Work-based Learning and Foundation Skills in Community Providers
NCVER “No Frills” Conference, Rockhampton

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The Research

This research aims to develop an understanding of the extent to which community providers are delivering training, including foundation skills, through work-based learning arrangements, and the styles of work-based learning that have been successful in up-skilling workers.

The project was funded by the Australian Government Department of Education & Training through the Strategic Partnerships Program.

CCA Project Manager was Ruth Walker.
Community Colleges Australia (CCA) is the peak association that represents and provides services to community-owned, not-for-profit education and training providers.

View our details at http://cca.edu.au/
CCA’s vision is for dynamic and vibrant Australian communities, informed and empowered through learning. To make this vision a reality, CCA works to empower the community education sector by:

- increasing understanding and awareness of the sector and its place in the economic and social fabric of Australia;
- building the capacity of community providers to deliver education to their communities, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged learners;
- advocating at all levels of government on the value of our members’ activities and programs; and
- building business opportunities for our members.
1,597,800 students enrolled in the government-funded VET system in 2014 (down from 1,789,100 in 2014 – a 10.7% decline).

Total of 1889 training organisations in 2015:
- 54 TAFE & 14 other government providers
- 391 community education providers
- 1585 private training providers

Government-funded VET by provider type: 2005-2014
• TAFE has dropped 30% of its enrolments - from 79% of students to 60.6% of students (-18.4% of the total).
• Private (for-profit) providers have increased enrolments by 294% - from 11.1% to 32.6% (+21.5% of the total).
• Community (not-for-profit) providers have dropped 44% of its enrolments – from 9.5% to 5.3% (-4.2% of the total).
• In 2014, 1.5% of students were attending more than one provider.

Research Questions

This project addresses the following questions:

1. To what extent are community providers providing work placements?
2. To what extent are community providers delivering work-based learning?
3. To what extent are community providers offering foundation skills to business?
4. What styles of learning have been successful for up-skiing workers?
Research Stages

- Literature review

- Survey sent to 519 community providers in October 2015 and February 2016: 98 responses received (response rate of 19%)

- Semi-structured interviews took place with a selection of providers took place from January to April 2016

- Final report - June 2016 (to be published July 2016)
Community Providers?

Defined as:
- a registered training organisation (RTO)
- not-for-profit
- incorporated entity (company, partnership association, incorporation)
- focus on adult education
- serving a community or communities (may be geographical, cultural, or other common identity & may be in more than one community)
Spot the difference:
Which is the community provider?

[Image: ACE Community Colleges logo]

[Image: Australian Indigenous College logo]

Community Education Australia
AVETMISS Provider Type

Community-based adult education provider
A not-for-profit, community-based organisation with a primary focus on adult education. Community-based adult education delivers courses relating to leisure, personal and community development, employment skills, preparation for VET and nationally recognised programs of study.

Other training provider:
• ‘91 — Private education/training business or centre is a privately operated registered training organisation (‘private provider’).
• ‘99 — Other training provider not elsewhere classified’ are for-profit private training providers (e.g. private one-on-one music teachers, private tutors) and not-for-profit training providers (e.g. Mission Australia, Salvation Army)
The Five Models

We found five models for delivering work-based learning:

1. Contracted WBL (traineeships & apprenticeships)
2. Work-based learning for specific clients
3. Operating businesses specifically for training (childcare centre, café, hair salon)
4. Mandatory work-based learning
5. Work placement opportunities
Research findings

What prevents you doing more work-based learning?

• Funding
• Service large geographical area
• Limited capacity to develop relationships
• Lack of market awareness
• Shortage of willing or suitable employers
• Complex learner needs
• Not in our business plan
Findings

- Significant providers of work-based learning
- Flexible and responsive to client needs (5 models)
- Notable presence in industries with mandatory work-based learning
- Vital role supporting local business
- Significant providers of foundation skills including to business clients
- Use a range of programs to up-skill workers
- Networking and communication important in building and maintaining business clients
- Trainer is critical to success of work-based learning
Findings

Barriers to doing more work-based learning:
• Funding for non-accredited programs
• Lack of human resources to build business relationships
• Accessing workplacements
• Market perception of community providers
• Lack of human resources to build business relationships
Community providers are very much involved in delivering foundation skills:

- 79% (of survey respondents) delivering classroom based accredited courses
- 26% (of respondents) delivering foundation skills to business clients
Foundation skills

What prevents you doing more foundation skills?

• Inadequate funding
• Job Active contract changes
• Funding arrangements prohibitively complex
• Students unwilling
• Limited capacity
Summary

• Community education providers are very much involved in the delivery of work-based learning including foundation skills.

• Community education providers tend to delivery work-based learning via one or more of five models.

• Networks within the community are important in building opportunities to delivery work-based learning.

• Strong lines of communication and the industry reputation of trainers are critical to success in delivering work-based learning.
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