



The Training and Skills Commission

Recognising the Value of Adult & Community Education

Skills for Future Jobs
2020 Series

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ACE PROVIDERS ARE FAR MORE THAN A PLACE OF LEARNING; THEY OFFER AN ENVIRONMENT THAT GENERATES A SENSE OF BELONGING TO, AND BEING PART OF, A COMMUNITY AND A PLACE FOR PERSONAL ENRICHMENT.



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Message from the Chair

On behalf of the Training and Skills Commission it is my pleasure to provide this paper on the Adult and Community Education (ACE) sector.

This paper forms part of the Skills for Future Jobs 2020 series. Papers published as part of the 2020 series explore significant education, training and workforce development policy issues for South Australia and provide a platform for deep engagement with our stakeholders.

The 2020 series will contribute to building a better, more vibrant South Australia where business and industry succeeds and our citizens have access to more varied, fulfilling and better paid jobs, now and into the future.

The Commission has over the last 18 months been engaged in discussions with the ACE sector to inform this paper. The Department of State Development and Community Centres SA has also undertaken an engagement process to strengthen the Government's ACE program. It is timely then, that the Training and Skills Commission express its views on the value of the ACE sector, the importance of longer-term funding for ACE, and the areas that are most in need of improvement.

As the fourth education sector, the ACE sector is of immense value to our state.

It is the Commission's hope that this paper and the recommendations in it are considered in full, and that they lead to an even stronger ACE sector.

I would like to thank the many contributors to this paper, your time and input is greatly appreciated.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Boyce'.

Michael Boyce
Chair
Training and Skills Commission



Introduction

Adult and Community Education (ACE) has a long history in Australia. For many years, it has offered an alternative and supportive platform to a wide range of people. This has included people from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, with limited education or significant barriers to learning, or people who simply wish to connect with others in a safe, supportive environment.

ACE is the fourth sector of education in Australia, comprised of community based, owned and managed not-for-profit organisations. The sector is committed to providing accessible learning opportunities for adults [non-school-base students] in local communities that support place-based community development¹.

ACE providers are far more than a place of learning; they offer an environment that generates a sense of belonging to, and being part of, a community and a place for personal enrichment.

ACE connects marginalised populations to communities, the economy and society. For the individual, ACE provides personal development in language, literacy and numeracy (LLN), in learning how to learn and by developing vocational and workplace skills and teamwork. It generates self-esteem along with mental, physical and emotional wellbeing².

Both socially and geographically, the role and value of ACE needs to be better understood, appreciated and championed. Global competition and the growing use of automation poses challenges to segments of the labour force and the community, favoring individuals and businesses that can adapt to, and utilise technological advances. However such changes can be severely challenging to the less educated and least adaptable among the population.

ACE programs reach out to long-term unemployed, disengaged youth, mature-age South Australians, migrant populations, those with low language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills, and to those with obstacles to participation in a formal training setting. The broad scope of capability within this sector positions ACE as a fundamental part of the solution in lifting foundation skills, increasing social engagement and improving workforce participation.

The Commonwealth Government has recognised the need to raise the level of LLN skills among the working age population in the *Foundation Skills Strategy* (2012). This has led to several initiatives, including the development of the *Foundation Skills Professional Standards Framework*, and in South Australia, the ACE Workforce and Professional Development program.

These are positive steps, and they have strengthened the capacity of the sector to be an integral part of the solution to South Australia's social and economic challenges. The Commission contends, however, that the role ACE can play needs to be better understood and utilised.

ACE is on the frontline of reaching out to and developing people that are most vulnerable, and therefore has much to contribute. By first engaging the vulnerable or disenfranchised, building confidence, and developing the literacy, numeracy, digital skills and employability skills that are necessary to enjoy life and work in a modern economy, ACE offers a valuable platform to leverage engagement, participation and opportunity.

1 Bowman K. Australian ACE Environmental Scan Research Project. Adult Learning Australia; 2016. p. 7.

2 Bowman K. The Value of ACE Providers: A guide to the evidence base. Adult Learning Australia; 2006. p. 7.

Recommendations

Funding

The Training and Skills Commission recommends that any new ACE program funding consider the following:

1. Multi-year funding
2. Greater flexibility for ACE providers to respond to community demand and need
3. The provision of post-delivery support
4. ACE workforce development and capability, inclusive of the additional products, services and expertise required to deliver ACE offerings

Regional Capacity

The Training and Skills Commission recommends a cross-agency project to identify and build the capacity of locally based community organisations in particular regional areas to deliver ACE. The Commission specifically highlights:

- Whyalla
- Port Augusta
- Keith
- Ceduna
- Morgan

Complex Needs Evaluation

The Training and Skills Commission recommends a cross-agency project to investigate the increase in the complexity of needs among ACE participants and provide a funding and policy response.

Data Collection Evaluation

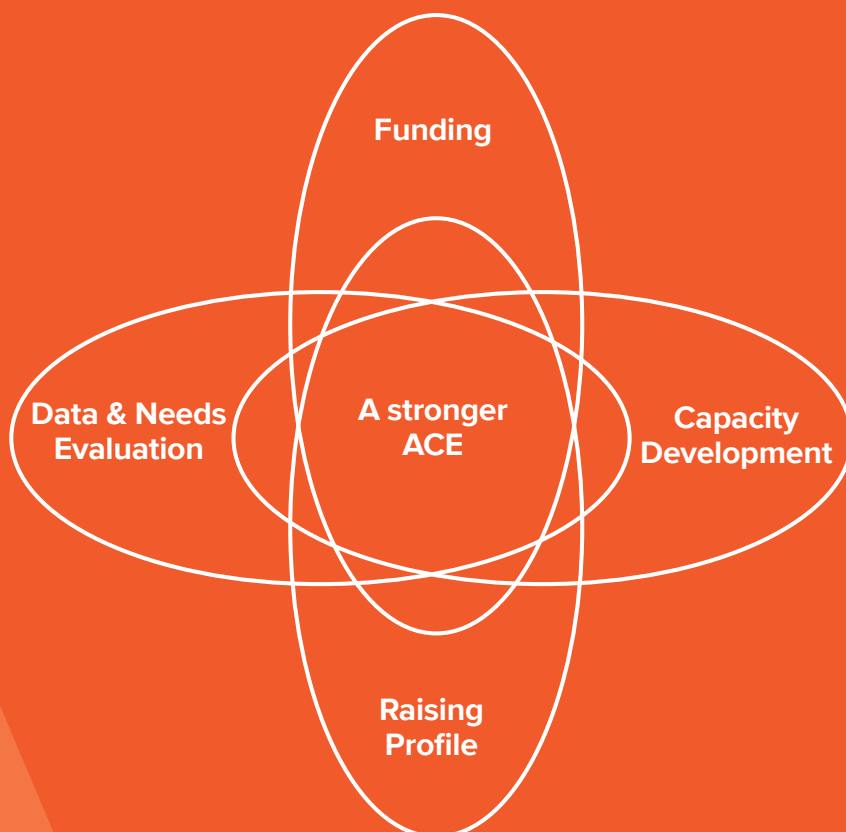
The Training and Skills Commission recommends the Department of State Development undertake a systematic review of data collection for the ACE sector taking into consideration:

- Identification of appropriate destination data to be reported
- Limiting the reporting burden on ACE providers
- How to achieve valuable longitudinal data evaluations

Raise the profile of ACE

The Training and Skills Commission recommends the Department of State Development lead an initiative to raise the profile of ACE to create:

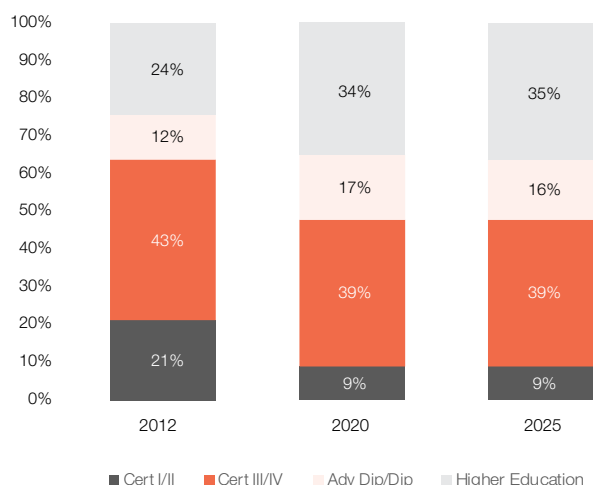
- Greater community understanding of ACE
- Greater utilisation of ACE
- Greater recognition of the economic, social, community and individual benefits of ACE



The need for ACE

The future of work in South Australia will require a workforce with higher levels of skill and capability. This means there is an increasing need to improve the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills of the working age population.

The changing qualification profile of employed persons 2012-2025



Source: Training and Skills Commission 2017

As automation and other technological advancements work their way through the local economy, it is inevitable that those with low level LLN skills and few or no recognised qualifications will find it increasingly difficult to participate in the workforce.

Beyond the workforce, digital literacy skills are required to engage with many aspects of modern living: banking, accessing care and engaging with government services to name a few. For some members of the community, this presents a significant challenge. The future will require that everyone have digital literacy skills to interact with government institutions and other support providers. It is not just the future of work that is digital, it is the future of life.

ACE should play a greater role in the support of displaced workers impacted by economic structural adjustments such as the cessation of auto-manufacturing in South Australia. ACE has the well-developed capacity to offer a supportive and welcoming environment for workers needing to re-engage with learning, and to help them on their pathway to retraining and reskilling. This speaks to the very foundation that ACE is built upon; responding to the needs of the local community.

Despite ACE providers representing an excellent distribution network for community education programs, across all Government portfolios, this network is largely unrecognised, underutilised and under-valued. There is an opportunity to leverage these existing networks to support those most in need.

Australia and South Australia face a significant challenge in raising the LLN skills of nearly half of the working age population. In 2012 the *Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies* revealed that nearly half of South Australians (47%) have a literacy skill level below that required to participate in a modern, skilled economy. In addition, less than half (44%) have the numeracy skills required.

In the *National Foundation Skills Strategy* the Australian Government has set a target of having two thirds of working age Australians with literacy and numeracy skills at Level 3³ or above by 2022⁴. In South Australia this means improving the LLN skills of more than half a million people. ACE has been, and will continue to be, a critical part of the training system that helps meet this objective.

ACE also has the capacity to assist in addressing some of the major employment challenges faced in South Australia. In May 2017, there were 62,000 people unemployed in South Australia, nearly 20,000 of whom were long-term unemployed⁵.

Given South Australia's unenviable youth unemployment, it is unfortunate that more disengaged youth are not directed towards ACE as a potential pathway. ACE participants aged 15-24 made up only 12% of participants in South Australia in 2015⁶. However, the ACE sector is well placed to provide the supported learning environment necessary for young people who for various reasons such as, social and economic hardship, physical and mental health problems, disability or long-term welfare issues, have disengaged from education, training or employment and become marginalised in society⁷.

In recent years, the majority of employment growth has been in occupations that generally require post-school qualifications. This is expected to continue, with the vast majority of jobs growth over the next five years expected to be in higher skilled occupations⁸. Conversely, low literacy and numeracy skills lead to an increased likelihood of unemployment, low income earnings, lack of access to technology, poor health and low community engagement⁹.

3 The Australian Core Skills Framework defines five levels of performance ranging from 1 (low level performance) to 5 (high level performance).

4 Department of Education and Training. *National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults*; 2012, p. 2.

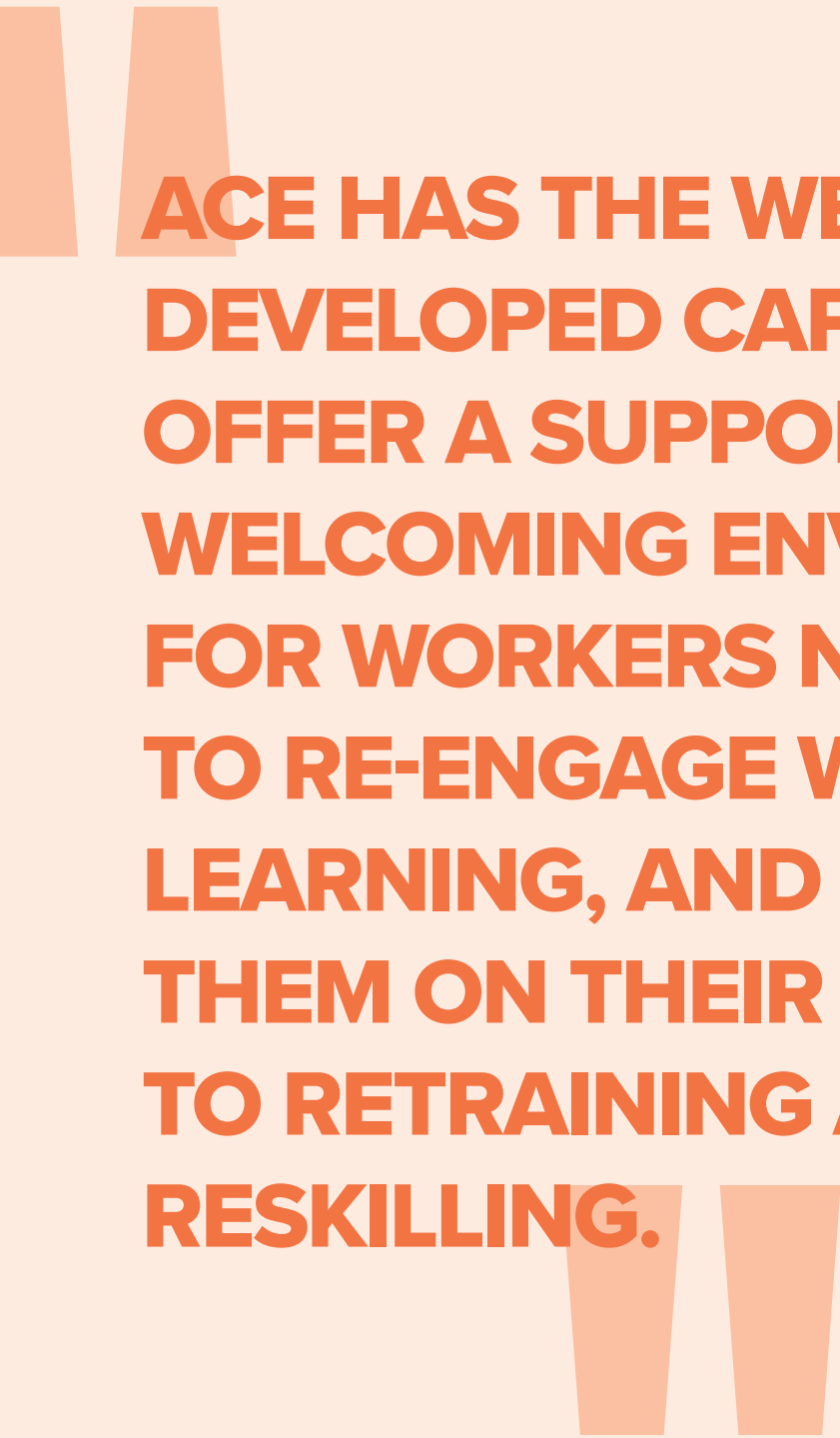
5 The ABS defines long-term unemployed as persons who have been looking for work for more than 1 year.

6 NCVER Vocstats – Contestable funded ACE, 2015

7 Adult Learning Australia, 2014. *Disengaged Youth and ACE*. Adult Learning Australia Ltd.

8 Department of Employment, 2016. *Australian Jobs 2016*. Australian Government.

9 OECD, 2011



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Employment status of South Australians aged 15–64, with and without a non-school qualification

	Employed	Not in the labour force
With a qualification	82%	14%
Without a qualification	60%	34%

Source: Census 2011

The wider adoption of new technologies and business models will disrupt segments of the labour force. Most at risk are those with lower-level skills and occupations requiring mid-level skills that are routine by nature. South Australia has the challenge of ensuring segments of the workforce are not prematurely, nor permanently, departing the workforce due to the changing nature of work. The ACE sector has a vital role to play in supporting, re-engaging and reskilling people who have been negatively impacted by structural adjustments within the economy and who experience barriers (social, economic or educational) in accessing formal education and training.

ACE is also important to the more than 10,000 migrants arriving in South Australia from a non-English speaking country each year¹⁰. ACE offers the entry point needed to learn the language, culture and systems of Australia. Many migrants have considerable skills and experience, and arrive with a strong desire to work and build better lives. ACE can help them on their pathway to full economic and social participation.

Similarly, the ACE sector's role in the regions is significant. One of the challenges faced in regional South Australia is accessing skilled labour; this can be despite a region having high unemployment. The challenge is that those unemployed may not have the skills needed by local businesses. ACE providers have the agility to develop programs that are responsive to the local needs of the region, either by developing the foundation skills needed to enter the workforce, or by acting as the catalyst for participants to move on to higher levels of learning needed for employment.

For many people, formal education through vocational education, university or in some cases high school, is not a viable option. Whether this is due to health, economic disadvantage, learning ability, language, or prior experience, significant barriers often need to be overcome to gain the skills required to succeed in formal training. As the fourth education sector, ACE offers an alternative pathway by providing a supportive environment for re-engaging with learning.

The value of Adult Community Education

Participation and social inclusion

The deep impact of the ACE sector is best understood through the experiences and outcomes of those involved. ACE has been the catalyst for change, hope and inspiration for countless people across the country.

In the words of one provider, 'ACE provides acceptance, welcome, inclusion, a smiling face, someone to talk to, and the ability to get involved at your own pace'¹¹.

The courses that participants undertake, and the support they receive from tutors and volunteers, help them to acquire essential life skills. For migrants, studying English as a second language through an ACE provider equips them with the skills to undertake more fully with their local communities.

By encouraging participation in social activities and by developing socially and culturally informed citizens, our communities become better places to live.

ACE enables people to meet others who have experienced similar situations to them, helping them to connect with others and build personal confidence. This capacity is key to engaging and connecting with vulnerable or marginalised individuals.

The ultimate value of participation and social inclusion, whilst hard to measure, must not be overlooked. The Commission maintains that Government investment in skills and training must include the access and participation agenda, and that ACE should form part of any policy considerations for Vocational Education and Training (VET) funding.

¹¹ Neighborhood Houses Tasmania. Budget Submission to the Tasmanian Government for the 2017 / 2018 State Budget; 2016. p. 5.





Case study 1:

Participant who became a volunteer

Loretta Cox came to SA with her husband and two kids in 2010, after her husband secured a new job. Prior to arriving in Adelaide, they had lived in Wollongong where she had spent the past 25 years working in the finance industry. It was a big shift for the family, but exciting nonetheless.

Loretta hoped to find part-time work in Adelaide, but to increase her chances she decided to complete a MYOB course at her local community centre, The Hut Community Centre in Aldgate.

After two years of searching and not having any luck finding work, Loretta returned to 'The Hut', first to complete a course in Microsoft Excel, followed by an Introduction to Word.

"I enjoyed learning new things, I found it stimulating, it was very hands on which was nice – particularly the Excel course. The classes were small, and that meant everyone's questions could be answered. I particularly liked that you could personalise your own project."

She found the tutors were very good at adapting course content to the needs of those in the class, and she enjoyed learning with people from different backgrounds.

Loretta enjoyed her time so much at the centre that she soon began volunteering there, where she found she could put her new Word and Excel skills into practice.

Loretta has been a volunteer at the centre for two years now and has been thoroughly enjoying it. "I work with lovely people, and I'm still learning new skills". She has even begun volunteering with the local tennis club, where, once again, she can use her new Word and Excel skills.

Loretta still hopes to find part-time employment, preferably in an office environment, but for the time-being she will keep learning and volunteering her time.

Economic benefits

In 2016, the Training and Skills Commission requested a report on the economic and social impact of the ACE sector to be conducted by the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies (SACES). The report¹² builds on a growing body of research that typically finds that ACE programs are:

- Cost effective
- Have positive effects on employment and wellbeing, especially among learners who enhanced their levels of qualification¹³
- Generate social benefits, especially among lower level learners who participated in programs without the objective or outcome of a higher formal qualification¹⁴
- Have a positive effect on communities.

Having a labour force with a high level of foundation skills is critical to ensuring South Australia can provide the skilled workers needed in the future. The growing employment opportunities in defence, food and wine processing, advanced manufacturing, the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and health care, all require a workforce with a high level of foundation skills.

ACE has a long history of assisting the unemployed or those not in the labour force to re-engage with learning through non-formal study, progressing to formal study and into employment. This provides long-term benefits not just to the individual, but to the South Australian economy.

The SACES research into the value of ACE estimated the average return on investment (ROI) per student was approximately \$945, or \$860 000 for the entire 2015–16 accredited ACE program. Over the span of 15 years, the return to a student is estimated to be more than \$8 000 or a gross benefit of \$7.8m for the entire accredited ACE program from the 2015-16 year. In other words, the ACE program in South Australia is expected to provide an economic benefit of up to 6.5 times the investment.



- **Positive effects on employment and communities**
- **Cost effective**
- **Social benefits**

The SACES estimation of ROI does not include secondary outcomes such as gaining employment, community building and improved health and wellbeing. These additional outcomes often reduce welfare dependence, increase tax revenue and workforce productivity. Nor does it include the significant input of volunteer hours provided by tutors, conservatively estimated at contributing the equivalent of 20 per cent of funded costs.


There should be no doubt that the ACE program in South Australia represents excellent value for money, bringing with it significant social and economic benefit.

¹² South Australian Centre for Economic Studies. The Economic and Social Impact of the Adult Community Education (ACE) Sector. University of Adelaide; 2016.

¹³ Dorsett R, Lui S, Weale M. Economic Benefits of Lifelong Learning. National Institute of Economic and Social Research. London; 2010.

¹⁴ Duckworth K, Cara O. The Relationship between Adult Learning and Wellbeing: Evidence from the 1958 National Child Development Study. Department for Business Innovation and Skills. London; 2012.





ACE CONNECTS MARGINALISED POPULATIONS TO COMMUNITIES, THE ECONOMY AND SOCIETY. FOR THE INDIVIDUAL, ACE PROVIDES PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IN LANGUAGE, LITERACY AND NUMERACY (LLN), IN LEARNING HOW TO LEARN AND BY DEVELOPING VOCATIONAL AND WORKPLACE SKILLS AND TEAMWORK.



Case study 2:

Participant who gained employment

Krystle Drewitt first encountered ACE while she was recovering from cancer in her late 20s. Having struggled with employment due to her poor health, she turned to study to develop new skills and create more options.

After completing a Certificate II in Community Services, Krystle went on to complete the Certificate IV, during which she needed to do a six-week placement. This was a challenging prospect, as her health meant she needed an employer who understood her situation and could be flexible.

Krystle approached Community House in Port Lincoln and found they were very understanding. She completed her placement and the centre was very happy with her, so much so that they quickly invited her back as a volunteer, which she gladly accepted.

While working as a volunteer Krystle became interested in their computer skills program. She signed up and in no time, she was helping her fellow students, even while still being a student herself.

Krystle says her confidence has increased significantly since she has been involved with ACE, and she feels better about herself. Fast forward two years and Krystle has recently completed her Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and has just been offered a position as a paid tutor.

"The people have been wonderful, they make you feel comfortable, the students are so willing to learn, and you get excited to show them new things."

Krystle says she gets a lot out of helping people, "we get a lot of people who have anxiety issues, and it's really rewarding to see them become comfortable in the class, particularly because I know how I felt when I started".

Krystle hopes her health continues to get better. She would love a full-time job but for the time being, she can only do what her body allows.

"It is really rewarding seeing students blossom or come out of their shell, and seeing them achieve their goals".





Pathways through ACE and beyond

One of the reasons ACE is so valuable is that it gives individuals who are socially isolated, who have a lower level of educational achievement, or who have few connections with their community, an opportunity to start a journey of engagement, connection and personal development.

Just as there are many entry points into ACE, there are many potential pathways an individual can take through and beyond ACE. For all participants, regardless of their goal, the journey starts with engagement. For some, this can be a challenging step and is a significant outcome in itself. For others, engagement is simply the beginning of a pathway that may take them from informal to formal learning, to becoming a volunteer, or to continue their education beyond ACE to complete a formal qualification. On completing a higher-level qualification, some people re-enter the ACE sector to become paid tutors or staff members, while others find employment outside of ACE. Some will eventually go on to establish their own businesses.

It should be recognised that each of these outcomes is equally as valuable to the individual as they are to the local community and society in general. Whether an individual improves their life skills, or they gain full-time employment, these are positive outcomes.

It should also be recognised that for most ACE students, the path they take is not linear. Participants are likely to move in and out of ACE over a period of years. This is the time it takes to find their feet and to gain the confidence and skills required to take the next step. SACES found the average participant in accredited ACE study takes two years to complete their study¹⁵. Yet this is only the beginning of their journey to gaining confidence in their ability to learn, to be appreciated and economically rewarded, and to completing a formal qualification.

While the pathway between non-accredited to higher level study or employment should be clearly identifiable, ACE providers and participants suggest this is often not the case. ACE providers also report there is a severe lack of support to assist students in progressing to higher level study or employment. This is further complicated by inadequate collaboration between Government agencies and other support providers.

¹⁵ South Australian Centre for Economic Studies. The Economic and Social Impact of the Adult Community Education (ACE) Sector. University of Adelaide; 2016.



Case study 3:

Participant who went on to higher level study

Lyn Whelan has not had an easy decade. In 2007, at 28 years of age, she was diagnosed with a brain tumour. Her daughter was four weeks old at the time. She defeated cancer once, only for it to return in 2014. At the time, she thought, "what am I going to do?" All she knew was that she did not want to give up, and she wanted to set a good example for her two children.

A friend, seeing she needed something to get her out of the house, suggested going along to the Pooraka Farm Community Centre. Two years on and Lyn is still going, only her role has changed. Since first stepping through the doors two years ago, Lyn has done every course the Centre offers, including:

- Aged and disability care
- Food health and safety
- Introduction to Microsoft
- Pathways to employment

Lyn says, "the Centre has helped me become more of me".

"I have had an awesome time at the Centre. Given my health and having young children, the support and flexibility provided by the Centre is just what I need."

What she has learned, along with the support, care and advice she has received has had a huge impact on her life.

Not only has going to the Centre given her new skills, but staff at the Centre helped Lyn overcome a difficult period with her ex-partner and children. Thanks to their help she was able to turn a difficult situation right around. She says, 'the staff are always there for you, they always have your back. As a single mother recovering from cancer, it's not easy. The Centre offers support that you just don't get in other work places'.

Lyn believes the courses she has taken have helped her become much stronger, more independent and more vocal—she has far more self-confidence. "The Course of Women's Studies really brought me out, and improving my computer skills has helped a lot".

Lyn has come full circle over the last two years. Going from socially isolated cancer sufferer, to student, volunteer and now paid employee.

Lynn started volunteering at Pooraka Farm in 2016, and it did not take long for other staff to see she had a unique ability to identify and connect with students who needed extra support. Lyn helps students to understand what is being taught, to fill in forms, and can point them in the right direction if they have difficulties at home. She has recently gone one step further, and is now facilitating her own class.

Funding ACE

The delivery of ACE is supported by Government funding, without which, ACE providers would not be able to provide the invaluable service they do.

For many years ACE providers have operated in an unpredictable funding environment, moving from one short-term grant to the next. This has made it difficult for providers to retain quality staff or make long-term plans. The recent introduction of triennial funding has been a significant positive step, enabling providers to identify and make plans to address the long-term needs of their clients, as well as train and retain quality staff.

Longer-term funding has also been critical to enabling providers to establish stronger connections with other support providers and build collaboration between agencies.

Key stakeholders are currently discussing the immediate future for ACE funding in South Australia. A thorough review of ACE funding is over due. For many years, funding for ACE providers has been capped. There has been no funding increase in line with Consumer Price Index (CPI) and no in-depth review to determine whether these levels are still appropriate.

Several reports and recent feedback received by the Department of State Development during its consultation around 'Strengthening ACE', has highlighted that the actual cost of delivering non-accredited ACE has significantly increased over time.

One of the reasons for this is the rise in the complexity of needs of ACE participants. Today, the diversity of ACE participants is extensive, coming from around 100 different countries and speaking 80 different languages¹⁶. Participants often face substantial barriers to learning, have differing levels of education and learning abilities, and consequently require significant support from tutors. The result in the classroom is tutors having to spend a greater amount of time supporting students and helping them overcome their challenges.

Under current funding arrangements, grants received by ACE providers have been for delivery only. All other costs, such as the purchase of equipment, course preparation, client needs assessment, curriculum development, marketing activity, staff training or travel costs—a particular challenge in the regions—need to be funded through other means. Without doubt, ACE providers make what funding they do receive go a long way, but there is a limit to what they can achieve under current funding arrangements.

Placing further pressure on funding has been the steady shift toward more professional and systematic practices across the sector, from teaching through to administration and governance. On the one hand, this is a positive and necessary step, yet a consequence of demanding higher quality practices is having to pay higher costs associated with ACE delivery.

The combination of these factors has stretched some ACE providers to the limit, with some questioning their ability to deliver non-accredited ACE programs under current arrangements.

One final consideration for funding ACE is the lack of funding for, and therefore, lack of capacity to provide post-delivery support. The Department of State Development has recently acknowledged the positive impact of post-study support, with a specific allocation of funding now a feature under one of the components of the WorkReady program for 2017-18.

The Department's Jobs First Employment Projects and Building Family Opportunities (BFO) program provide good examples of the positive outcomes that can be achieved through the case management of vulnerable individuals and their families. Since 2010, the BFO program has resulted in 800 employment outcomes by helping the long-term unemployed overcome challenges that have included homelessness, mental and physical health problems, domestic violence and insecure housing. A similar model would be of immense benefit to the ACE sector.

16 South Australian Centre for Economic Studies. The Economic and Social Impact of the Adult Community Education (ACE) Sector. University of Adelaide; 2016.



Targeted support for people when study has been completed can have a significant impact on their next steps, whether they be to higher level study, volunteering or employment. ACE participants are arguably one of the cohorts most in need of this support. Some targeted assistance at key transition points can make all the difference, ensuring that maximum benefit is derived from participation in ACE.

The Training and Skills Commission believes ACE needs to be better recognised for what it is—a key part of the solution in addressing region-specific, social and employment needs. Yet for this to happen, there needs to be flexibility in the funding of ACE. If the Government determines there is a case to provide support to a specific region, ACE needs to be part of the strategy; ACE providers are, after all, highly experienced in helping the disadvantaged.

To take the example of automotive workers in the northern suburbs, ACE providers servicing the northern suburbs may need to put on additional classes to meet participant demand. This would be a valuable service, yet there is no scope for providers to increase classes when they have reached their funding cap. A provision to apply for additional funds outside of the normal funding cycle to meet unforeseen demand would allow ACE providers to better meet the needs of their communities.

While it is acknowledged that providers typically support funding caps to ensure equitable distribution of funding, this approach limits the role that ACE can play. Consequently the sector may be overlooked as part of the solution to addressing social and economic needs in specific locations.

Critical Observations

The Commission has long championed longer-term funding for the ACE sector in South Australia to lift standards, provide more certainty and allow for longer-term planning for community providers. Triennial funding, community centres' workforce development funding and some limited capacity building funding have been welcomed. The Commission believes there is a unique opportunity right now for greater government support to the sector, particularly given what we know from our recent works, that ACE is not only critical to many, of immense value to our society but an extraordinarily efficient use of public monies.

In making recommendations, the Training and Skills Commission has drawn on feedback received by the Department in its recent consultation, issues raised by several reports released over recent years¹⁷, and the Commission's own engagement and consultation with the sector over the last 18 months.

Funding

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- Greater community understanding of ACE
- Greater utilisation of ACE
- Greater recognition of the economic, social, community and individual benefits of ACE

¹⁷ Parker D, Brennan S, Curtis T. The State of ACE in Australia. Adult Learning Australia; 2015.



Conclusion

THE ACE SECTOR IS OF IMMENSE VALUE TO OUR STATE. THE NEED FOR ACE WILL CONTINUE TO GROW AS THE NATURE OF WORK CHANGES.

The Commission challenges the South Australian Government and the ACE sector to think more creatively about how ACE could help address social and economic issues. The challenges are there, but so are the people and organisations with the capability to meet them.

ACE is the fourth pillar of South Australia's education system. If we secure longer-term and more flexible funding, build the workforce and capabilities of Community Centres, while raising the profile we will have a stronger ACE sector for the future.

Better Skills Better Work Better State

Disclaimer: The material contained in this document has been developed by the Training and Skills Commission with support and data provided by the Department of State Development and others. The views and recommendations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of South Australia or the Department of State Development, or indicate any commitment to a particular course of action.

The information contained in this document is provided in good faith and all reasonable care has been taken in its preparation. The Training and Skills Commission recommends users exercise care in interpreting this document and carefully evaluate the relevance of the material for their purpose and where necessary obtain appropriate advice specific to their particular circumstances.

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