qualifications.

Higher level VET qualifications, at Diploma levels are needed to meet changing technologies, and increase the productivity and competitiveness of industry. The highest future demand for work skills in Australia is at this level but there are issues associated with the current VET diploma and associate diplomas.

Foster et al 2007 provide details of the issues associated with the current VET qualifications at the higher, diploma and associate diploma levels.[72] These researchers suggest three main actions to improve VET Diploma and Associate Diploma level products:

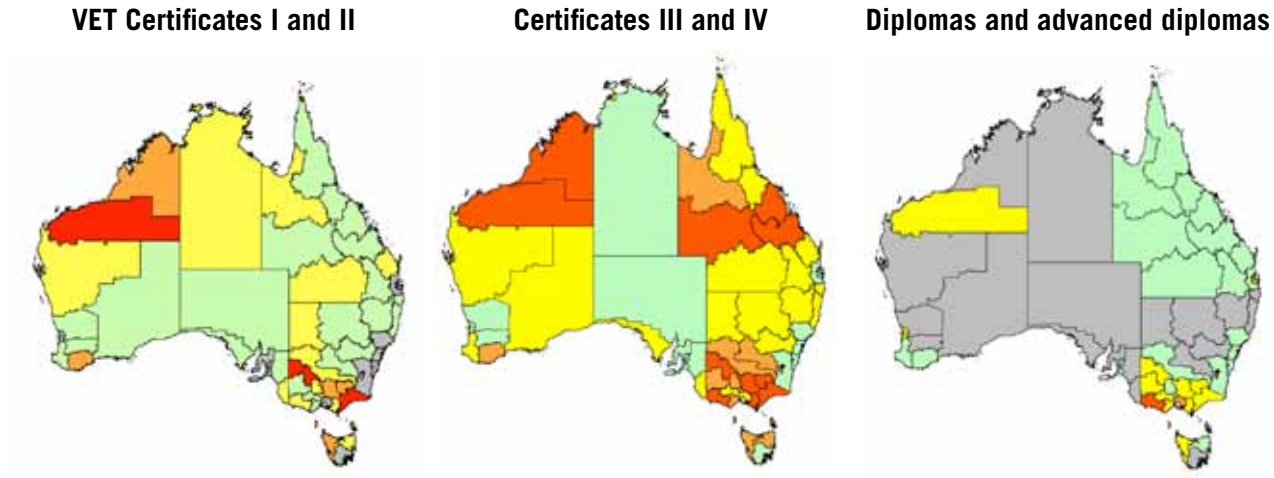
- relax the tight specification of training packages to job roles; this will enable emerging roles and skills to be readily incorporated into higher level VET qualifications
- develop broader qualifications that integrate knowledge and skills across job roles and streams within the industry. This will allow a greater emphasis on generic employability skills and business and specialised knowledge as electives
- increase the work and industry experiences within diploma level course training programs.

The need for higher level VET is greatest in regional Australia (see Figure 3 on next page)

69 Richardson S, 2007, *What is a Skills Shortage?* NCVER, Adelaide.
70 Bureau of Transport and Regional Services 2006, *Skill Shortages in Australia's Regions*, Department of Transport and Regional Services, Canberra.
71 Stanwick J, 2005, *Outcomes from lower-level vocational education and training qualifications*, NCVER, Adelaide.
72 Foster S, Delaney B, Bateman A, Dyson C, 2007, *Higher-level vocational education and training qualifications: Their importance in today's training market*, NCVER, Adelaide.

Figure 3 Scale of publicly funded VET in each of 69 Australian regions

(ABS statistical divisions)



Source: The Australian VET Atlas, accessible online through the NCVER website.

- Red – high
- Orange
- Yellow – mid
- Green
- Mauve – low

Employment services

Some researchers have suggested there has been a lack of successful and sustained connections between employment services and VET to date. For those disadvantaged in learning, the provision of assistance for finding employment, including when searching for work placements as part of VET programs, remains a high need. This means VET providers should link to local enterprises, be aware of regional development plans and relevant local workforce skills data.

Targeting local employment and offering programs of specific occupational training for available employment opportunities fits with the distinctive qualities of ACE providers as being responsive to local needs.

Enterprise level workplace planning and customised gap vocational training

The idea of VET offering workforce planning skills development programs has been raised[73]—and there has been a trend towards VET providers becoming more involved in overall workforce planning and development. A website for an overview of what is involved is: http://www.apsc.gov.au/publications06/workforceplanning.htm.

Enterprise workforce development and planning requires a diverse skill set, broader than those required by VET practitioners for training and assessment services.[74]

Contribute to the training of Australia's workplace trainers and assessors

This is a suggestion made by Bardon[75]. Research on older people and training shows that computer skills training or updating computer skills was the most useful training in enabling them to continue working past retirement age and that many favour 'train the trainer' courses to equip them to train or mentor younger workers.[76]

Social enterprises

In these times of recession, there is renewed interest in job creation and social enterprises that meet local needs and which can generate revenue for reinvestment in other activities within ACE providers. Social enterprises are businesses that trade for a social purpose. There are numerous definitions of social enterprise and worldwide it is a much contested term.

Social Ventures Australia (SVA) is a non-profit organisation established in 2002 by The Benevolent Society, The Smith Family, WorkVentures and the AMP Foundation to enhance Australia's social fabric. It aims to develop innovative and entrepreneurial social programs into sustainable, high impact social ventures. SVA works with innovative non-profit organisations to increase their growth and impact to drive transformational social change. Their website is http://www.socialventures.com.au/

SVA and Social Traders are co-hosting the 2009 Social Enterprise World Forum (SEWF) in Melbourne from 6–8 October 2009 to support the emerging Australian social enterprise movement, showcase successful enterprises and raise the profile of social enterprise in the region and the world.

Also the newly created Centre for Social Impact will be involved in teaching and collaborative research to help build social entrepreneurs and high performing social ventures. The Centre is a three university partnership venture—University of New South Wales, the University of Melbourne and Swinburne University of Technology (www.csi.edu.au).

Entrepreneurial education

Garlick, Taylor and Plummer (2007[77]) challenge VET providers to produce enterprising people. They argue such people are needed in Australian regions—people who achieve outcomes, 'can doers' who understand the way markets operate, can access finance, can see an opportunity, understand risk management, and can mobilise resources to good effect. Entrepreneurial education is usually linked to universities but Garlick et al argue VET has a largely unfilled role to play here because of its links to industry and its focus on job-specific education. VET is best placed to embrace an enterprising human capital approach to regional development.

VET can help prepare students, especially advanced students, for entrepreneurial careers if they so choose, through special education programs and/or because of the way VET programs are delivered. The aim is to produce graduates who are capable of being innovative and who can recognise and create opportunities, take risks, make decisions, analyse and solve problems, and communicate clearly and effectively; in other words, a generalised teaching and learning approach to encourage students to think and behave in an enterprising way. Course content can include dialogue, arbitrage, problem-solving, team work, finance, legal issues, management, networking, business planning, and market research. Graduating students may start new enterprises directly.

The World Economic Forum has just published a major report on Entrepreneurial Education[78].

Discussion points

73 Spoehr J, Barnett K, Parnis E, 2008, *Meeting workforce planning and development challenges: a direct role for the VET sector*, Presentation to the 11th Annual Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association (AVETRA) Conference—VET in Context, Adelaide, April 3 and 4, 2008, available at www.avetra.org.au

74 Workforce Blueprint can assist your organisation to become a workforce development and planning partner with enterprise and industry clients (possibly for a fee), http://www.workforceblueprint.com.au/

75 Bardon B, 2006, *Community Education and National Reform*, Discussion Paper for the Department of Education, Science and Training, November, 2006.

76 Lundberg D, Marshallsay Z, 2007, Older Workers' Perspectives on Training and Retention of Learning in Later Life, NCVER, Adelaide AND Diversity Council of Australia 2007, Grey Matters-Engaging Mature-aged workers,

77 Garlick S, Taylor M, Plummer P, 2007, *An enterprising approach to regional growth: The role of VET in regional development,* NCVER, Adelaide.

78 World Economic Forum, 2009, *Educating the Next Wave of Entrepreneurs Unlocking entrepreneurial capabilities to meet the global challenges of the 21st Century* A Report of the Global Education Initiative.

Frameworks for ensuring quality and sustainability

This chapter provides a collection of frameworks that were found during the scan of research for this report that might be of use by ACE providers for quality demonstration purposes.

Key points

- Frameworks are usually developed to ensure systematic attention is paid to the key factors that affect the quality of education and training and its outcomes
- Frameworks can be used for continuous improvement in planning and processes and/or reporting and accountability purposes
- The Frameworks included here have been developed for and with ACE providers to aid capability building in a range of areas
- There are two Frameworks specifically for ACE providers offering non-formal education
- Other frameworks included focus on ACE adaptivity and sustainability and client market segmentation and successful engagement with small business

Desired outcome

2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE Goal 4: Demonstrate quality

The A-Frame for non-accredited education program development and delivery (from Victoria)[79]

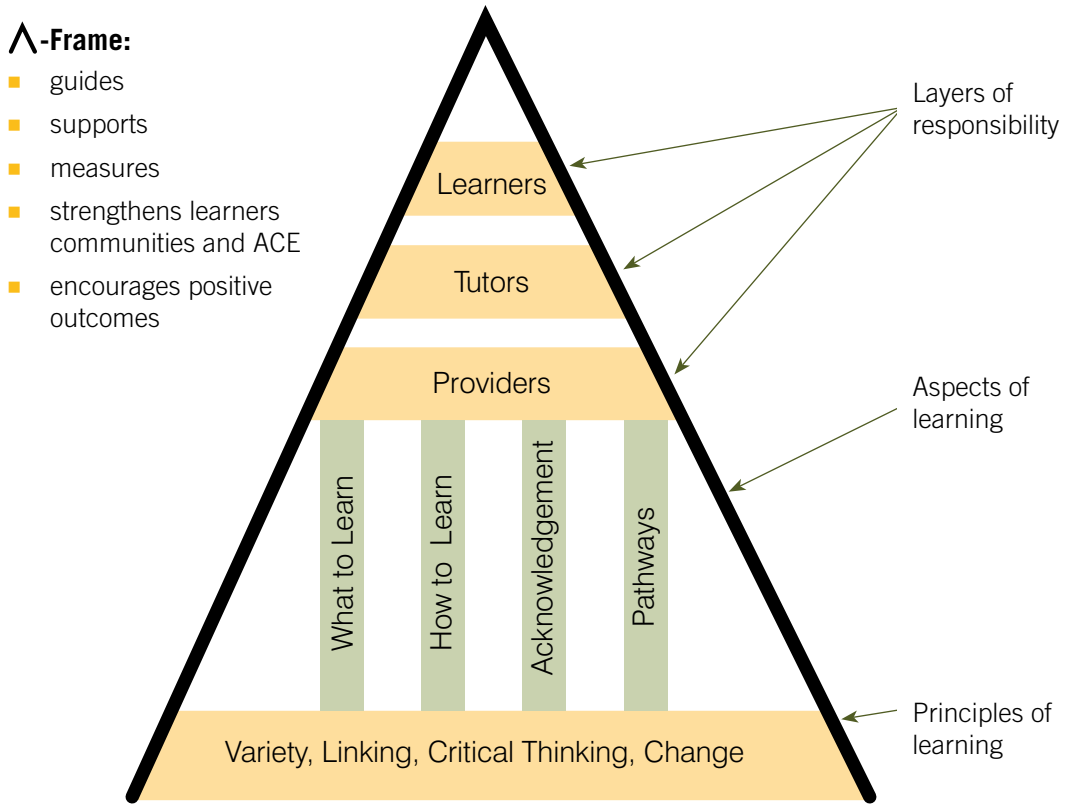
The Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board has developed a quality framework, called the A-Frame, to support the development and delivery of pre-accredited programs in ACE. It helps ACE teachers and course managers design, document and quality assure pre-accredited delivery.

The A-Frame caters for ACE providers delivering non-accredited learning; it includes very small organisations. The practical advantage of the A-Frame is that it helps teachers, learners and providers think through what will be learned, the reason for learning it and how teaching and learning should be structured and undertaken. Other important considerations are the form of acknowledgement that will be given to learners regarding their learning achievements and the pathways and future options that flow from these achievements. It encourages reflection on the outcomes for learners and promotes continuous improvement.

The A-Frame provides a consistent but flexible format for considering and documenting a learner's goals and outcomes as well as procedures for recording and monitoring student feedback.

79 Published by the Victorian ACFE Board, June, 2006, and available at www.acfe.vic.gov.au and www.cae.edu.au

Figure 4 A-Frame for non-accredited education program development and delivery



Australian standard non-formal learning—Guidelines for learning services providers (Standards Australia)[80]

The Standard aims to ensure learning services practitioners and professionals engaged in the delivery of non-formal learning are able to define, modify and change practice to improve quality, effectiveness and learning productivity. It is not intended to be used as the basis for registration or certification of individual learning services providers or organisations.

The Standard offers guidelines for quality and professional performance and practice. It adopts a competency-based approach, that is, it identifies the competence of LSPs to enable successful transfer and application of learning to the workplace. The process and the quality of the outcome depends on first determining the skills and competencies necessary to perform work consistently and to measurable standards. It then looks at designing and planning the learning process to impart knowledge and develop those necessary skills and competencies.

The Standard endeavours to provide guidelines to help LSPs meet the challenges of working in an environment characterised by increasing diversity in its client base, increasing sophistication in client expectations, changes in products and the expansion of options for learning. It acknowledges the ever increasing competition and demand caused by the globalisation of the labour market.

A framework for thinking about adaptivity in ACE (NSW)

The following framework was developed for analysing adaptivity in ACE[81]. The framework is based on a review of research and has four main areas where *solutions* are developed: in knowledge of the environment, strategy (guiding response), culture (orienting an organisation to change) and resources (what is required to support adaptive functioning

Table 16 Draft model of factors affecting adaptability

Knowledge	**Culture**
1. Awareness of what is occurring in the environment	1. A culture aimed at growth
2. Awareness of the implications for the organisation of the changes	2. Acceptability of the diversion of resources from one activity to another
3. Capacity to pick up weak signals	3. Culture shift from excellence to opportunity-driven
4. Awareness of the possibilities of existing capital and talent	4. Continuously work on corporate culture and break down barriers to change
Strategy	**Resources**
1. Common vision/strategy	1. Promote and mobilise human talent and creativity
2. Clear leadership	2. Build connectivity within the organisation and with partners
3. Constantly open up new strategic growth opportunities	3. Encourage diversity, risk-taking and challenging views
4. Continuously capitalise on innovations of products and services	4. Promote learning from experience
5. Compelling visions as alternatives to dying strategies	5. Establish clear guidelines on what is not to be done rather than directing what is to be done
6. Taking calculated risks	6. Develop structures based upon integration not compartmentalisation
7. Rapid response to new opportunities	7. Incentive systems that reward learning and adaption
8. Flexible networking and partnering	8. Manage finances conservatively
8. Enhance strategic alliances	9. Maximise effective and efficient use of resources

Insights from the authors' analytical framework from NSWACE providers are included in the report.

80 Published 15 May 2009 as the Handbook HB 329. for sale by SAI Global Web: http://infostore.saiglobal.com/store Email: sales@saiglobal.com)

81 Brown, Chodkiewicz, Hawke, Yasukawa, 2007, *Adaptive ACE organisations: responding to uncertainty*, NSW Board of Adult and Community Education.

The ACE Sustainability Framework

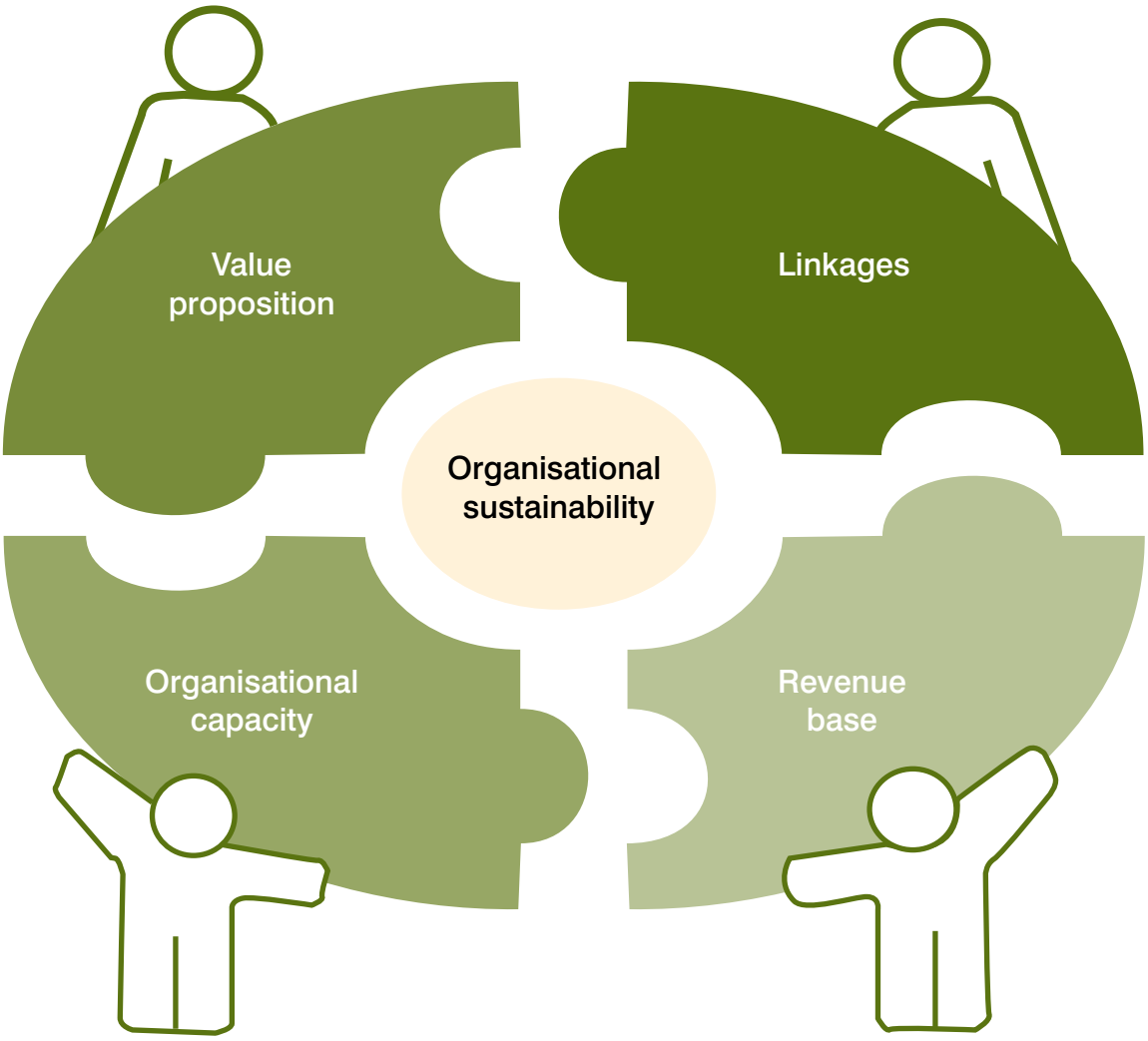
(Victoria)

The Sustainability Framework incorporates four key elements that are interrelated. All are essential for sustainability[82]:

- the value the organisation provides to its stakeholders
- the capacity of the organisation to achieve its impacts (and deliver on that value proposition)
- the ability to manage linkages
- the ability to acquire the necessary financial resources to operate on a sustainable basis.

The report in which this Sustainability Framework is presented discusses each key sustainability building activity in turn.

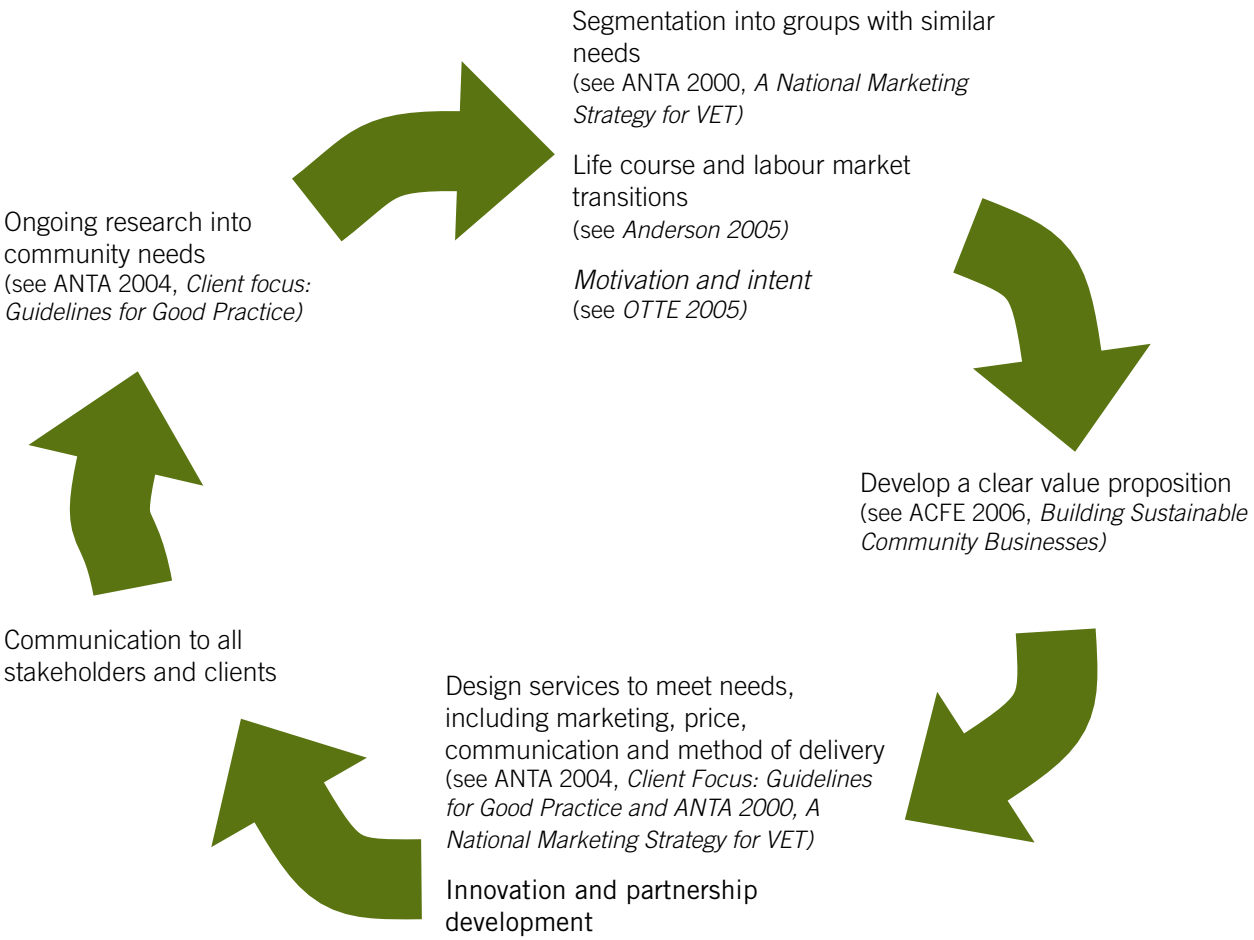
Figure 5 Sustainability Framework



A framework for building capability in individual client market research (NSW)

This framework comes from Couldrey's research[83], figure 2.The important feature of this framework is that it is a cycle, which recognises the need to be responsive to changing client needs and secondly, it is not 'one size fits all'. The tools which can be used at each point in the cycle are included.

Figure 6 A framework to build capability—the continous cycle and tools for use



82 2006 *Building Sustainable Community Businesses: A strategy for success* Adult Community and Further Education Board, Melbourne.

83 Couldrey M, 2006, *Market Segmentation in ACE* Report commissioned by the NSW Board of ACE. BACE: Sydney.

A framework for developing services for small businesses (Newton 2005 for ALA)

The small business development score card was developed specifically for ACE providers to serve as a ready reference as they develop learning services that both address the needs of small enterprises and fit with their operational limitations.

	Action We implement this:	Consistently	Occasionally	Infrequently	Not Yet
		1	2	3	4
✔	**We play to our strengths by providing flexible, innovative, tailored, 'just in time', 'just for me' training**				
	We tailor learning experiences to meet the individual needs and styles of learners				
	We utilise our expertise in individualised training provision, and provide the informal atmosphere conducive to learning				
	We utilise the enormous range of flexible learning materials available through the Flexible Learning Famework and other 'open access' providers				
	We provide genuine flexibility; and assist to identify needs and tailor delivery to match				
	We provide quality, relevant training in 'bit-sized chunks' (and recognition where relevant, as a value-add)				
✔	**We build relationships with small workplaces in the local area**				
	We have a 'foot in the door' with our local small enterprises				
	We nurture and build on the relationship with business				
	We actively promote ACE services to small business				
✔	**We act as the 'bridge' between small enterprises and the formal training system**				
	We operate a as 'learning broker'				
	We build networks				
	We value-add; and provide the linkage to learning and business support systems for small business				
	As an intergral part of local employment/training and regional development networks, we utilise local knowledge and expertise to assist in identiying and addressing training gaps				
✔	**We eliminate jargon—we use plain English to foster engagement, and to assist small enterprises to de-mystify the formal training system**				
✔	**We clearly demonstrate return on investment from training and learning to small business owners/managers**				
	We use the pace of change as an opportunity to assist small enterprises to 'cushion' against future shock				

The full value of ACE

This chapter looks at the full value of ACE providers that goes beyond the roles identified in the 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE.

Key points

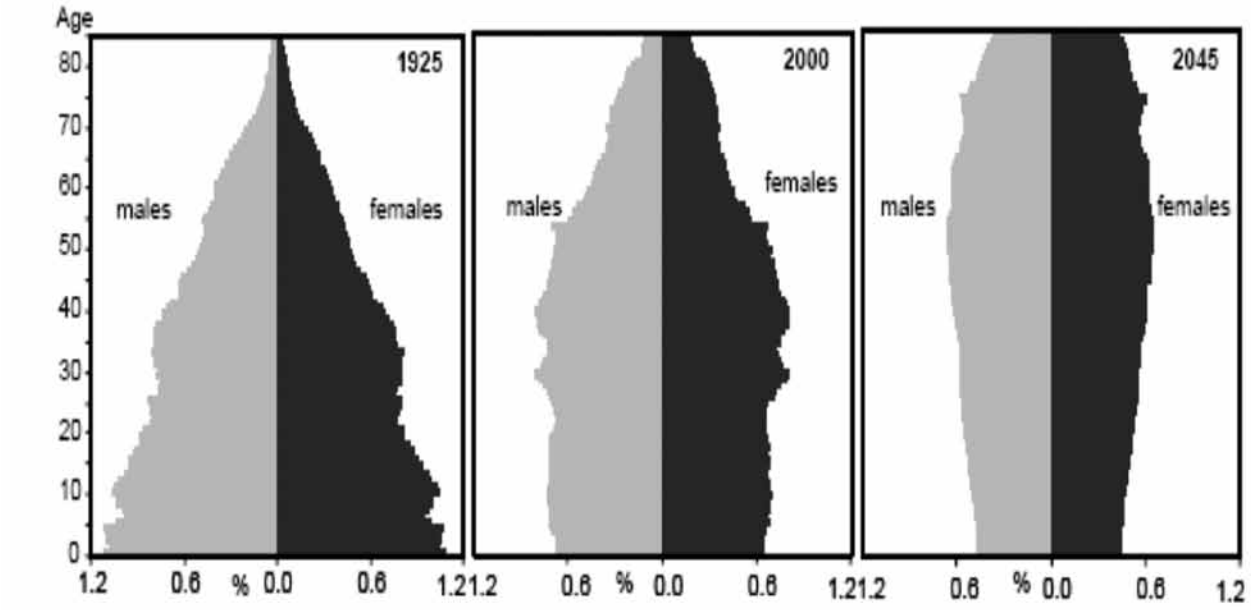
- The time has never been better for ACE to claim the broad benefits it generates
- ACE providers have diverse and extensive service offerings that can be grouped under six roles and that give rise to a diverse range of outcomes and benefits
- The contribution of ACE to vocationally focused education and training and work outcomes is significant
- The non-work focused importance and contribution of ACE is equally significant

Desired outcome

Keep awareness high of the full contribution of ACE to various policy agendas

This chart reminds us that we have an increasingly ageing population looking to remain active and engaged in their communities although not necessarily for paid work purposes. The non-work focused importance and contribution of ACE to personal health, well being and community cohesiveness needs to be valued in its own right.

Figure 7 From pyramid to coffin: Changing age structure of Australian population

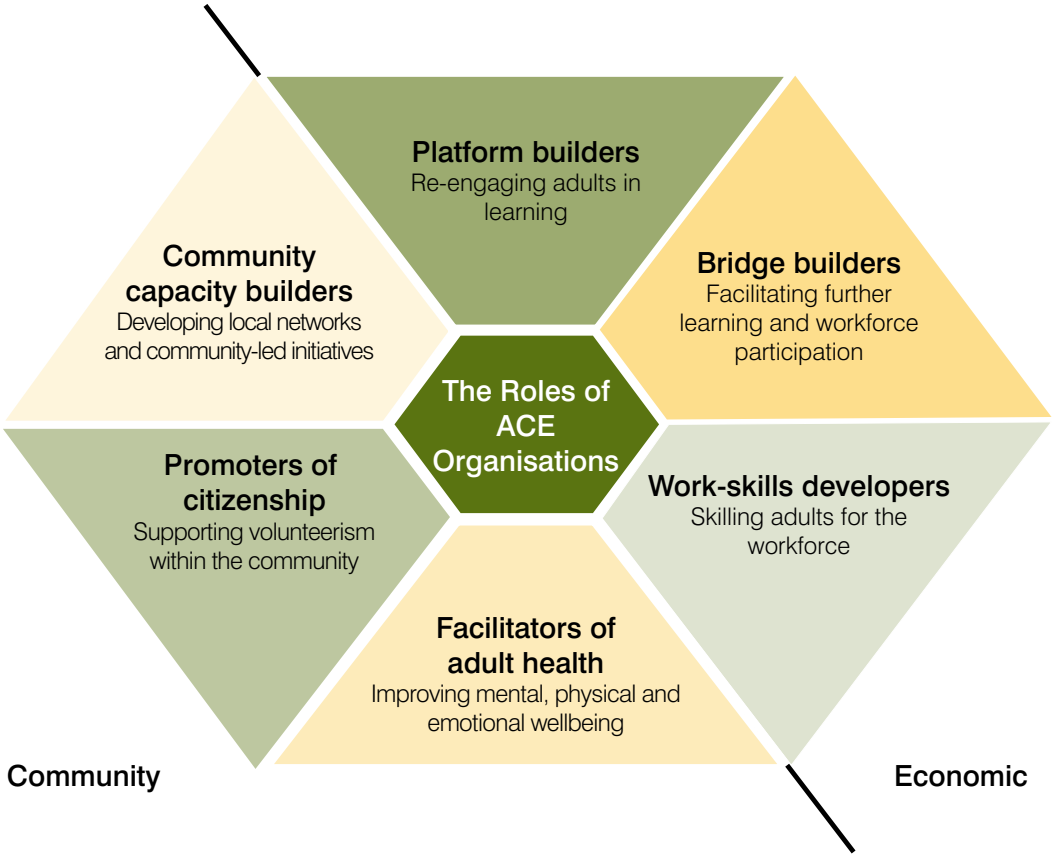


Source: Productivity Commission, 2005 *Economic Implications of an Ageing Australia* Commonwealth of Australia, G Figure 1 pxiv

Roles of ACE

ACE has a diverse and extensive service offering. Figure 8 shows 6 key roles that Australian ACE providers *collectively* perform that have been identified[84].

Figure 8 Roles of ACE providers



Source: Adapted from Bowman 2006 by Allen Consulting 2008[85]

These 6 roles of ACE providers are not necessarily mutually exclusive roles. ACE providers act as:

Platform builders—re-engaging adults with learning who have limited previous education and giving them a new start at obtaining basic education skills, for life and work purposes

Bridge builders—providing pathways for learning-engaged adults into formal tertiary education and paid work and so helping to up-skill Australians to keep pace with the increasingly skills rich nature of much of the available work nowadays

Work-skills developers—offering vocational training in their own right and across the full spectrum of VET qualifications and fields of educational study, including in the trades areas and at diploma levels where there are identified skills shortages across the country

Facilitators of adult health—improving mental, physical and emotional well-being, that is a growing issue in Australia, given the ageing of our population among other reasons

Promoters of citizenship—achieving adults active as volunteers in community activities, and thereby contributing to social cohesion and unity

Community capacity builders—facilitating local networks and community-led developments which is inline with current government policies that advocate self-help local development.

The economic value of ACE

The economic value of ACE has been estimated by some researchers using various methodologies and taking into account various benefits to be significant.

The benefits of ACE for valuation purposes can be divided into two main types:

- **The economic or market benefits** that relate to labour market outcomes and include transitioning to further education and training and to, and in, employment with resulting income gains to individuals and tax revenues to governments the community.
- **The non-economic or non-market** benefits that relate to improved health, parenting, civic attitude and participation, intergenerational learning and crime prevention.

Longitudinal studies of ACE participants in the state of Victoria, Australia demonstrate the high capacity of ACE providers to engage adults in foundation education and provide pathways to formal vocational education and work[86].

A 2003 study[87] has made an exploratory estimate of the market or vocational impact of ACE for the whole of Australia to be $3.3 billion annually (in 2001 dollars).

This estimate comprised of a private net vocational impact of $2.5 billion and a net community impact of $0.8 billion.

The private net vocational impact estimate measured actual (work) income and projected income arising from the numbers of transfers of ACE participants into vocational education and training or higher education or directly to work.

The net community benefits covered income to ACE sectors suppliers, teachers and employment income, student expenditures and additional tax revenues (by far the biggest of the four factors). Quantifiable community costs taken into account included government subsidies, student fees and earnings foregone.

A 2008 report describes and quantifies the economic benefits resulting from all ACE activity in Victoria to assist the Victorian Government to evaluate the contribution of ACE to the achievement of policy objectives and to the economies of local communities, regions and Victoria as a whole[88].

The market benefits were estimated to amount to an increase in GSP of $16 billion, and tax benefits of $21.7 million over the period 2007 to 2031 in net present value terms.

The non-market benefits were suggested to be of at least a similar magnitude.

These benefits are achieved relative to a Victorian Government investment of $741 million over twenty-five years (in discounted terms).

The benefit categories of the model used are shown below with each of the market and non-market benefits further categorised as private, accruing to those individuals participating in ACE, or public, those externalities (or 'spillover benefits') experienced by the wider community.

84 Bowman, 2006, *The value of ACE providers ALA*, Canberra.

85 Allen Consulting Group, 2008, The economic benefit of investment in adult community education in Victoria: report to the Dept of Planning and Community Development and the Adult, Community and Further Education Board.

86 Walstab A, Volkoff V, Teese R, 2005, *ACE Connects: Building pathways to education , employment and community engagement*, ACE Longitudinal study-survey 2005, Centre for Post-compulsory education and lifelong learning, University of Melbourne.

87 Birch E, Kenyon P, Koshy P, Wills-Johnson N, 2003, *Exploring the social and economic impacts of adult and community education*, NCVER, Adelaide.

88 Allen Consulting, 2008, *The economic benefit of investment in ACE in Victoria*, Report to the Department of Planning and Community Development and the Adult, Community and Further Education Board

Table 17 Components of economic evaluation of the ACE sector in Victoria

Benefit	Private	Public
Market benefits—benefits that are traded in the market economy—that result from the additional productivity of Victorians who have increased their human capital by participating in ACE	■ Increased productivity, leading to increased wages from paid employment ■ Stepping stone to higher education that then leads to market benefits	■ Productivity spillovers—more educated workers are able to increase the productivity of colleagues
Non-market benefits—benefits that are not traded in the market economy, such as benefits to the health and wellbeing of ACE participants, that while not as readily quantifiable, are real and substantial, and should not be overlooked when estimating the value of ACE	■ Health and wellbeing ■ Enjoyment of the ACE environment ■ More efficient household management ■ Other benefits	■ Social capital ■ Volunteerism and giving ■ Decreased crime ■ Intergenerational benefits ■ Other benefits

Another 2008 study has estimated the full economic benefit of the ACE sector in New Zealand[89]. The combined market and non-market economic benefit of New Zealand's ACE sector was estimated as between $4.8 and $6.3 million annually in current dollar terms, that is, a return on investment of $54 to 72 for each dollar spent as outlined above.

More on the non-vocational contribution of ACE

Learning is complex and difficult for researchers to disentangle from the many variables affecting an individual's life. It is therefore difficult to establish the causal effects of adult learning on economic, and especially on non-economic, outcomes. The quality of the available databases can also be an issue. Notwithstanding, there is strong evidence, mainly from overseas to show that participation in adult education contributes to positive changes in health and attitudes and increased civic participation and crime prevention.

Health and health behaviour

Quantitative evidence on the health benefits of adult learning reviewed by NIACE UK demonstrated an important link between individuals' participation in learning during adulthood and their subsequent changes in health and health behaviours. The following conclusions were reached:

- there is evidence that adult learning is associated with individuals' health (for instance those who undertake adult learning report better health)
- empirical evidence has found that adult learning can have both transforming and sustaining effects on health. In particular, adult learning can transform well-being, optimism, efficacy and self-rated health. It can maintain health behaviours, for example, the likelihood of remaining a non-smoker
- it remains relatively unexplored as to what kind of learning can make the most impact on individuals' health outcomes.

A 2008 report of the UK Centre of the Wider Benefits of Learning also found:

- people involved in adult education are less likely to be dissatisfied in midlife, more likely to be optimistic and less likely to use health services. Moreover, such benefits are greater for educationally disadvantaged adults
- people with better qualifications are more likely to have healthy lifestyles, to be fitter and slimmer—and such health advantages can be transferred to the next generation at the earliest age
- one more year of education increased life expectancy in the United States by as much as 1.7 years
- people attending adult education courses take more exercise and display greater awareness of health issues than others of their age
- learners in community based education with a history of mental health report that participation in learning has positive effects upon mental health. Indeed, some GP practices now prescribe education as a treatment for their patients, and such schemes have been piloted. In an evaluation of these pilots, patients who engaged in education as part of their treatment reported a range of benefits associated with mental health and well-being.

Civic engagement and attitude change

A 15-country study conducted by the UK Centre of the Wider Benefits of Learning suggests that, at the national level, education may contribute to societal cohesion in the following ways:

- greater trust (of individuals and of government)
- more civic co-operation
- increased racial tolerance
- lower levels of violent crime.

The abovementioned 2007 NIACE Review reports:

- empirical evidence shows that adult learning is associated with civic engagement (political interest, memberships to organisations and voting behaviour) and attitudes (race tolerance, authoritarian attitudes, and political cynicism)
- the evidence has further shown that adult learning is associated with attitude change. In particular, adult education was implicated in a movement towards more 'open-minded' perspectives on race and authority
- adult education seems to be important in sustaining non-extremist views but it does not appear to be associated with the transformation away from extremist positions
- more evidence is needed to understand the mechanisms for adult learning to impact upon individuals' attitudes and social outcomes.

89 Price WaterhouseCoopers 2008 *Economic evaluation of adult and community education outcomes* report for Adult and Community Education Aotearoa Inc.

ACE and active ageing

The Men's Community Sheds movement across Australia is a new form of informal community education that is creating spaces and opportunities for men to be active and socially connected and to use their vocational skills and produce useful products for their communities. These community-run men's sheds have high proportions of older men not in work and have important wellbeing and health benefits [90].The sheds are an example strategy for positive and active ageing.

The Australian Government has committed to a *Positive and Active Ageing Plan* [91].The *Plan* recognises the benefits associated with participating in community life, regular exercise and recreational activities, and seeks to remove the barriers that prevent older Australians from healthy ageing. The ACE sector has a long and proud tradition of success in delivering these benefits. The full value of ACE providers that goes beyond the vocational roles identified in the 2008 Ministerial Declaration on ACE needs to be recognised.

Discussion points

90 Golding B, Brown M, Foley A, Harvey J, Gleeson L, 2007, *Men's sheds in Australia: Learning through community contexts,* NCVER, Adelaide.

91 Available at <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/ministers/publishing.nsf/Content/mr-yr08-je-je099.htm>