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A snapshot of a selection of items added to VOCEDplus

APRIL 2022

The [full list](#) of new additions to VOCEDplus is available at [www.voced.edu.au](http://www.voced.edu.au)

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*Responding to the complexity of the challenges facing vocational education will require bravery from governments and those leading policy reforms - now is the moment for new approaches, new partnerships, and a new commitment to change*

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*The legislative framework provided by the Skills Bill has already put in place the parameters for a higher technical skills revolution - making the most of the opportunities they offer is now a question of finding the right approach*

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## Unlocking the potential of Australian apprenticeships

**Unlocking the potential of Australian apprenticeships / David Longley and Kira Clarke.**

Fitzroy, Victoria: Brotherhood of St Laurence, 2022. 7 pages.

This paper argues that despite being the most common form of employment-based training, Australian apprenticeships are not living up to their promise. Repeated funding increases and initiatives have failed to address declining participation and completion rates in Australian apprenticeship programs. They have also failed to widen and diversify the cohorts of learners engaged in apprenticeships. As Australia emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, an opportunity presents itself to address the weaknesses of the current system to improve its efficacy, suitability and reach. In this paper, the authors explore the weaknesses of the current system and propose a new approach, based on international evidence, that can make a difference to opportunities for young Australians.

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## Future of higher technical education in England

**The future of higher technical education in England: expanding opportunity for all / David Pendlebury.**

London, England: Lifelong Education Commission and ResPublica Partnership, 2022. 44 pages.

This report takes a detailed look at the poor take-up of higher technical education in England - often referred to as the 'missing middle' or 'forgotten half' of the English education landscape, and the challenges this presents to the Government's ambitions for improving productivity and levelling up economic performance within and between regions. Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) and Institutes of Technology (IoTs) are part of a suite of Government initiatives, including those being brought forward by the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill, which are seeking to drive an increase in the quantity and quality of higher-technical education provision in England. The report closely examines HTQs and IoTs, as they have significant potential to boost the take-up of higher technical education, supported by a number of other policy initiatives including the Lifelong Loan Entitlement, the Lifetime Skills Guarantee and Local Skills Improvement Plans. The report's recommendations aim to ensure that all policy initiatives in relation to higher technical education are appropriately developed and supported, in order to make a genuine difference in this field.

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*Similar specialist tasks are grouped together into skills clusters, which are further grouped into skills cluster families*

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## Australian Skills Classification

### **Australian Skills Classification, release 2.0: March 2022 / National Skills Commission.**

Canberra, Australian Capital Territory: National Skills Commission, 2022. 24 pages + 1 Excel document (classification data).

Released in its BETA version in March 2021, the National Skills Commission's Australian Skills Classification systematically sets out the structure of, and relationships between, skills within occupations and across the labour market. The Australian Skills Classification complements the Australia and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO). The classification offers a common language of skills, enabling stakeholders to identify and articulate skills using a comprehensive and universal taxonomy. The classification contains three categories of skills: (1) core competencies: commonly used in all occupations (sometimes called 'soft skills' or 'employability skills'); (2) specialist tasks: work activities a person undertakes specific to a job; and (3) technology tools: a technology, such as software or hardware, used within an occupation. This latest update to the classification brings the dataset out of BETA status, focuses more heavily on expansion, and brings the classification more closely into alignment with the ANZSCO in terms of structure and coverage.

[Download the PDF and the classification data file](#)

## Adult and community education in Australia

### **Australian adult community education environmental scan 2022 / Catherine Devlin with contributions from Leanne Wu.**

Footscray, Victoria: Adult Learning Australia, 2022. 77 pages.

Adult and community education (ACE) organisations are not for profit providers of accessible learning opportunities for adults. ACE also offers vital links across educational settings, workplaces and communities. This scan profiles the ACE sector in terms of its programs, features, provider types, participants, outcomes and supporting policy areas. It also explores the challenges facing the sector in terms of sustainability. There are three main program focusses for ACE: personal enrichment; foundation; and vocational. All ACE providers deliver enrichment programs. Most offer adult basic education in language, literacy, numeracy, digital and other foundation skills. State and territory governments define and support ACE in different ways. But government funded ACE programs are now largely focussed on vocational outcomes. This ACE scan update covers the following areas: (1) an overview of ACE in Australia in terms of its activities and providers; (2) ACE provision by state, territory and national perspectives; (3) ACE programs, including key features and data on the participants, outcomes and national policies supported; (4) a new data framework to draw conclusions on where to next for Australian ACE; and (5) trends over time to identify issues affecting the sustainability of ACE. The report concludes that the ACE sector demonstrably serves important social and economic needs within communities across Australia for the ongoing education of adults. Yet, it lacks broad recognition, financial support and connections with local, state and federal governments, and this impedes its capacity to achieve these important goals. Recommendations are made for ACE to achieve its full potential.

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*The adult and community education sector plays an important role educating many adult Australians but needs increased and ongoing support from all tiers of government to sustain and grow the sector's efforts*

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*Overall, European countries tend to use interviews and portfolios to identify and document the competences that adults have acquired in formal, informal and non-formal contexts*

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*Pedagogy, competency, standards, materials, and support systems are weak and misaligned to the knowledge and skills required in teacher training in response to the evolving digital technologies and the labor market*

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## Recognition of prior learning in Europe

**The recognition of prior learning: validating general competences / Michela Meghnagi and Michele Tuccio.**

Paris, France: OECD, 2022. 64 pages.

The recognition of prior learning (RPL) can support upskilling and reskilling opportunities by fostering shorter training times and enabling personalised learning pathways for adults. There are numerous initiatives promoted by the European Union to support upskilling pathways for low skilled adults as well as the validation of all forms of learning. Nevertheless, programmes for the recognition of prior learning are still unevenly spread across Europe and generally aim to help adults enter and progress in the labour market or access continuing vocational education. The recognition of adults' general competences - i.e. cross-field competences that all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development - is rare and is almost exclusively available for the purpose of further studies. Thanks to new evidence gathered through desk research and interviews with relevant stakeholders throughout European countries, this paper sheds additional light on the characteristics and country experiences of RPL systems focusing on adults' general competences.

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## Strengthening education and learning systems in Africa

**Strengthening education and learning systems to deliver a 4IR-ready workforce: synthesis report / Edward K. Brown, Maggie Okore, Mohammed Traore, George Boateng and Mona Iddrisu.**

Accra, Ghana: African Center for Economic Transformation, 2022. 77 pages.

Education is one of the main drivers of economic transformation, and governments need to emphasize skills needed in high job growth sectors, especially with regard to the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). High-quality and relevant learning is needed throughout the education system to produce a workforce with the advanced skills needed to make the most of 4IR. However, Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest secondary education enrolment rates globally, and completion rates are low. In addition, curricula tend not to reflect the changing nature of work, while teachers often lack adequate training and tools to provide young people with relevant skills. This study examines youth (aged 18-35) education, training, and employment, as well as skills challenges and opportunities in six African countries: Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Niger, Rwanda, and Uganda. The focus is on the secondary education level, including technical and vocational education and training. This report synthesises the identified overarching issues and presents recommendations for action.

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