

# ADULT, COMMUNITY AND FURTHER EDUCATION BOARD



STRATEGY: 2016 TO 2019



## A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER FOR TRAINING AND SKILLS

**The Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board is a key player in achieving high quality education and training opportunities and outcomes for all Victorians. The Education State agenda will be at the centre of the Board's work, aiming to provide access and opportunity for every individual to excel in education, regardless of their background, location, ability or circumstance.**

I am very pleased to see the strong alignment of the objectives of this strategic statement with the goals of the Education State.

In working on the priority areas identified, I am confident that the ACFE Board, with the support of the ACFE Regional Councils and in partnership with the Learn Local sector, will continue to build the skills and abilities of adult Victorians to contribute economically and socially to our community. This is a critical task.

The Andrews Labor Government believes training plays a major role in addressing disadvantage and promoting equity, and regardless of age, background or postcode, there should be opportunities for all Victorians to train for a brighter future.

The Government also understands the cost of delivering quality training. In January 2016, the subsidy rate for pre-accredited training increased for the first time in six years.

Under Skills First, the Government recognises how crucial Learn Locals are to communities across Victoria, often providing opportunities to some of the most disadvantaged.

Through Skills First funding, Learn Locals will be eligible to receive funding to build on their important role in providing training to their local communities, through the \$20 million Reconnect program extension. In addition, \$1.5 million has also been made available to establish Learn Local Quality Partnerships, which will assist with administration and free up Learn Locals so they can do what they do best – teach.

I have outlined a number of further areas for the Board to address in my Statement of Expectations.

Principle among these, are that with the Government's support and funding, the Board will work to improve outcomes for all adult learners – and in particular those experiencing disadvantage – and raise the profile of the ACFE Board and the community-based adult education sector. This strategy clearly articulates how the Board will prioritise activities to achieve this.

I wish the Board, the Regional Councils and the Learn Local sector every success in achieving this strategy's aspirations and look forward to supporting their important work.



**Hon. Steve Herbert MP**

Minister for Training and Skills



# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE ACFE BOARD

## A TIME FOR RENEWAL

This ACFE Board strategy positions the sector for changes taking place as Victoria creates the Education State and capitalises on an emerging appetite for renewal in the education sector. The strategic landscape is being transformed by factors including new policy settings, shifting demographics and challenging market conditions. Further, to provide quality pre-accredited training that reduces socio-economic disadvantage, we need to adopt new systems, processes and practices that ensure resources are deployed for maximum effect.

This strategy affirms the role of Learn Local organisations in the education sector and guides decision making over the next three years. The ACFE Board will move quickly on proposals that bring immediate benefits and explore more expansive opportunities that can deliver enduring benefits to learners and stakeholders.

## ACFE HAS AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY IN SHAPING FUTURE PROSPERITY

Not all Victorians have the skills needed to participate meaningfully in our economy, limiting their options and constraining Victoria's ability to capitalise on the economic and social participation of all its citizens. Learn Local organisations are experts in delivering pre-accredited training and related services to Victorians facing learning barriers, developing their skills and starting them on pathways to employment or further education. The sector takes pride in positioning learners for future success by developing the broad range of skills required for these important transitions. The funding of pre-accredited training programs is targeted to ensure that it is impactful and responsive to learner needs and local pathways.

## STEWARDSHIP OF THE SYSTEM

The future prosperity of the ACFE sector depends on the efforts of the many, not the few. The ACFE Board, with advice from Regional Councils, provides sector leadership by communicating clear objectives and designing and influencing the system settings for Learn Locals to improve outcomes for learners.

As system stewards, the ACFE Board is attuned to the needs of the whole system and will drive initiatives that benefit learners, providers and collaborators. With a compelling mission, we are well positioned to collaborate with those who share a common agenda and foster mutually beneficial relationships across the sector. The profile and impact of the sector will be enhanced by building and promoting an evidence base demonstrating the value of the work we do.

There are over three hundred Learn Local organisations delivering pre-accredited training and related services. They continue to demonstrate their resourcefulness and commitment to enhancing the lives of people in their communities. The ACFE Board supports Learn Local organisations to build the skills, resources and connections to prosper and encourages innovation and the diffusion of good ideas and practices throughout the system.

## STRATEGIES FOR RENEWAL

In establishing four key strategic priorities, the ACFE Board intends to bring a renewed sense of focus and creativity to our strategic efforts. Positive and lasting change will be achieved by:

- Mobilising resources to ensure access to high quality programs
- Supporting pathways to further education or employment
- Establishing high visibility and the reputation of pre-accredited training
- Strengthening the capacity of providers.

I encourage sector stakeholders to initiate and participate in activities that are aligned with these strategies, as our collective efforts enhance the social and economic participation of learners and contribute to the civic and economic capacity of the State.



**Sue Christophers,**  
Chairperson, ACFE Board



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



## QUALITY ACFE

Our resources are used to ensure access to high quality programs

### PRIORITIES

- Ensure programs and related services **respond to learner needs and aspirations**, connecting to further education and employment pathways
- Design the system settings for **responsive and agile program delivery** across networks of providers to maximise access for learners

In 2016/17, the ACFE Board will continue its focus on maximising the access of priority learner cohorts to consistently high quality pre-accredited programs which are efficiently delivered. As well as careful targeting of resources to priority groups, the Board will provide opportunities for teachers and trainers to access the expertise to maintain and develop their professional skills as well as forums to collaborate and innovate.

#### This will be enabled by:

- ✓ Continuing and expanding communities of practice that provide opportunities for Learn Local trainers to seek support from others, collaborate and promote innovation
- ✓ Continuing to ensure relevant professional development is available for Learn Local practitioners
- ✓ Seeking to ensure that Peak bodies' involvement in communities of practice injects specific expertise and promotes knowledge sharing
- ✓ Ensuring Regional Council plans identify the level of need for pre-accredited training for the identified key cohorts
- ✓ Supporting regional networks that leverage potential collaborations.

#### Specific activities to be undertaken to meet these priorities include:

- ✓ Building an online directory of programs, innovations and expert practitioners for providers to access
- ✓ Exploring options for inclusion of skills specifically needed in pre-accredited training delivery in teacher training
- ✓ Developing a common template to provide formal recognition for pre-accredited training completion.



## ACCOUNTABLE ACFE

We support pathways to further education and employment

### PRIORITIES

- Develop **robust baselines and build an evidence base** for planning and monitoring regional performance in transitioning learners to further education and employment
- Review and align budget and supports towards **programs and initiatives with high conversion rates** to further education and employment

The Board's focus in 2016/17 for these priorities is on establishing the evidence base and baseline measures to demonstrate that the programs and activities it funds and supports are achieving transitions of pre-accredited learners to further education and employment.

The evidence will support the Board to set future targets, align its budget to meet these targets and set and manage its risk framework.

#### This will be enabled by:

- ✓ Review and align the ACFE Board Budget and Risk Management Framework to the strategic objectives
- ✓ Targeting regional strategies to the key cohorts of need and explicitly aligning programs to them.

#### Specific activities to be undertaken to meet these priorities include:

- ✓ Mapping and evaluating currently funded activities for their actual or potential impact on pre-accredited learners moving into further training or employment
- ✓ Identifying baselines for conversion rates to training and jobs for each priority cohort
- ✓ Developing lead indicators to make projections for future planning.



## INFLUENTIAL ACFE

ACFE and pre-accredited training are well known and highly regarded

### PRIORITIES

- Proactively foster **productive relationships across the system** with state departments, TAFEs, Local Government and industry to shape policy settings, and collaborate to maximise impact
- Promote the evidence base to demonstrate the socio-economic value and **monitor the impact of pre-accredited training** on Victoria's prosperity

In 2016/17, the focus will be on high level strategic relationships which can be leveraged to align the sector to employment needs, collaborate on projects to maximise impact, and shape the policy settings.

The Board will share reports on its activities with key strategic stakeholders to encourage them to support ACFE programs.

#### This will be enabled by:

- ✓ Continuing to promote the impact of the ACFE sector on Victoria's socio-economic performance, particularly within the Education State agenda
- ✓ Supporting a sustainable funding model for ACFE during and beyond current VET Reform
- ✓ Leveraging high level strategic relationships with industry, state and Local Government and TAFE, maximising impact and influence through collaboration
- ✓ Supporting Regional Councils to discharge their role confidently
- ✓ Monitoring and evaluating the Board's performance and capability as an influencer.

#### Specific activities to be undertaken to meet these priorities include:

- ✓ Providing robust reports on the participation and attainment of learner cohorts, to encourage stakeholders to support ACFE programs, recognising the value of pre-accredited training.



## SUSTAINABLE ACFE

The ACFE provider network is strong and sustainable

### PRIORITIES

- Support a **network of providers with the right skills**, resources and connections to maximise deployment of resources and harness innovation
- Ensure and manage **sustainable funding provision** for sector programs

In 2016/17, the ACFE Board will continue to ensure that funding arrangements allow providers to manage risk and provide greater surety. Further steps will be taken to build the capability of the sector and to facilitate structured collaboration to support service provision.

Recognising the range of compliance obligations facing providers, the ACFE Board will work to ensure providers are supported to understand compliance obligations and to appropriately minimise the impact of ACFE Board compliance requirements.

#### This will be enabled by:

- ✓ Facilitating collaboration to enable more efficient management and administration, maximise resource utilisation, sharing of ideas and market intelligence
- ✓ Incentivising the broader application and sharing of promising innovations between providers
- ✓ Identifying opportunities to influence policy development external to the ACFE Board, which appropriately reduce compliance burden.

#### Specific activities to be undertaken to meet these priorities include:

- ✓ Reviewing the timing and mix of provider funding and other support strategies against strategic priorities to manage funding risk and provide greater surety
- ✓ Reviewing existing capability development strategies to ensure they are fit for purpose and develop new strategies as required
- ✓ Reviewing current ACFE Board registration and contracting requirements and appropriately minimising the impact of ACFE Board related compliance requirements
- ✓ Providing support to assist organisations to understand their compliance obligations.

## BACKGROUND

As a statutory body established by legislation in 1991, the Board's functions with respect to adult, community and further education include:

- planning, developing, evaluating and funding its co-ordination, provision and support
- advising the Minister on any relevant matters
- promoting research and development
- promoting public awareness of its importance.

When discharging these functions, the Board is expected to pay particular attention to arrangements that will give equitable access to learning opportunities for those people who have not had access to education, and who wish to participate, the quality of education that is provided and how this relates to specific community need.

The Board provides stewardship on behalf of the Government of Victoria for the adult, community and further education sector in line with Government priorities and the Board's legislated functions. The Board acts variously as system architect, funder, connector and influencer in discharging its responsibilities provision of pre-accredited training to adults facing socio-economic disadvantage.

## MISSION

**To increase the educational participation and attainment of adults, improve social cohesion and boost the human and social capital of Victoria.**

In developing its mission, the ACFE Board has looked closely at the opportunities and obligations that come with the unique position it occupies in the Victorian educational landscape.

## VISION

**The ACFE sector is recognised as a critical contributor to the prosperity of Victoria by improving transitions to further education and employment**

Achieving this vision for the ACFE sector – the Board, Regional Councils and the organisations that collaborate with the Board and each other to deliver services to learners – will be the focus of the strategic actions laid out in this document. When it is realised, the Board will be able to show that it is focussed on equity of access, quality provision of learning and meeting community need.

- ✓ **Increase the educational participation and attainment of adults**
- ✓ **Improve social cohesion**
- ✓ **Boost the human and social capital of Victoria**

## PRE-ACCREDITED LEARNER PATHWAY

