

Professional Development Strategy for the Pre-accredited Training Workforce

Professional Development Strategy (PD Strategy)

The aim of the PD Strategy is to enhance the knowledge, skills and professional practice of pre-accredited training practitioners¹ across Victoria. Over the next three years, this sector-wide strategy will be implemented and measured using an evaluation metrics framework. The development of the PD Strategy represents a significant focus by the Adult Community Further Education (ACFE) Board on supporting pre-accredited practitioners to deliver high quality training over the long term.

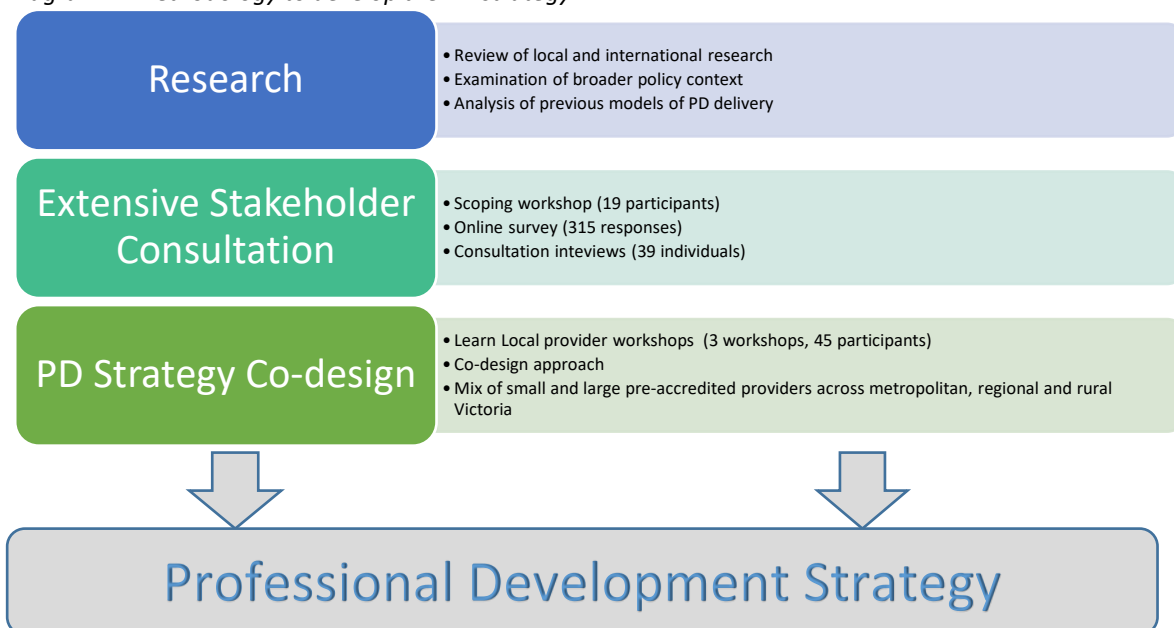
This new approach will ensure that learners, most of whom have no or low level educational qualifications are able to attain positive outcomes through their participation and engagement with pre-accredited training.

The PD Strategy, funded by the ACFE Board, provides an opportunity for a coherent, coordinated and transparent approach to professional development. This will develop workforce capability across all roles and functions for pre-accredited training practitioners. Professional development is defined under the PD Strategy as any activity that builds the capability of personnel involved in pre-accredited training provision.

Background research followed by an extensive stakeholder consultation process was conducted across the Learn Local sector to inform the future direction of professional learning. The consultation confirmed that practitioners across the entire pre-accredited training workforce are highly skilled, talented and dedicated towards achieving outcomes for educationally disadvantaged learners. They are already deeply committed to ongoing professional practice.

The comprehensive methodology used to develop the PD Strategy is outlined in the diagram below:

Diagram 1: Methodology to develop the PD strategy

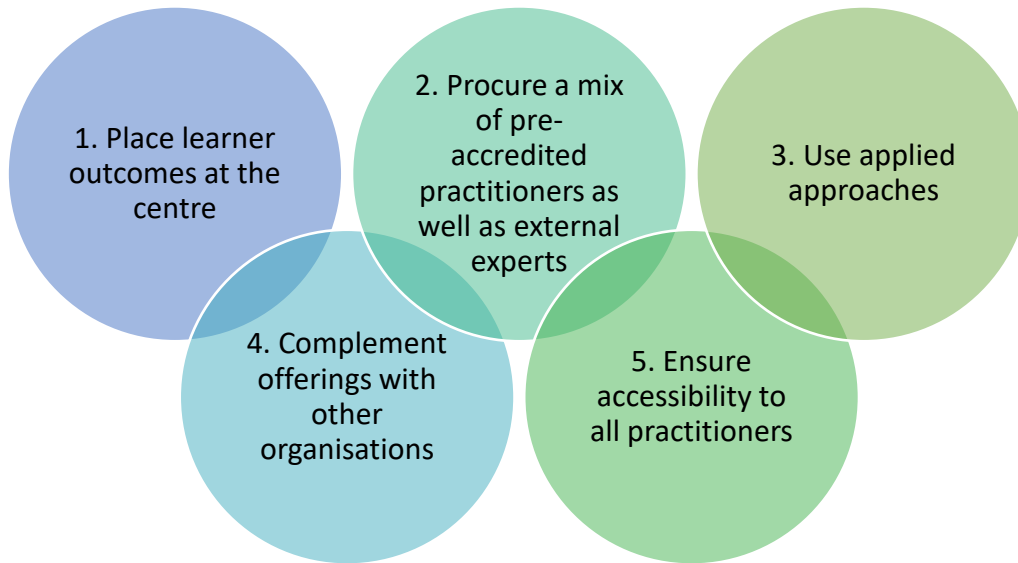


¹ Pre-accredited training practitioners includes anyone employed through a Learn Local provider in pre-accredited training and supporting educationally disadvantaged learners. This includes, but is not limited to, teachers, trainers, tutors, administrators, coordinators and committees of management.

Guiding principles

Throughout the consultation process, pre-accredited training practitioners raised a number of key themes to inform the professional development approach and to respond to current issues. These are reflected in the guiding principles outlined below:

Diagram 2: Guiding principles



1. Place learner outcomes at the centre

Pre-accredited practitioners often work in complex and dynamic environments and are focused increasing learner engagement to secure outcomes and pathways into lifelong learning and/or to employment. A responsive PD Strategy that supports creativity and innovation will ensure the sector is able to best meet learner outcomes.

2. Engage a mix of pre-accredited practitioners and external experts

The pre-accredited training sector is responsive to a range of learner needs. The PD Strategy aims to leverage and share the considerable knowledge, skills and expertise of pre-accredited practitioners to deliver professional development training, supplemented by external experts where needed. A mechanism will be developed and communicated to support this opportunity.

3. Use applied learning approaches

Applied learning is a professional development model that delivers training that is evidence-based, practical, relevant and considers real world application. This will ensure that pre-accredited practitioners remain engaged, focused and ensures better learner outcomes for the sector.

4. Complement offerings with other organisations

Pre-accredited practitioners should be encouraged to build productive working relationships and create partnerships with key stakeholders including industry groups, employers, employment services, other education and training providers, government and community organisations. This wide diversity of cross-sectoral engagement contributes enormously to improving the professional practice and ensures the learner outcome remains at the centre.

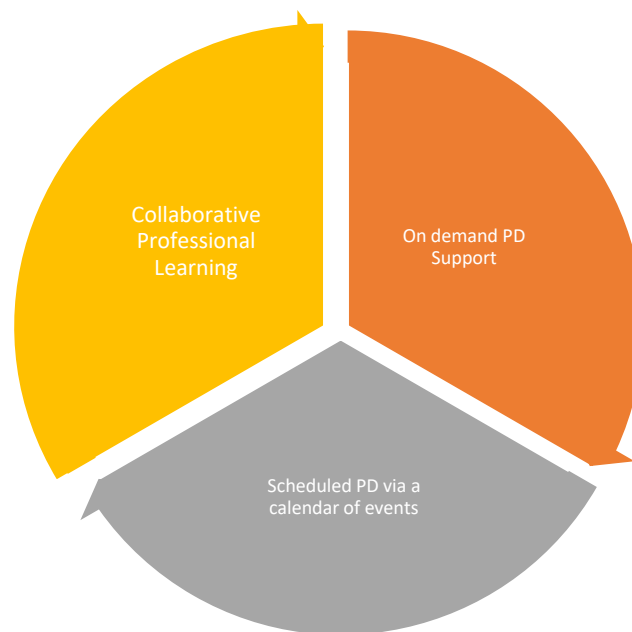
5. Ensure accessibility to all practitioners

Professional development needs to be responsive and accessible to the needs of pre-accredited practitioners. Consideration needs to be given to time, cost and travel requirements, as well as initiatives that can support the participation of part time, sessional employees and volunteers as needed.

Implementing the PD Strategy

The PD Strategy was endorsed by the ACFE Board in February 2019 and will be implemented across three streams. This will ensure that its implementation adheres to the guiding principles through providing different levels of engagement, delivery modes and support.

Diagram 3: Three streams of PD Strategy implementation



Stream 1: On demand PD Support

A stand-alone user friendly online ACFE Resources Web Portal to host and share a range of information and resources to support the Learn Local sector including:

- Downloadable templates, toolkits and resources to support organisational governance and management.
- Practical resources to guide administration and support staff to use and promote the Learn Local brand.

Stream 2: Scheduled PD via a calendar of events

A centralised calendar of events will be developed to communicate ACFE Board-funded scheduled professional development to pre-accredited practitioners and include other regional, local network and external opportunities. These will be scheduled on different days and across different locations to enhance accessibility.

Stream 3: Collaborative Professional Learning

The PD Strategy recognises the importance of professional expertise, collaboration, knowledge sharing and networking at the local level. The provision of collaborative professional learning will strengthen capability to benefit local communities. Still in the development phase, it is envisaged that this type of localised professional development will unfold in two ways:

- ACFE Board approved annual procurement to purchase localised expertise on specific topic areas covering theory, demonstration, practice and ongoing application opportunities. These activities may be supported by external expertise as required.
- Collaborative practice including but not limited to, peer mentoring and coaching, communities of practice, study circles, and knowledge sharing.

Evaluation of the PD Strategy

The PD Strategy will be evaluated to demonstrate its current and ongoing effectiveness. Evaluation will enable the ACFE Board to understand and measure how its investment delivers positive and long lasting change for learners. The evaluation will also enable the sector to consider more broadly any future directions for professional development.

Data collection tools will need to be created to support the evaluation.