LLN's role in 'Transitions and Transformations' – meeting the challenges

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Key data and research - the ALLS

Number and proportion of persons in each group with skill levels 1 or 2

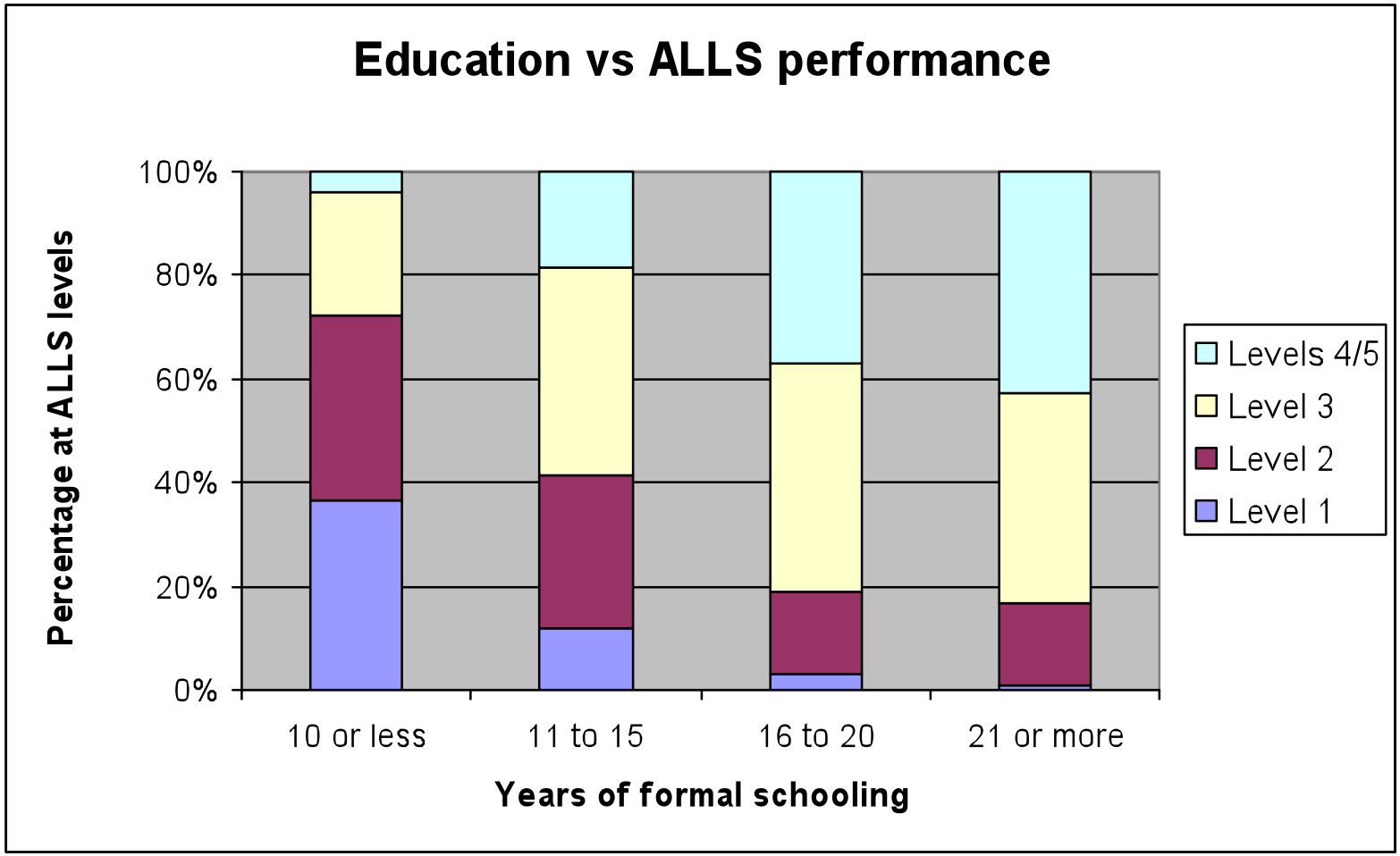
	Prose literacy scale		Document literacy scale		Numeracy scale	
	1,000s	**%**	**1,000s**	**%**	**1,000s**	**%**
Australia:	7,002.9	46.4	7,066.9	46.8	7,935.6	52.5

	Health literacy scale		Problem solving Scale	
	1,000s	**%**	**1,000s**	**%**
Australia:	8,980.3	59.5	10,591.3	70.1

If it is an explicit and specialised context – L&N demands become more difficult

Put it all together and it's even more difficult

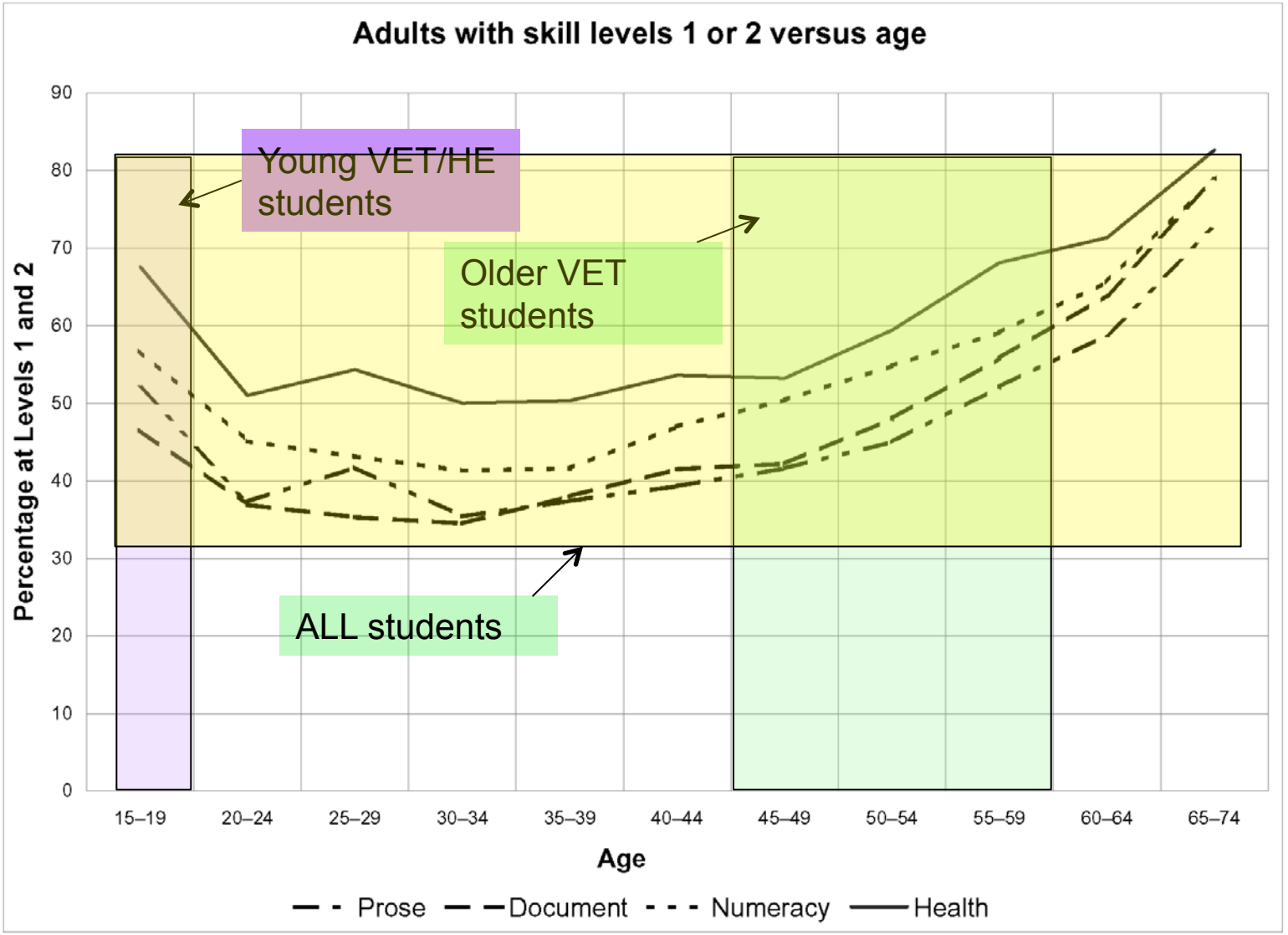
Key data and research - the ALLS



Other changes – the workforce

- Need is for higher levels of LLN in the workforce (and the community)
- Anne's list and analysis – ageing workforce, more and higher level quals, etc.
- Recent research argues that owing to globalisation and the introduction of technology, workplace numeracy demands are growing rapidly and more workers are now engaged in maths-related tasks of increasing sophistication (e.g. Hoyles et al 2002; Hudson 2007)

Implications for transitions and VET

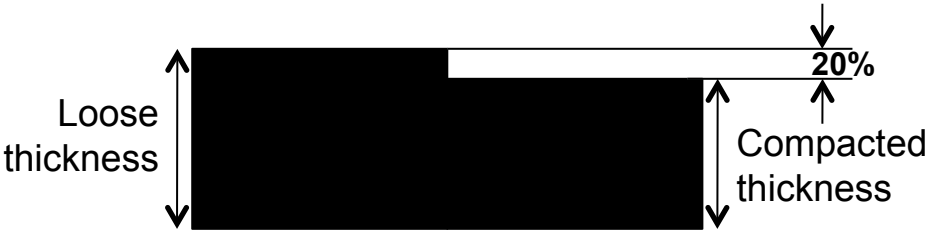


Implications for transitions and transformations

- L&N at the core of being able to transition and transform
- There WILL be significant L&N problems in students entering and moving between different forms of education/training/work
  There will be a mismatch between student skills and abilities in L&N and in the levels required in course resources, materials, expectations, etc.
- For some VET certificates and for Higher Ed courses the L&N requirements will be at the higher end of the scale (ALLS/ACSF levels 4 and 5)

Issues & challenges

In asphalting, workers need to calculate with 20%.

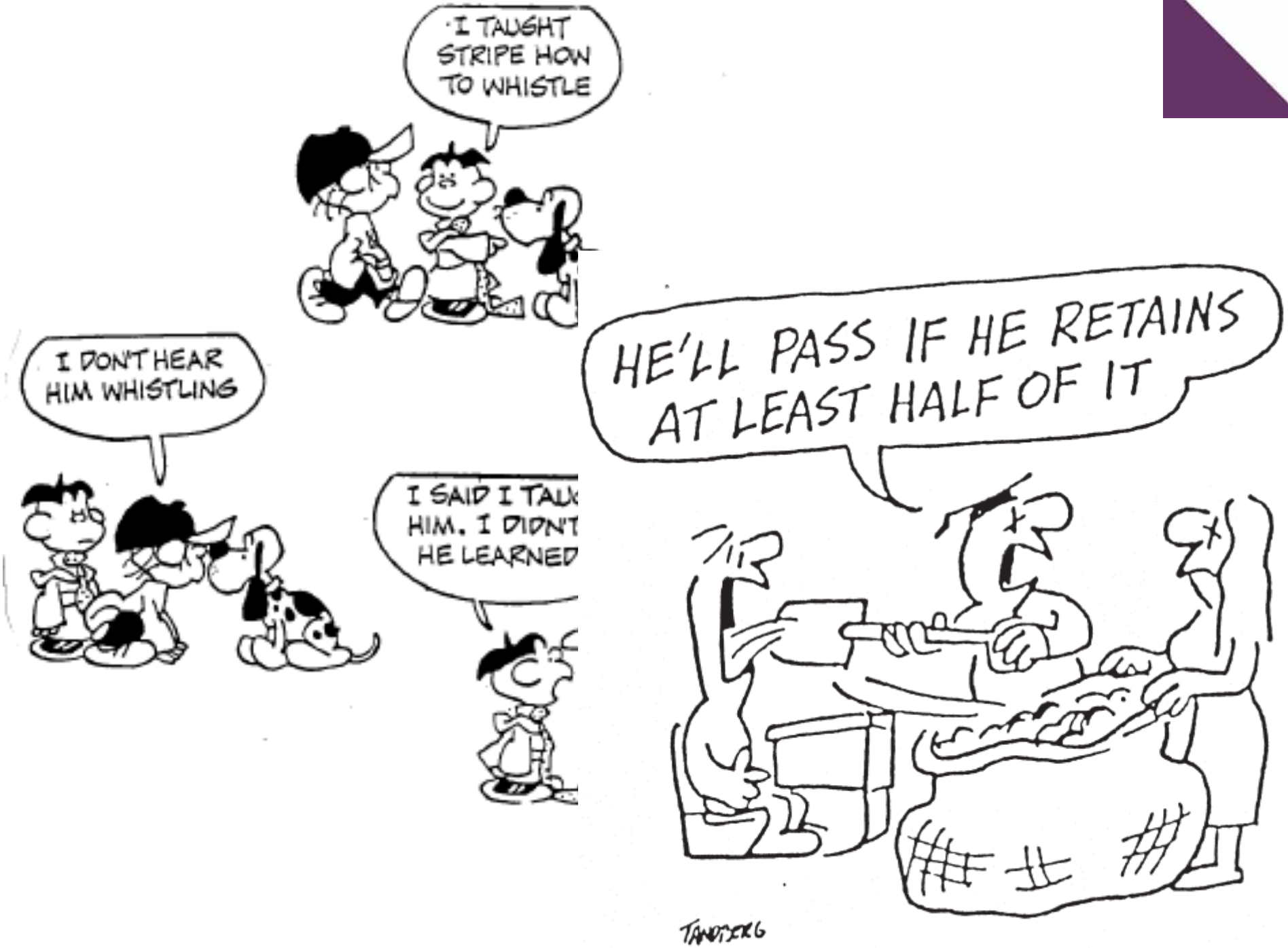


$$\frac{20}{100} \times \frac{225}{1}$$



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Pedagogical issue – how to effectively teach core skills in a vocational context?


I TAUGHT STRIPE HOW TO WHISTLE
I DON'T HEAR HIM WHISTLING
I SAID I TAU
HIM. I DIDN'T
HE LEARNED
HE'LL PASS IF HE RETAINS AT LEAST HALF OF IT
TANDBERG

Issues & challenges

The Blame Game

- There are a number of reasons why young people and adults do not have good L&N skills
- Let's not just blame the secondary schools
- Let's not just blame primary schools
- Let's not just blame the parents
- We need to address the issue in a systemic and organised way
- Need to work across boundaries – get rid of silos – realise that LLN are sophisticated skills – cooperate and work together across the curriculum – identify and support learners at all levels
- LLN specialists to work in parallel with content area specialists
- But do we know how? Needs support and facilitation

Issues & challenges

The knowledge and skills of the VET workforce about L&N

- A gap in the knowledge of VET trainers and teachers (non-LLN specialists) about L&N issues
- Needs to include knowing what to do about the L&N issue – including teaching, materials and resources, assessments, etc.
- Pedagogical issue – how can you effectively support and teach core skills in a vocational or specialist context?

Issues & challenges

The age, knowledge and skills and experience of the L&N workforce

- A gap in the skills and currency of L&N practitioners teaching knowledge
- A number of reports have documented the ageing L&N workforce and the drop off in the delivery of training and professional development support for adult literacy and numeracy teachers across Australia (e.g. McGuirk 2001, Thompson & Chan 2001, McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2004).
- "... it was widely noted that professional development had all but disappeared. ... At the same time, there is a sharp decline nationally in the provision of post-graduate courses in literacy and ESL." (Thompson & Chan, 2001).

Issues & challenges

The age, knowledge and skills and experience of the L&N workforce

- "... it appears that in Australia opportunities for professional development are decreasing. Improving certification to enhance professionalism might also be needed to aid the replacement of practitioners who are leaving or about to leave due to age." (McKenna & Fitzpatrick, 2004).
- Issue of pedagogical knowledge again – how can you effectively support and teach core skills in a vocational or specialist context? L&N skills and tools are rapidly changing.
- Where are teachers gaining their professional knowledge and keeping up to date? (e.g. No ALT/ANT courses run in Victoria for 10 years!?)
- What is the minimum qualification? Cert IV? Need to

And numeracy?

- ALLS results again: 47.5% of males are at levels 1 or 2; 57.6% of females are at levels 1 or 2. A difference of over 10%!
- Research data from the UK that indicates the strong role that numeracy plays in both human and social capital terms.
  - People without numeracy skills suffered worse disadvantage in employment than those with poor literacy skills alone. ... Women with numeracy difficulties appeared especially vulnerable to exclusion from the clerical and sales jobs to which they aspired (Bynner & Parsons, 1997, p. 27).
  - For women, while the impact of low literacy and low numeracy is substantial, low numeracy has the greatest negative effect, even when it is combined with competent literacy. … Poor numeracy skills make it difficult to function effectively in all areas of modern life, particularly for women. (Bynner & Parsons, 2005, p. 7)

And numeracy?

- Back in International Literacy Year, 1990, after the first national survey of adult literacy standards, No Single Measure, Rosie Wickert stated:
  "it is clear from the results that when people have poor literacy skills, they have even worse numeracy skills. The need to upgrade numeracy skills in the context of literacy must be taken into account of in all decisions to raise the level of adult literacy in Australia" (Wickert, 1990).
- Much of lower level numeracy taught by non-numeracy/maths people – further specific pedagogical knowledge issues
- Have we moved forward in addressing this issue? What specific policy or program actions have we taken in relation to numeracy? Or is numeracy buried and not even bolted on?

New opportunities

Foundation Skills

- IBSA is scoping the development of a Foundation Skills Training Package. The Foundation Skills Training Package will provide pathways into vocational qualifications and support for the foundation skills development needs of a range of learners.
- The National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults: The Australian Government has announced that it will work with state and territory governments to develop an over-arching National Foundation Skills Strategy for adult Australians.

New opportunities

The need to engage with these initiatives

- Support the introduction of the Foundation Skills Training Package – consultations coming up.
- Take advantage of policy initiatives and probably new program initiatives as part of the National Foundation Skills Strategy for adult Australians. Argue for a major initiative to support training and professional development for VET and L&N teachers – support for improving the pedagogical knowledge of teachers and trainers – at the core of improving the core skills of our adults and youth and enabling an ability to transition and transform
- Work with Industry
- Work within our institutions to implement across the curriculum initiatives to support all students in utilising and improving their LLN skills as an integrated part of their study and training

New opportunities

Pedagogical issue - new training opportunities:

- TAE70110 Vocational Graduate Certificate in Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice, which represents the skills and knowledge required to address the LLN skill development of learners
- TAE80110 Vocational Graduate Diploma of Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Leadership, which provides leadership and research opportunities.
- Suite of LLN units being developed from Cert IV upwards - needs to be for both L&N specialists and VET/content specialists
- The main issue to be addressed though is how teachers and trainers can be supported to access such training (and other H.Ed opportunities) and how to develop the ability to have a professional dialogue.

And can programs make a difference and transform?

Yes – VCAL has done it in Victoria – session later today about VCAL.

An integrated accredited program targtted at youth – L&N as a core alongside personal development skills and vocational skills – most/many students in the lower ALLS levels.

Yes – well we hope so as it's early days still – the integrated VU L&N strategy.

Some references

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