



Media release

Adult and community education plays a vital role in VET

Adult Learning Australia (ALA) welcomes the announcement of a review into vocational education and training (VET) by the Federal Government.

“This has been a long time coming. Funding cuts and open competition in VET have failed both students and employers,” says Adult Learning Australia’s CEO, Jenny Macaffer.

“ALA has long expressed concerns about VET funding cuts and the unethical practices by some VET providers that have severely impacted vulnerable Australians.”

“We need to ensure that everyone has access to high quality education throughout their lives to ensure they can adapt to changing social and economic circumstances, and to the ever-changing job market. The adult and community education (ACE) sector plays a key role in this.”

According to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), ACE organisations in Australia currently enrol more than 9% of total VET students, and are acknowledged for their expertise in providing accessible learning opportunities in local communities.

Not-for-profit ACE organisations are often the only ‘on the ground’ providers of post-school education in local neighbourhoods and small rural locations. They exist in towns and communities with small populations that can’t sustain a TAFE or university campus, or where the education market is too small to attract private for-profit operators. In larger communities, they supplement the work of a TAFE or university by offering non-accredited and accredited VET pathway programs and provide a range of VET courses to a range of adult learners.

“Government policy must recognise the crucial role of adult and community education in VET, and acknowledge its role in retraining and reskilling Australians, and in providing pathways to work and further learning,” says Jenny Macaffer, CEO.

ALA will work to assist the review and advance the interests of not for profit adult and community providers and adult learners.

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