**Advice to providers to support targeting pre-accredited delivery
to priority learner groups**

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**North West Metropolitan Regional Council area**

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| **REGIONAL CONTEXT (max 2 pages)** |
| **Key Themes**North West Metropolitan (NWM) region has experienced continued strong population growth (most notably Wyndham and Hume), and faces challenges from a mix of aging population (Hobsons Bay) combined with newly arrived, young migrant population with diverse CALD communities. **Unemployment is a key issue** for the north west particularly given the closure of car manufacturing and supply chain businesses over the last 12 months. More prevalent is youth unemployment and disengaged youth, eg only about 70% young people aged 19 years had attained Year 12 or equivalent in both Wyndham and Hobsons Bay LGAs compared to about 80% for Victoria in general. **Women** of the NWM region face a number of challenges, including increasing levels of family violence, adequate access to women’s refuges, issues of underemployment (particularly for young women in hospitality and retail) and barriers to returning to the workforce including skills for the future (entrepreneurship skills, soft business skills, employability skills, digital skills). The NWM region has the **highest rate of arrival of immigrants**, and the highest number of residents who were born overseas and migrated to Australia, with Hume, Whittlesea, Wyndham and Melton having the highest rate of arrivals. ***Women***: * A focus on encouraging programs and pre-accredited training to support women’s safety, law and family violence awareness, women’s rights and gender equity.
* Enhanced access to pre-accredited leadership programs for women in workplace skills of the future is needed, opening up employment pathways in leadership and growth areas.

***CALD***:* Increased attention should be given to programs and services for CALD women, especially in the area of positive health outcomes, access to bilingual playgroups and awareness and education centred on participation in early childhood education.
* Enhanced English literacy capacity, particularly CALD Women. Early access to English intervention programs for women should be encouraged, particularly in the Hume, Whittlesea, Wyndham and Melton LGA is where the arrival of migrants is highest.

***Unemployment***:* Pre-accredited training must align with Victoria’s priority industry sectors where there is most future opportunity for economic growth. These sectors for NW Melbourne are: transport, distribution and logistics, construction, food, health, ICT, retail and professional services.
* Improving STEM skills to adapt to growing business opportunities in knowledge economy (and transition away from manufacturing) is also needed.
* development of soft skills to focus on a rounded and practical set of skills that provides a broad range of transferable skills beyond STEM such as:
	+ general management and admin skills
	+ foreign language skills
	+ creativity skills, knowledge of cultures
* in relation to disengaged youth, consideration should be given to providing additional support to existing VCAL providers so they can offer more places for more young people, as well as broaden subject offerings to build practical skills. Additionally, learners would benefit from expert advice on jobs, courses and pathways following completion of VCAL studies.
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The data below indicates how effectively pre-accredited delivery in 2015 (latest publicly available data) was targeting priority groups



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**Additional information on individual priority groups**

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| **YOUNG MOTHERS, WOMEN RETURNING TO WORK AND WOMEN WHO HAVE EXPEREINCED FAMILY VIOLENCE)** |
| Women in the NWM region face a number of challenges, including increasing levels of family violence, adequate access to women’s refuges, issues of underemployment (particularly for young women in hospitality and retail) and barriers to returning to the workforce including skills for the future (entrepreneurship skills, soft business skills, employability skills, digital skills). With the recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence released, it was interesting to note that many LGAs do not have women’s advisory committees or gender equity statements. Further, gaps were identified in limited offering of programs and pre-accredited training to support women’s safety, law and family violence awareness, women’s rights and gender equity. Other factors influencing opportunities for women in NWM include: * Closure of traditional manufacturing and auto industries
* Growth of employment in aged care, childcare, health and education services
* Lower rates of kindergarten participation for children of migrant and refugee women
* High levels of overall mortgage stress in growth corridors due to lower levels of disposable income
* Poor levels of positive health outcomes across NW region, combined with higher levels of anxiety and depression among women

A focus on encouraging programs and pre-accredited training to support women’s safety, law and family violence awareness, women’s rights and gender equity. Enhanced access to pre-accredited leadership programs for women in workplace skills of the future is needed, opening up employment pathways in leadership and growth areas |

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| **CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE LEARNERS** |
| The NWM region has the highest rate of arrival of immigrants, and the highest number of residents who were born overseas and migrated to Australia, with the numbers trending upwards year on year. Within the NWM region, Hume, Whittlesea, Wyndham and Melton have the highest rate of arrivals. Typically, gender based family roles will take priority over participation in learning programs for newly arrived immigrant families. This often means the woman has the primary responsibly for child caring activities up until the child commences formal education. The impact can include social isolation for CALD women, limited access to English language programs and poor employment outcomes. Other considerations for the CALD cohort include: * 15% of the CALD community in Brimbank do not speak English
* Employment is prioritised over participation in training
* Reliance on Industry to provide workplace training
* Lower levels of English literacy creates CALD vulnerable workers
* Access to bilingual play groups to reduce levels of social isolation and create new social networks

Early access to English intervention programs for women should be encouraged, particularly in the Hume, Whittlesea, Wyndham and Melton LGAs where the arrival of migrants is highest. |

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| **PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY** |
| The disability cohort is extremely diverse and the learning and support needs of each are different. A one-size fits all approach is not practical and many teachers in VET and Learn Local face challenges in supporting students with the wide range of disabilities. With the introduction of the NDIS, it is still unclear how the NDIS can support transition into education and training. For those with physical disabilities, the provision of accessible equipment may be the solution. However for those with communication, learning and cognitive disabilities, a support worker model might be needed to support access to pre-accredited training based on specific learning needs. Further, there is growing awareness of issues of mental health across the Region.Other considerations for the Disability cohort in NWM include* Include online learning as an initial engagement strategy
* Programs to engage and support people with intellectual disability and mental health issues
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| **YOUNG PEOPLE (15 -19) DISENGAGED FROM WORK AND/OR SCHOOL** |
| An environmental scan for Wyndham & Hobson’s Bay from LLEN for 2016 shows only about 70% young people aged 19 years had attained Year 12 or its equivalent in both LGAs compared to about 80% for Victoria in general (end of 2014 year). Youth Services Departments within local councils and the Local Learning and Employment Networks have established relationships with students and are good avenue for promoting Learn Local programs within the cohort.Other considerations for the Disengaged Youth cohort in NWM include* Testing assumptions that young people are technology savvy
* Understanding gender issues and the increase of disengaged girls
* Inclusion of the youngest cohort, those at Year 12 and under
* Immediate needs of the cohort include food security, health, settled accommodation and living on a low income
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| **EARLY SCHOOL LEAVERS**  |
| The Early School Leaver cohort in NWM region includes young people leaving school prior to completing certificate years. This cohort may also include adults or older people who identify as having left school early. Additionally, there is some level of overlap with the Disengaged Youth cohort in terms of needs, trends and opportunities relevant for young people. Other considerations for the Early School Leaver cohort in NWM include:Need for STEM support across all age groupsOffering pre-accredited programs with a focus on expressed needs of law and order, confidence building and practical skills not typically considered pre-accreditedLiteracy and digital capability levels are lowEmployment prospects are low; skills required for entry level jobs is increasingUnderstanding the needs of this cohort relative to literacy, digital capability and skill requirements to seek employment is key. Pre-accredited programs could focus on areas not typically considered pre-accredited training, with consideration given the flexible delivery to encourage participation and commitment.  |

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| **INDIGENOUS LEARNERS** |
| **Regional intelligence** |
| Melton, Wyndham and Melbourne have the highest numbers of indigenous learners, with Wyndham having the largest indigenous community in Western Region. The indigenous population in the West has grown significantly, with over 40% being under 18. Housing affordability has resulted in a higher proportion of indigenous people renting in Wyndham compared to non-indigenous people. The indigenous community values family and community relationships highly. Engagement needs to be high touch, face to face and through established family connections. Other considerations for the Indigenous cohort in NWM include* The intersection between the cohorts is strong (eg: Indigenous/Women, Indigenous/Disengaged Youth)
* Family takes priority over anything else, including learning and commitment to programs.
* Providing a culturally safe environment, where the design of learning space encourages participation in programs.
* Deepen local understanding of the needs of indigenous communities, finding the pathways that work and demonstrating flexibility

Leverage good practice models, including exploring existing programs that are having success and considering partnerships as appropriate.  |

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| **UNEMPLOYED PEOPLE** |
| Data confirms rising levels of unemployment and the need for greater focus on addressing the needs of this cohort in NWM region. Currently, the official unemployment rate for NWM Region is higher than Melbourne Metro. The region is also experiencing rapid population growth however job creation is not keeping pace. Further, the major economic shift occurring across Victoria is having the greatest impact in North/West, which already has lower than average education outcomes and workforce skill levels.Other considerations for the Unemployed cohort in NWM include* Unemployed continue to be a key priority cohort for the North West region (ranked 3rd) after disengaged youth at 18% (1st)and disability group at 9.25% (2nd)
* The North West has the second highest numbers in this cohort Victoria wide (only Gippsland is higher).

Pre-accredited training in the region needs to align with Victoria’s priority industry sectors where there is most future opportunity for economic growth.A focus on improving STEM skills to adapt to growing business opportunities in a knowledge economy (and transition away from manufacturing) is needed. Likewise, development of soft skills and online training for this cohort to focus on a rounded and practical set of skills that provides a broad range of transferable skills beyond STEM (e.g. general management and administrative skills, foreign language skills, creativity, knowledge of cultures).  |

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| **VULNERABLE WORKERS**  |
| Vulnerable and under-employed workers intersect across all of the priority cohorts. In NWM region, this impacts particularly on young people, women and people of CALD background. Across the NWM region, casualisation of work has left large cohorts of the population underemployed and at risk. People don’t have set work hours and are often on call, which impacts their ability to commit to training programs and therefore their ability to increase their skills and capability to secure ongoing work. NWM region has a large cohort of unemployed people from a CALD background who worked in the manufacturing industry after arrival. Their skills and language level are limited and this generally limits their ability to gain other employment.Other considerations for the Vulnerable Workers cohort in NWM include:* Large pockets of generational disadvantage exist in the NWM region
* Young people are on the increase in accessing training through Learn Locals
* Often people are time poor so are not able to access the training they need
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