

Workshop B3b

**Building bridges –  
Practitioners working together**

*Looking at ways to break down barriers between the  
Social (Community) and Vocational applications of LLN  
training delivery*

**John Molenaar, Manufacturing Learning Victoria**

Reference:

**VET workforce skills in language, literacy  
and numeracy.**

*IBSA VET workforce LLN capability project 2010*

A paper seeking views and advice from experienced VET practitioners on the most effective ways to develop VET workforce skills in language, literacy and numeracy.

Can LLN training that is delivered in a vocational context have the same benefits as training with a social focus?

- What are the differences? Is one better than the other?
- How and when can the two interact and complement each other?

More vocational trainers are taking up or being encouraged to take up active delivery of LLN in their classes.

- Is this a positive step?
- Can they do it alone?
- What are the barriers?

## How can practitioners work together?

Skills Australia, Australian Workforce Futures Report (Australian Workforce Futures, Skills Australia, 2010) emphasised the impact on Australia's workforce of the lack of foundation skills of language, literacy and numeracy (LLN).

The report also stated:

***We need also to ensure education and training providers have the skills and networks to identify and address these core skill needs***

The Australian Workforce Futures Report (Australian Workforce Futures, Skills Australia 2010) had identified:

***It should be compulsory for all VET practitioners to gain competency in addressing language, literacy and numeracy issues, so they can identify the language, literacy and numeracy shortcomings of learners and refer them to the appropriate support.***

Support for an **expanded** and skilled LLN workforce can also be seen in current thinking about effective workplace literacy provision.

***•We need to identify effective ways in which the VET workforce can be skilled (or up-skilled) to ensure that the LLN skill needs of the Australian population are identified and addressed as part of the education and training process.***

***•This does not mean that all VET trainers and assessors need to become LLN experts, however more needs to be done to ensure that all VET practitioners have a baseline understanding of LLN issues and the ability to adjust their practice to accommodate the LLN skills of their learners and the insight and awareness to refer learners to appropriate specialist support.***

### **Language, Literacy and Numeracy skills of the Australian population**

Analysis of ABS Labour Force statistics and figures from the Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Adult Literacy and Life Skills: Summary Report*, 2007) identified that:

- **More than 4 million** employed people (40% of the total workforce) and **360,000** unemployed people (60% of the unemployed population) **do not** have sufficiently high **literacy skills** to meet the complex demands of everyday life and work.
- Of the unemployed, many **do not present to education programs** and are totally **disengaged from learning** all together. They are more likely face-to-face contact with **service providers in the community services**, welfare or job network areas **than** they are to be engaged in an **educational program**.
- Many people who are already in work or enrolled in mainstream VET training programs have **low level LLN** skills but they are often **fearful of exposing** their weaknesses by seeking support. Research has also shown that people with low level LLN skills are often not able to identify their skill gap.

### **Current LLN delivery**

While the logical solution for addressing these skill gaps may appear to be through the use of specialised stand-alone LLN programs, such as the **Certificate In General Education for Adults (CGEA)**, in reality these stand-alone approaches cannot meet the level of demand or offer the vocationally specific outcomes needed by the vast majority of potential learners.

- Some government-funded adult LLN programs, e.g. LLNP and AMEP, are provided by specialist LLN teachers but most of the working population who have low level LLN skills will present in mainstream VET without any previous specialised LLN training.
- The WELL program does deliver targeted LLN training in the workplace.
- Since the introduction of Training Packages there has been a policy of building LLN into vocational qualifications. All Training Package users need the ability to unpack units of competency and identify the embedded LLN requirements.

Mainstream VET practitioners need to understand LLN in two distinct areas:

1. The LLN requirements of the unit of competency/qualification (the outcomes to be delivered through training)
2. The potentially low level LLN skills of learners that may impact on effective participation in training.

- **LLN qualifications in the VET sector**

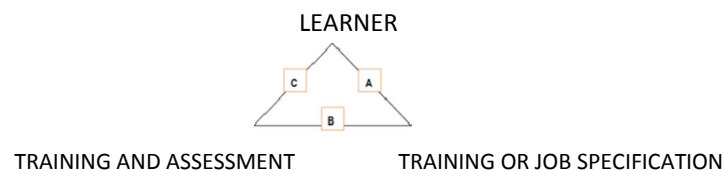
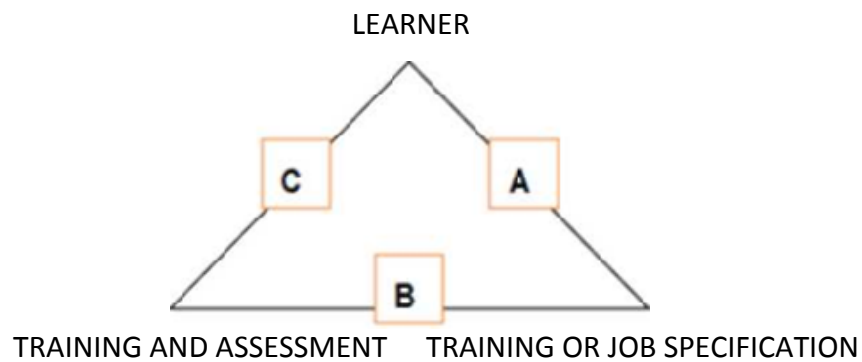
A flexible range of options are available to meet the needs of practitioners from those who need to *develop greater awareness of LLN issues* right through to those seeking *specialist LLN qualifications*.

*Within the TAA 04 and the TAE 10 Packages*

- TAELLN401A is an elective in the Certificate IV in Training and Education and is designed for VET trainers and assessors to become aware of LLN issues and adjust their practice to accommodate the LLN skills of their learners
- TAALLN501A is an elective at Diploma level that allows trainers and assessors to deepen their understanding of direct teaching strategies to improve their learners' LLN skills

- The new TAE70110 Vocational Graduate Certificate in Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice provides development of specialist skills to address the LLN skill development of learners in workplace, community or formal classroom settings
- The new TAE80110 Vocational Graduate Diploma of Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Leadership provides leadership and research opportunities for existing practitioners

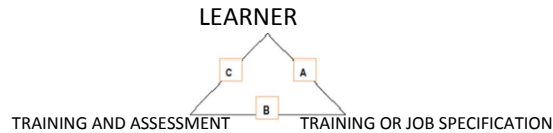
## Things to consider when addressing LLN issues in my training and assessment practice



### A

If the training specification describes a certain level of reading, writing, speaking and listening or numeracy that a person needs to have on the job, and your learner does not yet have that required level of skill, then your training program should help them develop the required level and allow for lots of practice of the skill within the required context.



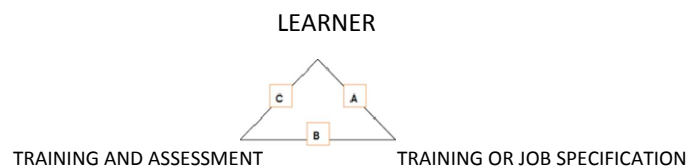


**B**

Your training program should include as much content from the real workplace as possible. It's important to know details about the workplace and about what language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) skills are required. For example:

- What vocational words are used?
- What procedures need to be read?
- What forms need to be completed?
- What reports need to be written?

Include plenty of practice in using these documents in your training program.



**C**

Analyse whether the level of LLN required in your training program is higher than the skills of the learners. Include appropriate strategies in your training to support learners. You may need to adjust aspects of your training. For example, replace PowerPoint slides requiring a lot of reading with a slide presentation containing a range of images, followed by a group discussion and note taking exercise to distill key points. Many learners will absorb information more effectively through 'listening' or 'observing' rather than 'reading'.

Specialised stand-alone LLN programs include:

**Certificates In General Education for Adults (CGEA)**

**Certificates in ESL (English as a Second Language)**

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What qualifications do trainers need to deliver these programs?

CGEA

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ESL

CGEA

ESL

***Vocational competency requirements of teachers:***

A qualified TESOL teacher is a person who holds a postgraduate qualification that includes a supervised teaching practicum in TESL/TESOL or a 4-year Bachelor of Education qualification with a TESL/TESOL method.

Approved qualifications include:

- B.Ed with TESL/TESOL as a method
- Diploma of Education with TESL/TESOL as a method
- TESL/TESOL within Graduate Certificate in Education
- Graduate Certificate in TESL/TESOL
- Graduate Diploma in TESL/TESOL
- Appropriate Masters Degrees which include a TESOL specialisation such as Master of Arts (TESL/TESOL), Master of Teaching, Master of Applied Linguistics

**CGEA**

In addition to holding *TAE40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment* or equivalent, it is recommended that those teaching in the core skills for reading and writing and or numeracy have undertaken specialist study in teaching adult literacy and numeracy.

Desirable specialist training would cover, but not be restricted to, current issues and theories to do with the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills to adults.

**Desirable skills and knowledge includes:**

- Adult literacy pedagogy, including coverage of psycho-linguistics, socio-linguistics, humanistic /progressivist pedagogy, critical pedagogy, discourse theory.
- Adult numeracy pedagogy, including critical literacy /numeracy.
- Socio-cultural factors affecting literacy learning, including language as a social and cultural phenomenon, importance of context, language of power, role of literacy in allowing or denying access to education, employment, services and impacts on health .
- Applied linguistics, for example the conventions of formal English in a range of genres, an understanding of the behaviour and needs of learners in a multi-lingual and multi -cultural learning environment, code switching and use of various English dialects (including Aboriginal English), text analysis – how to analyse the linguistic structure of a text to identify problems and build skill development.

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