
Learn Local: an overview

Victoria's independent *Learn Local* organisations deliver for individual Victorians, local businesses and the community. Across regional, rural and metropolitan Victoria over 320 *Learn Local* organisations, funded by the Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board deliver the education and training that Victorians of all ages need to get a job and develop the skills they require for even greater personal achievement in learning and in the workplace.

For businesses, *Learn Local* organisations are on-the-ground training partners that deliver high quality, customised training. A suite of nationally recognised programs are delivered to meet the needs of the local workforce. Local insight and understanding means *Learn Local* organisations offer work-based programs that drive improved productivity, efficiency and effectiveness for local businesses.

Learn Local education and training delivers a broad range of programs in unique local community settings. Because *Learn Local* organisations deliver accredited and pre-accredited programs, they offer convenient, welcoming and flexible learning options.

- Accredited training provides skills and knowledge that leads to a nationally recognised qualification. Accredited qualifications, such as the Certificate III in Community Services Work or the Advanced Diploma of Rural Business Management, deliver learners the skills and knowledge required to work in a broad range of occupations and industries.
- Pre-accredited programs are programs that are designed for learners to gain confidence and the fundamental skills which lead to employment and further education opportunities, such as accredited programs.

Almost 1.6 million adult Victorians have never completed twelve years of schooling and in 2010, 81% of learners in the *Learn Local* education and training sector had experienced disadvantage because of location, prior educational attainment, economic or social circumstances, with 20% of learners experiencing simultaneously three or more of these characteristics of disadvantage.

ACFE strives to reduce these figures, giving individuals the opportunity to develop skills and acquire qualifications in their local community to enhance the quality of their lives and broaden their options to participate socially and economically.

Who chooses to study with a *Learn Local* organisation?

Each year over 100,000 Victorians choose to learn through a *Learn Local* organisation. They come from a wide range of backgrounds but often choose *Learn Local* education and training because it is close to home, offers a friendly environment and has teachers who are focussed on doing what individual learners need to succeed.

Learn Local education and training learners are diverse and include:

- existing workers and employees undertaking further study to get, change or achieve more in their jobs
- individuals wanting to get back into learning after time away from formal study
- Victorians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and Indigenous Australians
- Young and mature aged learners undertaking their *Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)* or *Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)*
- adults learning for interest or their own personal development
- adults who have had no prior formal education.

What are *Learn Local* organisations?

Learn Local organisations are independent community organisations. They are all not-for-profit businesses that are established to serve the needs of local communities. Each of the 320 *Learn Local* organisations has its own local board and management team that works with the wider community, local businesses and local, state and federal governments. Over 8,000 qualified staff and dedicated volunteers support learners attending this network of 320 organisations in communities from Melbourne to Mildura to Mallacoota.

Around half of Victoria's *Learn Local* organisations are registered training organisations (RTOs). This means that they are able to deliver *accredited training* and offer qualifications. It also means that Government regularly checks to ensure that all accredited training delivered is high quality and meets national standards.

Those *Learn Local* organisations that are not registered training organisations specialise in delivering pre-accredited programs. Many also work with other *Learn Local* organisations and TAFEs to offer their learners integrated pathways into accredited certificate and diploma programs.

In addition to education and training programs, most *Learn Local* organisations deliver a range of other services for their communities that may include childcare, employment services and community development activity.

Who delivers the training in *Learn Local* organisations?

The teachers that deliver accredited and pre-accredited programs in *Learn Local* organisations are committed to providing flexible learning opportunities for their communities.

Those delivering accredited training must have the same teaching qualifications as those teaching at other providers such as TAFE. The majority of these teachers also have a wealth of experience in the specific industry they are teaching their learners to work in.

Many *Learn Local* teachers delivering pre-accredited programs have qualifications in literacy and numeracy education. All pre-accredited programs taught by *Learn Local* organisations are also designed in line with the Victorian Government's A-Frame, an Australian-first quality framework.

What results do *Learn Local* organisations deliver?

The success of *Learn Local* organisations is clear.

- A recent report found that men studying through *Learn Local* organisations lifted their annual wage premiums by an average of \$8,000 to \$13,000 and women increased their wage by an average of \$1,300 to \$2,200
- In 2009, learners participating in education and training programs at *Learn Local* organisations comprised 15.6 per cent (approximately 47,000) of the 300,000 government supported Vocational Education and Training (VET) learners in Victoria
- *Learn Local* organisations have a proud record of delivering adult literacy and numeracy, employment skills, VCE / VCAL, vocational skills and training and other less formal learning in local communities. In 2010:
 - 5.2% of learners were disengaged young people (ie. aged 15-19, currently unemployed and have not completed Year 12), compared to 4% of the wider population
 - 24% of learners were early school leavers (ie. persons whose highest qualification is year 10 or 11), compared to 20% of the wider population
 - 37% of learners were from low socioeconomic status localities, compared to 25% of the wider population
 - 19% of learners were from a CALD background, similar to the proportion of CALD residents in the Victorian population (21%)
 - 15% of learners had a special need
 - 10% of learners were men over 45 years of age, compared to 18% of the wider population
 - 17% of learners were vulnerable or low skilled workers (ie. persons whose highest qualification is Year 9 or below), compared to 10% of the wider population
 - 1.3% of learners were from an Indigenous background, more than double the proportion of Indigenous persons aged 15-64 in the Victorian population (0.5%).

Where is my nearest *Learn Local* organisation?

With over 320 *Learn Local* organisations across Victoria there is bound to be one just around the corner. To find your nearest organisation go to www.acfe.vic.gov.au