

Skilled trainers >>
Skilled workforce

Strengthening the VET Workforce in South Australia

Implementation Framework

2026-29

Skills SA



Government
of South Australia

Department of
State Development

Minister foreword



South Australia's future prosperity depends on a skilled workforce and a strong education and training system that enables people to participate, adapt and thrive in rapidly evolving sectors.

Vocational education and training (VET) plays a central role in delivering the skills our economy needs, supporting industry growth and demonstrating why young people do not need to go university to have a meaningful, well-paid and rewarding career.

Under the National Skills Agreement, the Malinauskas Government has secured a record \$2.3 billion to strengthen VET and improve outcomes for South Australians.

This is the most significant investment in skills in the state's history, designed to deliver on priorities outlined in the National Skills Plan and preparing the country – and our state – to respond to and sustain economic growth.

We are boosting this through the 2026-27 State Budget, investing more than \$260 million for measures including three additional new technical colleges, 1,000 new pathways into the construction industry and building the AUKUS skills workforce.

At the heart of VET are the educators and staff who deliver high quality training and support learners every day. With a growing need for VET qualifications in priority areas, an uplift is required in South Australia's capability and number of experienced and qualified educators.

Developed in close consultation with educators, training providers, and industry partners, the Framework is a practical, evidence informed approach to strengthening local workforce: attracting skilled people into VET teaching, support for educators early in their careers, investing in ongoing professional development and enabling experienced practitioners to lead, share practice and drive continuous improvement across the system.

It also recognises the critical contribution of the broader VET workforce to equip the next generation of workers.

The Framework will help us attract, retain and develop our vocational education workforce and ensure South Australia has the skilled workers needed to deliver major projects and seize the state's unprecedented economic opportunities.

The Hon. Lucy Hood MP

Minister for Education, Training and Skills

Contents

Introduction	4
Our guiding principles	5
South Australian VET workforce Snapshot	6
What you told us	7
Opportunities to strengthen the South Australian VET workforce	8
The implementation Framework	10
Taking positive action	11
Ignite	12
‘Become an Educator’ taster courses	12
Scholarships for aspiring educators	14
Incubator Grants for recruiting RTOs	16
Uplifting and retaining the VET workforce	18
Springboard	19
‘Starting to Teach’ short course	20
Peer Support Program for early career educators	22
Accelerate	25
Scholarships to enhance teaching practice	26
Scholarships to support industry currency	28
Professional Development program	30
AI and EdTech Special Interest Group (SIG)	32
Elevate	33
Peer Support Facilitator Grants	34
International Research Fellowships	36
Educator Symposium	38
Evaluation and review	39
References	41



Introduction

The Strengthening the VET Workforce Framework (the Framework) sets out a clear and practical approach to building a skilled, capable and sustainable VET workforce for South Australia. Its purpose is to support educators and Registered Training Organisation (RTO) staff to deliver high quality training that meets the needs of learners, employers and industry – now and into the future.

The Framework has been developed through consultation with RTOs, educators, industry and government partners. It responds to well-known workforce challenges, including difficulties attracting and keeping educators, high early career turnover, unclear or high risk entry pathways, increasing learner complexity, fast changing industries and technology, and pressure on staff to develop and keep a broader range of skills up to date.

The Framework takes a whole of career approach, responding to workforce supply and demand challenges: it recognises the need to attract new people into teaching, give stronger support to early career educators, support ongoing skill development for experienced staff, and create professional opportunities to share practice and lead improvement. It also recognises that while educators are central to training quality, the capability of RTO staff who support learners, delivery, digital systems, quality and compliance is critical to learner success.

Aligned with the National VET Workforce Blueprint, the Framework supports South Australia's focus on growing and diversifying the workforce, strengthening pathways into teaching, uplifting capability across career stages, and supporting quality, relevance and sustainability across the system.

The Framework also complements South Australia's Policy Direction for Skills – Skilled.Thriving.Connected. – and its ambition to build the skills of highly adaptable people through a strongly connected and quality-driven skills system.

The Framework is intended to be a live document and will be reviewed regularly so it can respond to new evidence, sector feedback and emerging workforce needs.

Our guiding principles

The Framework is guided by a set of clear principles that shape how initiatives are designed, delivered and scaled:

Collaborative and co designed

Initiatives are developed with RTOs, educators and industry to ensure they are practical, relevant and grounded in real workforce needs.

Centred on quality and learner outcomes

Investment is targeted to areas where it will most effectively improve teaching quality, learner experience and outcomes for South Australian students, aligned with state and national government priority sectors.

Builds on what works

Initiatives build on existing good practice, recognised VET products and established pathways wherever possible. The focus is on strengthening and extending what already works, rather than duplicating effort or creating unnecessary new structures.

Focused on real barriers

Initiatives are designed to address known challenges faced by educators and RTOs in South Australia, including time, cost, workload, access and workforce supply pressures.

Staged and evidence informed

New approaches are tested through pilots and trials first, with learning used to refine and scale effective models over time.

Committed to shared learning

Insights, outcomes and evidence are shared across the system to support continuous improvement and inform future action.

Together, these principles ensure the Framework supports sustainable workforce growth and capability and contributes to a high quality, future focused VET system for South Australia.



A snapshot of the South Australian VET workforce


A snapshot of the South Australian VET workforce

At the heart of South Australia's VET sector is a local workforce of around 2,300 educators (2) responsible for delivering training across industries that underpin the state's economic priorities.

 **2,300**
VET educators

Supported by:

 **1,300+**
Administration and operations staff

 **460+**
Leaders providing strategic and operational direction

 **300+**
Specialists in curriculum, learning design, quality, and learner support (4¹)

Many interstate educators and staff also contribute to training for South Australian students.

Around 80% of VET educators work within education and training organisations. Of Australia's 4,000 RTOs, 2,900 are approved to deliver in SA, with around 200 based in South Australia (1). TAFE SA remains the largest provider and employer, with around 2,460 staff (6).

In 2024, 309,655 South Australians undertook VET training (5). Half of all enrolments (51.3%) were at Certificate III, and 19.1% at Certificate IV. Most training (57.8%) occurred in Community Services, Hospitality, Construction, Business Services, Electrotechnology, Health and Automotive (5).

VET educators work with diverse learners; in 2024:

 **4.5%**

Identified as having a disability


 **2.9%**

Identified as Indigenous or Aboriginal

 **9.3%**

Were school students

 **40.1%**

Had not completed post secondary education

 **10.5%**

Were unemployed 5.4% not in the labour force

Nationally, the VET educator pipeline is weakening: teacher numbers have fallen **11-18%** in the past decade, and only 25% of Certificate IV in Training and Assessment graduates go on to work as VET educators (4).

Meanwhile, demand is rising. In 2024, SA recorded **3.8%** growth in overall VET participation (5).

The labour market reflects this pressure. The Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) Internet Vacancy Index indicate that job ads for VET educators in SA have risen **228%** over 10 years – more than double overall job growth – and only **half of vacancies are filled** (4). VET educator has been listed as an occupational skill shortage since 2022 (3). Shortages of VET educators are greatest in the same sectors experiencing workforce and skills shortages, and some educators may exit teaching for better paid industry roles in high demand sectors (4).

Demographic challenges persist. The median educator age is 49, compared to the national workforce median of 39 (2), meaning the sector holds deep experience while highlighting the need for timely succession planning. Educators average 42 hours per week and an average hourly wage of \$57 (2);

While above the national occupational average, it remains below many industry salaries, increasing competition for experienced practitioners (2,4).

The workforce is also predominantly metropolitan, with limited regional presence. Representation of Aboriginal staff, people from non English speaking backgrounds, and people with disability remains low despite high (and growing) participation among learners (4,5).

1 Based on South Australia's distribution of the VET workforce by segment (4).



What you told us

Consultation with educators and training providers highlighted a strong, shared commitment to delivering high quality VET, alongside several persistent and interrelated workforce challenges.

Challenges attracting and recruiting educators

Reflecting the ongoing shortage of VET educators, many RTOs told us that recruitment remains difficult – particularly for experienced educators and specialist roles. Recruitment is often reactive and driven by turnover and immediate delivery needs, rather than long term workforce planning. Providers shared that recruitment commonly relies on personal networks and referrals, which can work well in some industries but may limit the size and diversity of the potential educator pipeline.

Pay competition and skills shortages

Pay competition was consistently identified as the primary barrier to attracting and retaining educators. Competition with industry wages and other RTO pay rates is especially acute in trades, technical areas, ICT and health, where educator shortages are most pronounced.

Early career pressures and retention risks

The early years of an educator's career emerged as a critical pressure point. Many new educators, despite holding the required teaching qualification, report they do not feel fully prepared for the classroom and described being "thrown in the deep end". RTOs similarly noted that early career educators are not consistently classroom ready, with common gaps relating to confidence, classroom management and supporting diverse learners.

While mentoring and induction are widely recognised as essential, they were also described as resource intensive and costly and are not always available – particularly for smaller RTOs or those already experiencing educator shortages (where existing staff have a high teaching load).

This challenge is compounded by a reliance on casual employment in the early career stage, which can affect stability, professional confidence and retention.

A mature age workforce transition

Most early career educators are not young entrants. A significant proportion are mature age professionals aged 45 years or over transitioning from industry. Early attrition from this cohort has long term implications for workforce sustainability, succession planning and the transfer of industry expertise into VET.

What motivates educators

Despite these challenges, educators consistently reported strong motivation to teach, driven by a desire to support learners and share industry knowledge. Motivation varies somewhat by career stage:

- Early career educators placed greater emphasis on pay, job security and encouragement.
- Mid-career educators valued work-life balance and sustainable work.
- Late career educators were often motivated by giving back to the profession and mentoring others.

Both the early career stage (1-3 years) and a mid-career stage (around 7-10 years) were identified as points of heightened retention risk.

Job satisfaction and retention

Overall job satisfaction remains relatively positive, with many educators indicating an intention to stay in the sector. Educators of all career stages expressed a desire for clearer career pathways and opportunities to deepen their contribution over time. Retention is strongest where educators experience learner success, work within supportive organisational cultures, have stable and manageable workloads and can access professional development and career progression opportunities.

Professional development needs

Professional development priorities reflect a changing and increasingly complex teaching environment. Educators and RTOs identified a need to strengthen capability in:

- supporting diverse and complex learners,
- embedded language, literacy and numeracy practice,
- building digital and AI aware teaching and assessment,
- maintaining industry currency in rapidly evolving sectors.

Flexible, blended professional development – such as short, practical training, supported by release time or backfill – was strongly preferred. While RTOs are highly committed to supporting professional development, time, workload and compliance pressures remain significant constraints.

Opportunities to strengthen the South Australian VET workforce

South Australia's VET workforce is critical to delivering high quality training and meeting current and future skills needs. Strengthening the workforce requires a coordinated approach that supports people at every stage of their career, removes barriers to entry and development, and makes better use of existing expertise across the skills system.

Strengthen entry pathways into VET teaching

There is a clear opportunity to make the transition from industry into VET teaching easier and lower risk. Many capable industry professionals are interested in teaching but are unsure what the role involves or see the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment as a high risk first step. Practical taster courses, staged and stackable qualifications and early exposure to teaching through placements can help people test their interest, build confidence and enter the workforce with clearer expectations. This will help strengthen the pipeline of new educators, particularly in priority industries and regional areas.



Test new attraction and recruitment models

RTOs report that recruitment remains reactive and heavily network based, limiting diversity and scale. There is an opportunity to trial new, shared recruitment approaches – such as industry-led attraction campaigns, hybrid industry-educator roles and wage offset models – through collaborative pilots. Building strong evidence about what works will support more sustainable workforce planning and future investment decisions.

Improve early career support and retention

Educational research consistently shows that the first few years of teaching are the highest risk period for educators leaving the sector. Stronger, more consistent early career support – such as structured induction, peer support and confidence-building professional development – can reduce isolation and help new educators succeed. Supporting early career educators to build practical skills, professional identity and resilience is a key opportunity to improve retention and protect investment in new entrants.

Support ongoing capability development for experienced educators and staff

Experienced educators are critical to quality delivery and mentoring in VET, but many face barriers to further study and professional growth due to workload, cost and time pressures. Flexible, staged professional development and higher-level qualifications can support educators to refresh teaching skills, strengthen assessment practice, maintain industry currency and respond to digital and system change. There is also an opportunity to invest in the skills of RTO staff who support learners, delivery, digital systems, quality and compliance, as their capability directly affects learner outcomes and educator effectiveness.

Lift industry currency and workforce relevance

Maintaining industry currency is becoming harder as industries change rapidly. Supporting educators to undertake recognised industry upskilling, placements or advanced training helps ensure the training they deliver remains credible, current and aligned to employer needs. Stronger links between industry and educators also build employer confidence and improve learner job readiness.

Recognise and use educator leadership and expertise

Experienced educators hold valuable knowledge about what works in teaching and assessment, but this expertise is often shared informally or not at scale. Supporting educators to lead peer learning, share practice and contribute to system improvement increases capability across the sector and strengthens professional recognition. This also supports retention by creating meaningful progression and leadership pathways.



The Implementation Framework

The Framework, depicted below, responds to current and emerging VET workforce opportunities and challenges in South Australia through a cohesive and integrated program of work. The descriptions outline the intent and key components of each mechanism, with further detail provided in the pages following.



Growing the VET workforce

IGNITE

Taking positive action

Ignite initiatives focus on attracting new talent and creating clear, supported pathways into VET teaching. They help industry professionals explore teaching, build confidence and skills early, and move into the workforce through practical, staged and stackable pathways. Ignite also supports RTOs to grow their educator workforce in priority areas.

By building on existing supports such as subsidised training, Fee Free places in the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, the Paid to Learn model being implemented by TAFE SA, the Construction Industry Training Board's Tradie2Trainer program and current recruitment approaches by RTOs, Ignite reduces risk at the point of entry, clarifies pathways and builds on those that work, and helps increase the number and diversity of people entering the VET workforce.



IGNITE

'Become an Educator' taster courses

A practical first step into VET teaching

The Ignite 'Become an Educator' taster courses give industry professionals a low risk, practical introduction to VET teaching and workplace training. They help people explore whether teaching is right for them, build early confidence, and make informed decisions before committing to the qualification.

The courses support attraction into the VET workforce by offering a clear, supported starting point that reflects the real skills and responsibilities of teaching and training. They also give participants practical skills they can use straight away in their current workplaces.

Why it matters

South Australia continues to face shortages of VET educators, particularly in priority industries and regional areas. Industry professionals are a key source of future VET educators, but many are unsure about what teaching involves and whether the role suits them.

Consultation with educators and RTOs shows that:

- the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment is a big commitment that doesn't necessarily allow people to test their aptitude for teaching,
- unclear entry pathways and the risk of leaving industry can discourage potential educators.

The Ignite taster courses respond by demystifying the role, setting realistic expectations, and providing a supported on ramp into the VET workforce.

What the short courses provide

The taster courses are short, practical training programs that introduce VET teaching and workplace training, while building ready to use skills.

The courses:

- show what VET teaching and workplace training look like in practice,
- include hands-on activities such as engaging learners and facilitating skills development,
- explain how industry experience can be turned into effective teaching and training,
- outline clear next steps, including pathways into the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

Two course options are available:

- one mapped to TAESS00017 Workplace Supervisor Skill Set, for people supervising or supporting apprentices, trainees or VET student placements,
- one mapped to TAESS00020 Workplace Trainer.

Delivery is flexible, using a mix of online, hybrid and in person learning to suit participants and industry needs. Participants can choose to complete assessments to receive a Statement of Attainment, providing a recognised starting point and a clear pathway into further study.

Around 320 people will be supported through a short course.

Who it's for

The courses are designed for South Australians who:

- want to better support the apprentices, trainees or VET students in their current workplace,
- are experienced industry professionals considering a future in VET teaching,
- are curious about VET teaching who want to "try before they commit".

RTOs can nominate people directly, and other places will be offered through a competitive expression of interest. Priority will be given to industries and regions with ongoing skills shortages.

No prior teaching experience or Training and Assessment qualification is required.



What success looks like

Success is seen when:

- participants gain confidence and clarity about whether VET teaching is right for them
- more people move into the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment or other educator pathways with realistic expectations,
- early attrition reduces because educators enter the sector better informed and prepared,
- stronger connections form between industry professionals and RTOs,
- over time, a more sustainable and job ready pipeline of new VET educators develops in key skill shortage areas.

How we will know it's working

We will track:

- participation and completion, including reach into priority regions and industries,
- changes in confidence and understanding of the educator role before and after the course,
- progression into the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment or other teaching pathways,
- RTO feedback on readiness and suitability of participants who transition,
- early signs of retention and engagement in teaching roles.

Key dates

The workplace supervisor course will commence from July 2026, with three intakes per year.

The workplace trainer course will commence from October 2026, with two intakes per year.



IGNITE

Scholarships for aspiring educators



Turning industry expertise into teaching capability

Ignite Scholarships support industry professionals to move into VET teaching through a scaffolded and supported pathway. The scholarships reduce cost and risk, build confidence early, and help people progress into teaching roles in areas of workforce need. They provide a clear next step for people who have completed a taster course and received a Statement of Attainment.

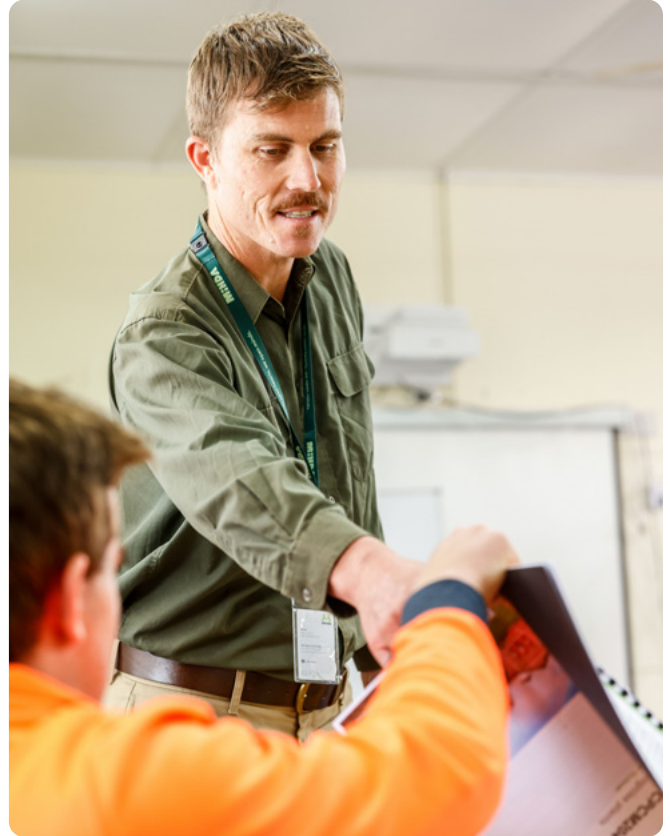
Why it matters

South Australia continues to experience shortages of VET educators, particularly in industries also experiencing skill shortages and in regional areas. Industry professionals are a strong source of future educators, but many face barriers when considering the transition into teaching.

Consultation with RTOs and educators shows that:

- upfront costs and financial risk stop people from starting or completing the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment,
- entry pathways into VET teaching are often unclear,
- early support is limited, especially before people can teach independently,
- RTOs struggle to recruit and rely on a smaller, ageing workforce.

Evidence shows that aspiring educators are more likely to succeed when training is staged, well supported and linked to real teaching experience, rather than completing the whole qualification at once.



What the scholarship provides

Ignite Scholarships are delivered as a structured and staged program, with defined intakes and a clear pathway into teaching. The scholarship includes:

- a place in Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, delivered through skill sets and short intensive training blocks,
- early focus on units that allow teaching under supervision,
- recognition of prior learning and credit transfer, where appropriate,
- financial support to reduce barriers to participation,
- support for supervised teaching or placement within RTOs.

Up to 200 people will be supported with a scholarship.

Small grants are also available to help RTOs host placements and support supervised teaching.

Who it's for

The scholarships are targeted to South Australians who:

- are experienced industry professionals seeking to become a VET educator,
- have completed a taster course and received a Statement of Attainment.

RTOs can nominate people directly, with additional places offered through a competitive expression of interest. Priority will be given to industries and regions with ongoing educator skill shortages.

In allocating scholarships, consideration will also be given to opportunities to strengthen workforce diversity, including improved participation of under represented groups.

What success looks like

Success is seen when:

- more qualified educators enter the workforce in priority areas,
- RTOs improve recruitment outcomes and workforce stability,
- the educator workforce becomes more diverse and sustainable,
- participants move smoothly from training into VET educator roles,
- early career confidence, readiness and retention improve.

How we will know it's working

We will track:

- scholarship uptake and completion,
- progression into teaching roles,
- participant confidence at key points,
- retention over time,
- RTO feedback on job readiness and workforce impact.

Key dates

The first intake will commence in January 2027, with two intakes per year through to 2029.

Incubator Grants for recruiting RTOs

Testing what works to grow the VET educator pipeline

Ignite Incubator Grants support RTOs to work together, and with industry, to test new ways of attracting and recruiting VET educators. The focus is on coordinated action, shared solutions, learning what works and building evidence so successful models can be scaled to address long standing workforce shortages in priority industries and regions.

Why it matters

RTOs across South Australia report that recruiting VET educators is difficult and often reactive. Many providers rely on personal networks and last minute hiring, which limits the size and diversity of the candidate pool and increases reliance on a small, ageing workforce.

Strong competition from industry – especially in trades, technical fields, ICT and health – makes it harder to attract experienced workers into teaching. While RTOs see the need to try new recruitment approaches, many do not have the time, funding or capacity to do this alone.

These challenges require shared solutions, stronger industry involvement and better evidence. Ignite Incubator Grants address this gap by supporting collaborative trials that individual RTOs could not run on their own.

What the grant provides

Ignite Incubator Grants fund pilot projects that allow RTO partnerships to test, refine and evaluate new educator recruitment models.

The grants support:

- co designed pilots involving multiple RTOs and industry partners,
- shared, non competitive approaches that benefit the broader VET system,
- models that involve shared risk, such as:
 - wage offset arrangements with a planned step down over time,
 - industry led attraction campaigns, co designed and co funded with employers,
 - hybrid roles that combine industry and teaching work,
 - approaches that improve workforce diversity and representation.

The focus is on learning and evidence, not one off recruitment activity. The grants include support for staged delivery, allowing time for models to mature, partnerships to strengthen and evidence to be built through regular review and learning cycles.

A limited number of grants will be offered through a competitive process, to support around 100 new entrants.

Who it's for

The grants are available to:

- Skills SA Funded Activity Agreement (FAA)-holding RTOs delivering publicly subsidised training in South Australia,
- multi RTO partnerships, with collaboration required,
- proposals with active industry and employer involvement,
- RTOs willing to co-contribute resources,
- initiatives aligned to government priority sectors and regional workforce needs.

What success looks like

Success is seen when:

- RTOs test new recruitment approaches together and at scale,
- industry plays a stronger role in attracting educators,
- clearer pathways from industry into VET teaching emerge,
- strong evidence is built on cost, impact and scalability.

At a system level, success means identifying models that are ready for wider rollout or future funding.

How we will know it's working

We will track:

- the reach and diversity of candidates,
- the number of educators recruited and placed,
- cost compared to standard recruitment methods,
- feedback from RTOs and industry partners,
- early retention and progression signals,
- whether models can be scaled or reused across the system.

Key dates

The first round will open in the second half of 2026, with additional rounds in January and July each year to 2029.



Uplifting and retaining the VET workforce

Uplifting and retaining the VET workforce means investing in people at every stage of their career. **Springboard initiatives** support educators as they enter teaching, **Accelerate initiatives** help experienced educators and staff refresh and broaden their skills, and **Elevate initiatives** recognise and support experienced educators to lead, share practice and drive system improvement. Clear development pathways, practical professional learning and recognition of the complexity of these roles are essential.

Together, these initiatives complement existing supports and help remove barriers to skills development across the workforce. By strengthening educator capability, supporting RTO staff, improving retention, and lifting teaching quality and industry relevance, they help build a VET workforce that is confident, connected and sustainable, and better equipped to meet the needs of learners, employers and the broader skills system.



SPRINGBOARD

Supporting a good start for early career educators

Springboard initiatives provide targeted support for new and early career VET educators during their first three years of teaching, when the risk of leaving the sector is highest. Springboard is designed for educators transitioning from industry into teaching and focus on building confidence, practical teaching skills and a strong professional identity.

Through a short, skills-based course and a structured peer support program, Springboard helps educators move from qualification to confident classroom practice, manage early teaching challenges, and feel connected and supported by peers.

This approach aligns with the National VET Workforce Blueprint by strengthening early career pathways, providing consistent induction and support, reducing isolation, and improving retention of skilled educators so the VET workforce remains capable, confident and sustainable.

Springboard complements existing supports, including current professional development offerings and the work RTOs already do to support early career educators.



SPRINGBOARD

'Starting to Teach' short course

From qualified to classroom ready

The Springboard 'Starting to Teach' short course supports new and early career VET educators to move from holding a qualification to teaching with confidence. The course builds practical teaching skills, confidence and professional identity in the early stages of a VET career, when the right support makes the biggest difference.

Why it matters

It's well documented that the first 1-3 years of teaching are the highest risk period for VET educators to leave the sector. Many new educators enter VET from industry with strong vocational skills, but feel under prepared for classroom delivery, even after completing the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

RTOs report that induction and mentoring are essential but not always available due to time, workload and funding pressures, especially in smaller organisations. Early career educators often feel "thrown in the deep end" and face challenges such as learner engagement, classroom management, assessment decisions and workload before they have had time to build confidence.

What the short course provides

Springboard 'Starting to Teach' is a practical, skills focused course that supports early application of the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

The course includes:

- a guided introduction to effective VET teaching,
- practical strategies for learner engagement, classroom management and inclusive delivery,
- support to turn industry experience into clear learning activities,
- foundations of assessment practice and feedback, focused on building confidence,
- strategies to manage workload, wellbeing and early professional identity.

The course uses flexible delivery, combining online learning with applied activities based on real teaching situations.

Up to 400 early career educators will be supported.

Who it's for

The course is designed for:

- new and early career VET educators, within their first two years of teaching,
- educators who have recently completed the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment,
- educators delivering publicly subsidised training to South Australian learners or based in South Australia.

Full time employment with an RTO is not required.



What success looks like

Success is seen when:

- early career educators feel confident and ready to teach independently,
- learner engagement and classroom management improve,
- fewer educators leave in the first 1-3 years of teaching,
- RTOs experience smoother onboarding and less pressure on informal support systems.

How we will know it's working

We will track:

- participation and course completion,
- confidence and readiness before and after the course,
- educator feedback on usefulness and relevance,
- early signs of retention,
- RTO feedback on educator preparedness and classroom performance.

Key dates

The first intake will commence in July 2026, with multiple intakes each year.

SPRINGBOARD

Peer support program for early career educators



Supporting early career educators to grow, together

The Springboard Peer Support Program provides structured, peer based support for new VET educators during their first three years of teaching. The program reduces isolation, builds teaching confidence and supports retention at a time when educators are most likely to leave the sector.

Why it matters

The first three years of a VET educator's career are widely recognised as the highest risk period for attrition. Consultation with educators and RTOs shows that early career educators – who are often mature age workers transitioning from an expert role in industry – feel under-supported and lack confidence in the classroom.

While one-to-one mentoring is valued, it is not always available or easy to sustain, particularly for smaller RTOs. Many educators lack regular opportunities to reflect, share challenges or learn alongside peers facing similar issues.

Facilitated peer support is a practical and scalable way to support early career educators, helping navigate challenges, build capability and strengthen confidence.

What the program provides

The Springboard Peer Support Program offers a structured, facilitated peer support model that complements induction, mentoring and early career training.

The program includes:

- connecting early career educators with each other via small peer support circles (between 8-12 educators per circle),
- facilitation by a trained, experienced educator,
- optional short one to one check ins where extra support is needed,
- a focus on real teaching challenges, not theory.

Peer sessions focus on key early career needs, including:

- teaching fundamentals,
- learner engagement and behaviour management,
- assessment and compliance basics,
- wellbeing and role transition.

Sessions are held regularly, with more frequent support in the first year, and use real scenarios, guided problem solving and shared reflection. Up to 400 early career educators will be supported.

Who it's for

The program is for South Australian VET educators in their first three years of teaching.

Educators will be employed by an RTO, working full time, part time or casually.

The program is designed to fit alongside other professional development.

What success looks like

Success is seen when:

- early career educators feel less isolated and more confident,
- educators have a clearer professional identity and sense of belonging,
- learner engagement and classroom management improve,
- fewer educators leave in the early years,
- RTOs benefit from more confident educators needing less ad hoc support.

How we'll know it's working

We will track:

- participation and continued engagement,
- educator confidence, capability and wellbeing (before and after participation),
- feedback on the relevance and value of sessions,
- early signs of retention and continued teaching,
- facilitator insights into common challenges and support needs.

Key dates

The first program will open for Expressions of Interest in late 2026, and then with two intakes each year.





ACCELERATE

Upskilling for educators and RTO staff

The Accelerate initiatives support experienced VET educators and RTO staff to strengthen the quality of training delivery and assessment across South Australia. Accelerate is designed for educators and staff who have several years' experience delivering or supporting accredited training and assessment.

Through scholarships, professional development and shared learning, Accelerate helps educators strengthen teaching and assessment practice, maintain industry

currency, support diverse learners, and use digital tools and AI with confidence. It also supports RTO staff to build the skills they need to better enable educators, improve learner experience and strengthen system quality.

This approach aligns with the National VET Workforce Blueprint by supporting professional learning, clear development pathways, retention of experienced educators and staff, and a stronger, future ready VET system.

Accelerate complements existing supports, including Fee Free places in Diploma of VET, subsidised training, existing professional development offers, and the work RTOs already do to support continuous improvement.



ACCELERATE

Scholarships to enhance teaching practice

Building advanced teaching skills

Accelerate Scholarships support experienced VET educators to strengthen teaching practice, assessment quality and leadership skills. The scholarships fund higher level Training and Assessment skill sets and qualifications that help improve training quality, learner outcomes and educator confidence across South Australia's VET system.

The scholarships are designed for educators with busy workloads. Educators can complete individual skill sets to meet immediate professional development needs, build skills over time and use these as pathways toward the Diploma of VET. This staged approach allows educators to improve practice without completing the whole qualification all at once.

Why it matters

Consultation and workforce research show that many experienced educators:

- are highly motivated to improve their teaching, assessment and learning design skills,
- face barriers to further study due to time, cost and workload pressures,
- lack clear pathways beyond the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment,
- are more likely to stay in the sector when they feel skilled, recognised and supported.

Educators and RTOs strongly support stackable learning pathways. Training and Assessment (TAE) skill sets provide practical steps toward Diploma level study, making higher level qualifications more achievable.

What the scholarship provides

Accelerate Scholarships support completion of:

- TAESS00025 Learning Support skill set,
- TAESS00031 Design and Deliver Elearning skill set,
- TAESS00032 Advanced Assessment skill set,
- TAE50122 Diploma of VET.

Each scholarship includes:

- a fully subsidised place in the selected course,
- flexible delivery and funding support that recognises workload and time pressures,
- opportunities to learn alongside other experienced educators.

Up to 300 scholarships will be awarded.

Who it's for

Accelerate Scholarships are for VET educators working in South Australia who:

- want to deepen teaching, assessment, learner support or learning design skills,
- are committed to improving learner outcomes,
- are seeking a supported pathway to higher-level Training and Assessment qualifications.

Educators may apply individually or be nominated by their RTO. Support may also be available to assist RTOs with educator release time.



What success looks like

Success is seen when:

- more educators gain accredited, higher level teaching skills,
- educators are more confident and skilled in teaching and assessment practice,
- learner outcomes improve,
- educators feel recognised, supported and invested in as professionals,
- retention of experienced educators improves.

How we'll know it's working

We will track:

- educator feedback on confidence and capability
- completion of skill sets and Diploma pathways
- evidence of improved teaching and assessment practice
- movement into leadership or specialist roles.

Key dates

Applications for skill set scholarships will open each year in May², with delivery starting from July.

Diploma of VET applications open each October, from 2026 to 2028, for study starting the following year.

² Except for 2026, where applications will open in the middle of the year.

ACCELERATE

Scholarships to support industry currency

Current, credible and connected to industry

Accelerate Industry Upskilling Scholarships support VET educators to maintain and strengthen their industry skills. The scholarships focus on recognised, practical industry upskilling that improves teaching, assessment and learning materials, builds educator confidence and strengthens employer trust in the VET system.

Scholarships are targeted to skill shortage areas and sectors affected by major training package or industry changes.

Why it matters

VET educators need strong, current industry skills to deliver high quality training. However, RTOs have advised that maintaining industry currency is becoming harder over time. Many educators enter VET with solid industry experience but struggle to keep up with rapid change while managing teaching, assessment and compliance workloads.

Evidence shows that:

- industry practices, technology and regulations change quickly, especially in trades, care, construction, digital and growth sectors,
- some educators rely on informal or 'ad hoc' industry contacts, which can reduce confidence and assessment quality,
- time, cost and limited access to industry training or placements are major barriers,
- strong industry currency supports learner job readiness, employer confidence and the credibility of VET delivery.

What the scholarship provides

Accelerate Industry Upskilling Scholarships support structured, recognised industry learning where it has the greatest impact on training quality and workforce needs.

Support may include:

- completing TAESS00012 Enterprise and Industry Engagement as a pathway toward the Diploma of VET,
- undertaking higher level industry qualifications or skill sets needed to deliver advanced or specialist units,
- completing short courses, licences or certifications linked to new technology, regulation or industry practice.

Around 50 scholarships will be awarded and will include:

- financial support to cover some or all approved industry upskilling costs,
- flexible learning options to suit different industries and roles,
- a clear expectation that new industry knowledge is applied into teaching and assessment to improve quality.

Who it's for

Accelerate Industry Upskilling Scholarships are for VET educators in South Australia who:

- need upskilling to deliver higher level training,
- work in industries experiencing rapid change or skill shortages,
- are committed to ensuring training reflects real workplace practice.

Educators must apply with support from their RTO.

What success looks like

Success is seen when:

- educators feel confident keeping training aligned with industry practice,
- teaching and assessment materials are current and defensible,
- learners gain skills that match employer needs,
- RTOs strengthen quality delivery in priority industries and regions,
- industry confidence in VET and educator capability improves.

How we'll know it's working

We will track:

- completion of recognised industry upskilling,
- educator and RTO feedback on relevance and use in practice,
- evidence of improved delivery quality or assessment confidence,
- industry feedback on skills system responsiveness.

Key dates

Two intakes will be offered per year from 2027, in January and July.



ACCELERATE

Professional development program

Practical strategies for inclusive, high quality and evidence-informed VET

The Accelerate Professional Development program builds educator skills in inclusive practice, learner support and language, literacy and numeracy (LLN). It helps educators deliver high quality teaching, support learner success and manage the growing complexity of the VET environment.

Why it matters

Consultation with educators and RTOs shows that supporting diverse and complex needs of learners is now a core part of VET teaching.

Evidence shows that:

- learner support and LLN challenges are among the most demanding parts of educators' work,
- many educators feel under prepared to manage complex needs in their classes,
- access to practical, flexible professional development is uneven, especially for educators with heavy workloads or in regional areas,
- strong skills in learner support, LLN and reflective practice improve learner engagement and outcomes, and support educator confidence and wellbeing.

This program responds by building practical, applied capability that educators can use straight away.

What the program provides

The Accelerate Professional Development program includes two linked streams.

1. Individual stream

Designed to be flexible and manageable, this stream offers:

- on-demand learning in topics such as inclusive and trauma aware practice, learner engagement and behaviour support, embedded LLN strategies, universal design for learning, reasonable adjustments and using evidence and reflection to improve teaching,
- facilitated workshops where educators apply learning to real teaching and assessment situations.

This stream is aligned to mandatory professional development identified in the Skills SA Student Support Standards .

This stream aims to engage up to 500 educators and staff.

2. RTO based site improvement stream

For organisations seeking deeper impact, this stream provides:

- tailored, on site delivery of specialist led workshops on priority areas such as LLN uplift or inclusive assessment,
- in-depth, tailored advice and support on improvements to student facing processes and practices,
- practical improvement and action learning approaches to embed change,
- alignment with Skills SA requirements and learner support standards.

This stream aims to engage up to 200 educators and staff.

Who it's for

The individual stream is open to VET educators delivering to South Australian students, and RTO staff involved in teaching quality, learner support and other student-facing roles.

The RTO site improvement stream is available to organisations with offices and staff in South Australia, delivering to South Australian students.

It is particularly suited to:

- educators and RTOs working with learners who have complex support needs,
- educators and RTOs wanting to strengthen LLN and inclusive practice,
- RTOs seeking consistent improvements in learner support and teaching quality.



What success looks like

Success is seen when:

- educators and RTO staff feel more confident supporting diverse learners,
- students experience safe and inclusive learning environments,
- teaching and assessment are more inclusive, consistent and evidence informed,
- improved learner engagement, persistence and completion,
- stronger links between learner support, teaching quality and outcomes.

How we'll know it's working

We will track:

- participation and completion,
- feedback on confidence and practical value,
- use of strategies in teaching and assessment practice, and learner engagement more broadly,
- student outcomes,
- RTO feedback on capability uplift and local impact.

Key dates

Accelerate Professional Development opportunities will be released twice a year, in January and June.

Expressions of Interest for RTO-based site improvement professional development will open from mid-2026 and remain open on a rolling basis until funding is fully allocated.

ACCELERATE

AI and EdTech Special Interest Group (SIG)

Explore, test and share what works in digital and AI enabled VET practice

The AI and EdTech SIG supports VET educators and RTO staff to use digital tools, education technology and AI confidently, ethically and effectively. The group focuses on improving teaching, assessment and learner engagement through practical, educator led approaches grounded in real delivery contexts.

Why it matters

Digital tools and AI are changing how VET is delivered, assessed and experienced by learners. Educators report strong demand for support in:

- online and blended teaching,
- emerging technologies and digital tools,
- practical and evidence-based innovation,
- safe ways to trial new approaches.

Many educators and RTOs are unsure how to use AI appropriately. Common concerns include academic integrity, ethical practice, compliance expectations and learner readiness. Without shared guidance, educators are often left to manage these issues on their own.

What the SIG provides

The AI and EdTech SIG is a facilitated, practice-led group offering:

- shared exploration of ethical and responsible AI use, digital assessment design and validation, online and blended delivery tools, learner engagement with technology and productivity tools for educators,
- practical sessions focused on real teaching, assessment and learner support challenges,
- shared case studies, tools and examples developed by participants,
- opportunities to help shape future professional development, guidance and resources for skills sector use.

The focus is on trying, testing and learning together in ways that support quality, compliance and educator and RTO confidence.

Places will be limited to 40 participants, selected through an expression-of-interest process.

Who it's for

The AI and EdTech SIG is open to VET educators and relevant RTO staff who:

- develop or support training or assessment to South Australian students,
- are interested in AI, digital tools and education technology,
- may already be experimenting with technology and want to go further,
- value practical, educator and practitioner led approaches.

What success looks like

A successful SIG will result in:

- educators and RTO staff feeling more confident using AI and digital tools appropriately and ethically,
- practical, classroom ready approaches shared and adapted across RTOs,
- stronger collaboration and innovation, and less duplication of effort across the sector,
- a growing set of shared resources and guidance that lift practice statewide.

How we'll know it's working

We will monitor:

- participation and sustained engagement,
- participant feedback on confidence and capability,
- usefulness of shared tools, case studies and resources,
- evidence of changed or improved practice,
- uptake and impact of SIG ideas more broadly in the skills sector.

Key dates

The SIG will commence from mid-2026 and meet quarterly.

ELEVATE

Sharing practice and innovation across VET

Elevate is a stream of initiatives that invests in experienced VET educators as leaders and contributors to system wide improvement. It recognises that strong practice already exists across South Australia's VET sector and focuses on making that practice visible, valued and shared.

Through Elevate, experienced educators are supported to lead peer learning, explore new ideas and share what works. The initiatives create structured opportunities to build leadership capability and apply insights that improve teaching, assessment and learner outcomes.

Elevate responds directly to priorities in the National VET Workforce Blueprint by supporting experienced educators to lead, share and help scale effective practice across the VET system.



ELEVATE

Peer support facilitator grants

Supporting educators to support each other

Elevate Peer Support Facilitator Grants support experienced VET educators to lead peer support and reflective practice for early career educators. The grants fund training and release time so facilitators can lead small peer support circles that provide safe, practical spaces for learning and connection.

Why it matters

Early career educators often face heavy workloads and rapid change. Many feel isolated or unsure of their practice and lack regular support. At the same time, experienced educators' expertise is often under used, shared informally or difficult to resource.

Peer support and reflective practice build confidence, capability and retention. When experienced educators are trained to lead structured peer learning, early career educators grow faster and are more likely to stay in the sector. These grants recognise and support the leadership role experienced educators already play.

What the grant provides

The grants support:

- training in reflective practice and peer facilitation, mapped to TAEPPDD502 Lead and mentor VET teachers, trainers and assessors
- funded release time to run peer support circles,
- resources and connections with other facilitators,
- matching with 10-20 early career educators for a 12 month period.

Up to 60 grants will be offered to 2029.



Who it's for

Experienced VET educators in South Australia who:

- are recognised for strong practice and credibility,
- are interested in mentoring or leadership,
- value collaboration and reflective practice,
- are committed to supporting early career educators.

Educators can be nominated through their RTO or selected through a competitive application process.

What success looks like

Success is seen when:

- experienced educators are recognised as leaders,
- early career educators build confidence and stay in the sector longer,
- reflective practice becomes part of everyday work,
- there are stronger connections by educators across RTOs.

How we'll know it's working

We'll track:

- completion of facilitator training,
- participation and outcomes of peer support circles,
- facilitator reflections on leadership growth,
- continued or expanded use of peer support models.

Key dates

Applications open each September until 2028, with peer support circles to commence in January and July each year.



ELEVATE

International research fellowships

Global learning. Local impact.

Elevate International Research Fellowships support South Australian VET educators to learn from international practice and apply those insights locally. Fellows undertake applied research that contributes to shared sector knowledge and practical improvements, aligned with South Australian priority areas.

Why it matters

The VET sector is changing quickly. Learning from international systems can offer new ways to strengthen teaching, assessment, industry engagement and educator capability.

The Fellowship enables educators to:

- learn from leading global practice,
- trial new ideas that improve quality and alignment to industry practice,
- build leadership confidence and influence,
- share learning for wider sector benefit.

What the Fellowship provides

Elevate International Research Fellowships focus on practical outcomes, not academic study. Each Fellowship will provide:

- funding for international applied research,
- structured support and peer learning,
- time to explore best practice,
- publication of a Fellowship report and support to share findings.

Previous research experience is not required.

Up to 35 Fellowships will be offered to 2029.

Who it's for

The Fellowship is open to VET educators working in South Australia who:

- are curious and motivated to improve practice,
- can explain how international learning will benefit South Australia,
- are committed to sharing learning with others.

Fellowships may be awarded to individuals or small teams.

What success looks like

A successful Fellowship results in:

- practical insights applied in South Australia,
- stronger teaching, assessment or industry engagement,
- increased leadership capability,
- learning shared through reports, events and resources.



How we'll know it's working

Impact will be monitored through:

- Fellow feedback on leadership and capability growth,
- completion and quality of Fellowship reports, presentations, workshops and shared resources,
- reach and engagement across the VET sector,
- longer term use of learning in South Australia.

Key dates

Applications for the first round will open mid-2026, with further rounds in November and May each year through to 2029.

ELEVATE

Educator symposium

Sharing what works. Recognising those who lead practice.

The Elevate Educator Symposium is an annual event that brings VET educators together to share effective teaching, practitioner research and practical innovation. It strengthens professional connection and highlights good and best teaching practice across the sector.

Why it matters

Many educators want opportunities to share their expertise and be recognised for their work. The symposium creates a dedicated space for educators to learn from each other, reduce silos and lift the profile of VET teaching excellence in South Australia.

What the symposium provides

An annual hybrid (in person and online) symposium that offers:

- showcases of good practice, innovative teaching and research,
- practical, classroom ready sessions on contemporary practice,
- presentations led by VET educators and skills sector colleagues,
- opportunities to network, collaborate and connect across RTOs and regions,
- access to recorded sessions, case studies and exemplars that support ongoing learning across the skills sector.

Who it's for

Educators and staff supporting South Australian students. Hybrid delivery supports participation from regional, remote and part time staff.

What success looks like

- Strong participation from educators across many RTOs,
- High quality practice and research being shared and reused,
- Educators feeling more confident, connected and recognised,
- Clear links between the symposium and other Strengthening the VET Workforce initiatives.

How we'll know it's working

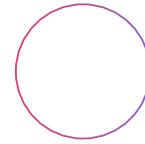
We will track:

- participation and engagement across sessions,
- educator feedback on usefulness, relevance and application to practice,
- ongoing use of symposium resources across the skills sector.

Key dates

Held each year on World Teachers' Day, the last Friday in October.

Evaluation and review



Evaluation is a key component of the Framework to make sure actions are working as intended and delivering real benefits for educators, RTOs and learners. The focus is on learning what works, improving delivery over time, and using evidence to guide future decisions.

Our evaluation approach

The Framework will be evaluated using a mix of data, feedback and practical evidence collected over time. Because many initiatives are new or being trialled, evaluation will be ongoing and used to refine and strengthen activities as they roll out.

We will look whether initiatives:

- reach the right people, including priority industries, regions and cohorts,
- make a difference to workforce supply, capability and retention,
- deliver value for money,
- can be sustained or scaled across the system.

What we will measure

Evaluation will focus on four key areas.

1. Participation and early outcomes (short term)

We will track who is taking part and identify early signs of impact, such as:

- number and type of educators, staff and RTOs involved,
- participation by region, industry and career stage,
- changes in confidence, motivation, preparedness and satisfaction,
- RTO views on early impacts on capability and delivery.

This information will help identify gaps, risks and opportunities for improvement during delivery.

Key performance indicators are:

- Educator engagement: more than 1,150 educators are engaged through Framework initiatives, representing approximately 50% of South Australia's VET educator workforce.
- Provider participation: at least 70% of RTOs with a Funded Activities Agreement (FAA) are engaged, supporting system-wide uplift and quality delivery of publicly subsidised training.
- Participant satisfaction: at least 80% of participants report being satisfied with the relevance and quality of the initiative(s) in which they were involved.

2. Impact over time (medium to long term)

We will assess whether initiatives are leading to real workforce improvements, including:

- progression into teaching or leadership roles,
- completion of qualifications and professional development,
- retention of educators over time,
- improved ability of RTOs to attract, develop and keep staff,
- signals of improvement in teaching quality and learner experience.

Where possible, outcomes for participants will be compared with non participants to understand the added value of the Framework.

Key performance indicators are:

- Industry professional to VET educator pathways: at least 60% of participants in Ignite initiatives progress into VET educator roles.
- Early career retention: at least 90% of participants in Springboard activities remain in the sector for 4 years following participation.
- Higher-level qualification attainment: at least 90% of participants in Accelerate scholarships complete their qualification or course.
- Capability uplift: at least 80% of educators involved in Accelerate and Elevate initiatives report and demonstrate improvements in teaching practice and learner outcomes.
- RTO workforce impact: at least 80% of RTOs involved in Ignite and Springboard initiatives report reduced difficulty in attracting and retaining educators.

3. Value for money

We will assess whether investment is delivering expected returns by looking at:

- costs compared to outcomes achieved,
- differences across regions, provider types and delivery models,
- whether some initiatives deliver stronger results for the level of investment.

This will help guide future funding decisions.

Key performance indicators are:

- Annual assessment coverage: all initiatives are subject to an annual value for money review, including comparison of costs, completion rates and outcomes against business as usual approaches.
- Cost effectiveness: at least 70% of initiatives demonstrate equal or better completion-to-cost ratios compared with business-as-usual delivery models.

4. Sustainability and scalability (long term)

We will identify which initiatives:

- deliver the strongest and most valued outcomes,
- can become part of business for RTOs, without further government intervention,
- should be improved, combined or stopped,
- have potential to be expanded across the skills system.

Key performance indicators are:

- Enduring outcomes: at least 70% of participants demonstrate sustained benefits 12 months or more after participation in Springboard, Accelerate or Elevate initiative, including continued application of skills or practices introduced through the initiative.
- Embedding and system adoption: at least 50% of participating RTOs adopt or adapt learnings, practices or tools from initiatives into their ongoing workforce and professional development arrangements.
- Scalability: at least two Ignite Incubator Grants are successfully scaled statewide within the Framework period (2026-29).

How information will be collected

Evaluation will use a combination of:

- participation and administrative data,
- baseline and follow up surveys,
- interviews and focus groups with educators, RTOs and industry,
- case studies for more complex initiatives,
- feedback from non participants as a comparison group.

Participation in evaluation activities will be a requirement for any funding provided to individuals and organisations.

Sharing and using what we learn

Findings will be shared through:

- regular progress updates,
- skills sector briefings,
- learning summaries and reports,
- guidance to improve future program design.

Evaluation insights will be used to:

- improve initiatives as they are delivered
- inform future workforce planning and investment
- contribute to state and national reporting.

Reviewing the Framework

We expect to review the Framework annually, to support ongoing responsiveness and our ability to tailor actions in South Australia's implementation plan for the National Skills Agreement Strengthening the VET workforce policy initiative.

Evaluation and future opportunities to speak with the skills sector will be critical contributions to shaping our forward path on this work.

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