
A snapshot of a selection of items added to VOCEDplus

JUNE 2021

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*Public consultation is open
until 18 July 2021*

Quality Initial Teacher Education Review in Australia

Quality Initial Teacher Education Review: discussion paper / Australian Department of Education, Skills and Employment.

Canberra, Australian Capital Territory: Department of Education, Skills and Employment, 2021. 26 pages (discussion paper) + 1 page (terms of reference).

On 11 March 2021, the Hon. Alan Tudge MP, Minister for Education and Youth, delivered a speech which highlighted the importance of initial teacher education (ITE) and announced a review into ITE. The Quality Initial Teacher Education Review (the Review) was launched on 15 April, with the announcement of the terms of reference and an Expert Panel. This discussion paper provides an overview of the current state of ITE in Australia, providing evidence on two key questions that form the scope of the Review: how best to attract and select high-quality candidates into ITE and how best to prepare them to become effective teachers. The paper includes discussion questions to help participants share their ideas and experiences; however, the Panel also welcomes feedback on what concerns people the most - particularly if they are informed by their own experience as a teacher, pre-service teacher or other education stakeholder.

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*Submissions close on
9 July 2021*

Reform of the Adult Migrant English Program in Australia

Reform of the Adult Migrant English Program: discussion paper / Australian Department of Home Affairs.

Canberra, Australian Capital Territory: Department of Home Affairs, 2021. 15 pages.

In August 2020, the Australian Government announced major legislative reforms to the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) that came into effect on 19 April 2021. This means that more migrants can now access free English language classes through the AMEP for longer and until they reach a higher level of proficiency. This is the first part of the Government's three-part plan to make English language tuition more accessible, ensure better quality outcomes and encourage greater participation. Reforms to the current AMEP business model have now been designed to complete this plan. The Department of Home Affairs is inviting public feedback on the proposed reforms to the AMEP business model through a discussion paper and forums. Stakeholder feedback will be crucial to ensure the best possible outcomes for students.

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Small and medium-sized enterprises play a key role in ensuring access to apprenticeships in areas of the country - particularly rural areas - which are less well-served by large employers, or where large employers are concentrated in particular industries

The efficiency, sustainability and legacy of the changes brought about by COVID-19 suggest that a complete return to pre-pandemic TVET policy and practice is unlikely

Apprenticeships for young people in England

Putting apprenticeships to work for young people: an analysis of the impact of policy reforms and the pandemic on apprenticeship starts / Jenna Julius, Henry Faulkner-Ellis and Sharon O'Donnell.

Slough, England: National Foundation for Educational Research, 2021. vi, 37 pages.

Apprenticeships are paid jobs which incorporate on- and off-the-job training. There is a strong economic case for investing in these as a key training route to help young people, in particular, enter the labour market, and to support the wider economic recovery from the pandemic. This research examines the impact of the apprenticeships reforms on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and on young people in England, against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. It also considers to what extent the apprenticeship programme needs to be refocused in order to ensure that - as we continue to emerge from the pandemic - the apprenticeship system is working to support young people and SMEs. Key findings include: (1) government reforms led to an increase in apprenticeship starts in London, while apprenticeship starts fell in all other regions of the country; (2) the pandemic had a substantial impact on apprenticeship starts, which declined by almost half (47 per cent) between March and July 2020 compared to the same period in the previous year; (3) apprenticeship starts among deprived and younger learners have continued to decline disproportionately as a result of the pandemic; and (4) latest data suggests apprenticeship starts for young apprentices and intermediate level apprenticeships remain far below pre-pandemic levels.

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Vocational institutions innovating, evolving and changing

How are vocational institutions innovating, evolving and changing as a result of COVID-19?: a study of practice and perspectives in five countries / Association of Colleges.

Manchester, England: British Council, 2021. 59 pages.

This research looks at how vocational institutions in the five study countries, having dealt with the initial crisis-management of the COVID-19 pandemic are beginning to innovate and to evolve their thinking for the medium to long term. Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) practitioners and leaders from Ghana, India, Malaysia, South Africa and the UK provide insights and reflect on five key questions: How are institutional policy and structures likely to change to reflect the changing situation? Is this different for private institutions? What changes are proposed to the curriculum/occupational areas to reflect the rapidly changing demand and how are they identifying this demand? How will learners get the practical and work-based experience they need and what changes to work-based learning and apprenticeships are needed? What changes are needed to the skills and type of staff in the teaching institution? How can new delivery models and ways of working promote more inclusive practice? The research signposts key themes for national policy-makers and practitioners to support the TVET reform in the aftermath of COVID-19 and focuses on recommendations that are both practical and feasible, and that will benefit policy-makers and TVET institutions, their staff and students.

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The ongoing failure to recognise international credentials is contributing to skills gaps and labour shortages

A post-pandemic skills and training agenda in Canada

Supporting entrepreneurship and SMEs: a post-pandemic skills and training agenda / Tania Saba, Simon Blanchette and Catrina Kronfli.

Toronto, Ontario: Future Skills Centre, 2021. xi, 39 pages.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has, in general, been considerably more severe on entrepreneurs and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) than on larger organisations. This fact is critical to note since SMEs are the backbone of the Canadian economy, employing almost 90 per cent of all Canadians who work in the private sector. SMEs faced significant challenges even before the pandemic. Skills gaps and labour shortages have long been a feature of the Canadian economy and they remain a top concern for SMEs. The purpose of this report is twofold: First, it reviews existing research on SMEs' and entrepreneurs' skills, upskilling and training needs, and proposes options for better supporting them as they strive to recover from the pandemic and prepare for what comes next. In particular, this review highlights barriers and challenges faced by entrepreneurs who are members of equity-seeking groups, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, this report presents preliminary results from a survey on skills and competencies (a survey that is still in the field as of June 2021) and from a set of focus groups conducted as part of the same project.

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The fundamental pedagogical principles should apply with equal force to both face-to-face and online and blended learning

Online and blended delivery in further education in the UK

Online and blended delivery in further education: a literature review into pedagogy, including digital forms of assessment / John Hamer and Jenny Smith.

Manchester, England: Department for Education, 2021. 64 pages.

It is currently unknown how long further education (FE) settings and educational delivery in the UK will be affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. It is expected, however, that the use of technology in educational delivery (EdTech) will have an enhanced role going forward given the benefits it can have for both teachers and learners when utilised effectively. To ensure the success of online and blended education and so that learners continue to benefit from a good standard of teaching, teachers need to know how to teach online. They must also understand how to adapt traditional face-to-face pedagogic practices so that they are suitable for a new environment and mode of learning. This research focuses on four key themes: (1) online and blended learning pedagogies; (2) quality and effectiveness of online and blended teaching and learning; (3) assessment; and (4) professional development and support for staff.

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VOCEDplus is produced by NCVER with funding support from the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment.



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