

# Is a nod or a wink as good as a word? Making the connections: 48 ways to progress equity in the national training system

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## **Abstract**

During 2003 fifty-five organizations received funding through Reframing the Future to undertake workbased learning projects focusing on the professional development criteria in ANTA's 'Bridging Pathways' and 'Partners in a Learning Culture' blueprints for implementation. An evaluation of these projects has found rich stories and substantial evidence of how VET professionals across Australia change, adapt and work together to adjust their knowledge, values, attitudes, resources and practices to meet the challenges of learner needs in our complex and diverse training system. This paper will present the evidence and illustrate it with stories from everyday VET experience where diversity, equity and flexibility move from rhetoric to reality.

## **Introduction**

The primary title of this paper comes from a conversation with the manager of a supported workplace for workers with an intellectual disability that has taken a lead in VET training and assessment. For me, 'Is a nod and a wink as good as a word?' put into a nutshell the potential for the competency based, criterion referenced VET system to accommodate a range of learner characteristics and communication styles, matched with assessment processes, that would meet both the workers' abilities and an enterprise's strategic plan – if such questions were continuously asked and debated. This question has the power to make people stop and think.

The secondary title 'Making the connections – 48 ways to progress equity in the national training system' emerged from the evaluation of the ANTA funded 2003 national Reframing the Future equity staff development projects that provided insights into how VET practitioners and organisations are responding to a key challenge in implementing a national training system in Australia – improving opportunities for equity groups, such as people with a disability and Indigenous people, to not only access but also to achieve successful outcomes from VET.

This paper draws on the profiles and key messages from the Reframing the Future publication 'Making the connections – 48 ways to progress equity in the national training system' which outlines how many of the 1300 participants and numerous organisations involved in the Reframing the Future projects are meeting learner needs in terms of diversity, equity and flexibility.

## **Background**

In its National Strategy for Vocational Education and Training 1999-2004 *A Bridge to the Future* ANTA committed to achieving equitable outcomes in VET and to that end endorsed the following two strategies:

1. Bridging Pathways - The National Strategy for increasing opportunities for people with a disability in vocational education and training (2000 to 2005). This strategy was developed by the Australian Disability Training Advisory Council (ADTAC), an advisory body to the ANTA Board, with a subsequent Blueprint for Implementation being developed in 2000. The Blueprint is used by partners, including States and Territories, as a framework for the progression of disability-related initiatives. A mid-term review of the Blueprint's implementation was completed in 2003 and is currently being used as a basis to review and re-focus the Blueprint on priority strategies, allowing partners to develop actions of relevance to local needs.

Forty-six Reframing the Future projects focusing on disability addressed the criterion on Professional Development in the Blueprint - Strategy 13 - 'equip training delivery and other staff with skills that assist with the inclusion of people with a disability'.

2. Partners in a Learning Culture - Australia's National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Strategy for Vocational Education (2000-2005). This strategy and the Blueprint for Implementation were developed and are monitored by the Australian Indigenous Training Advisory Council (AITAC), an advisory committee to the ANTA Board. The Blueprint for Implementation was recently reviewed, and AITAC has provided advice to the ANTA Board on the key issues arising from the review, and ways to progress these issues.

Nine Reframing the Future projects focusing on Indigenous people addressed one or more of a range of criteria for professional development in Strategy 5.1 in the Blueprint for Implementation. These include professional development for Indigenous people to enable them to progress in the VET sector; practitioner research into effective teaching strategies for Indigenous students; and professional development for Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff to increase the capacity of the VET sector to provide opportunities for Indigenous people.

The funding for these fifty five workbased learning staff development projects was provided by ANTA and approved by ADTAC and AITAC. Reframing the Future managed the program and supported the projects throughout 2003.

The projects were distributed nationally and involved a diverse group of providers such as Indigenous community RTOs, private RTOs, enterprise RTOs, community based RTOs, TAFE Institutes, and Group Training companies. While the majority of participants were VET practitioners and managers a wide range of other stakeholders and networks were involved, for example training industry skills organisations, local and national business and industry representatives, Indigenous community elders, disability support agency staff, regional disability liaison officers, officers from relevant Indigenous or Disability organisation projects, school and higher education representatives and in some cases representatives from relevant Commonwealth, state and local government departments and policy areas.

## **Methodology**

Research design, including the data gathering and analysis approaches were based on qualitative participant research methodologies.

A profile was constructed of each of the forty eight projects drawn from the project action plans, mid-term and final reports provided by project coordinators and featuring structured open ended questions; notes taken at review workshops and forums; site visits by Reframing the Future personnel; and from other direct contact either by email or telephone between Reframing the Future staff and project teams. The content of each project's profile was confirmed by the project coordinator.

Each profile identified the context of the project; the connections made to the national training system and the relevant ANTA equity blueprint; the challenge(s) facing participants, their response or solution; and, any unique features or developments that occurred during the project. The profiles highlighted the sophisticated roles of the workbased learning facilitator and project coordinator in addition to any change management process needed to implement the national training system with improved outcomes for equity groups. They also paid attention to the achievements, benefits and next steps of each project.

The profiles were then analysed to draw out insights into the multiple responses by the VET sector to the many challenges of progressing equity in the national training system.

### **Findings and discussion**

Analysis of the profiles revealed eight 'key messages'. Here, I will discuss only those with the most relevance for the VET practitioner and illustrate them with excerpts from selected project profiles. It is worth noting that most profiles could be used as exemplars for several key messages. The full discussion, all the key messages and profiles can be found in the publication McKenna S 'Making the connections – 48 ways to progress equity in the national training system' (in press). It will be available soon through <http://reframingthefuture.net>

#### *RTOs are increasing their capabilities to meet the needs of a diverse range of clients*

The profiles show that there is a new understanding of the difficulties for specific cohorts of learners among Indigenous clients and those with a specific disability. In response, RTOs are refining the ability to provide clear and concise information to guide clients in making choices based on an understanding of industry skill requirements.

RTOs are also demonstrating the ability to form partnerships with disability support agencies, Indigenous community groups and Indigenous RTOs. RTOs are also actively supporting VET practitioners to contribute their professional expertise and perspectives to these partnerships.

#### *Clear information assists learners with a disability to make 'informed choices'*

Finding a suitable training or career path can be a big challenge for a person with a disability and those supporting them. Staff decided to clarify the information prospective students with disabilities might need in order to make good career and VET choices. The provision of 'clear

course information including content and vocational outcomes prior to enrolment' is a requirement of AQTF Standard 6.3 – Access and equity and client service.

In order to identify the information needed by prospective students with disabilities, the Project Facilitator devised an action learning process in which staff working in 34 qualifications across seven Training Package areas identified essential skill requirements in specific qualifications. These requirements were then entered onto a template. At the same time strategies for inclusive and anti-biased teaching practices were introduced to the participants through workshops, contact with Disability Support Officers and resources placed on the staff intranet. Finally, the information developed by the participants was collated into a draft brochure, which was then critically reviewed by participants and other key stakeholders.

*Southbank Institute of TAFE*

#### Partnership supports young learners with complex needs

Participants from both organisations expanded their knowledge about opportunities and services for young learners with complex needs. For example, the Gateway Program participants gained a greater understanding of the national training system and VET pathway options as well as support services available in TAFE, while the Swinburne teachers gained increased knowledge of community based professionals and agencies that can assist in supporting their young learners.

As a result of the community's workshops, there is an increased level of commitment to share and change practice on an everyday level. For instance, the community sector participants are now including VET options and outcomes into their goal setting with their clients.

The project has acted as a catalyst in building a collaborative partnership between the two organisations. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed committing each partner to explore joint venture projects and research opportunities and Swinburne will include Jesuit Social Services staff in their Professional Development events. Swinburne is also mapping informal competency achievements in Gateway skill development programs with a view to developing recognition and credit into VET courses. P29

*Swinburne University of Technology – TAFE Division*

#### *Individual VET practitioners' capabilities are increasing through collaboration*

The profiles show that unexpected benefits can emerge from collaboration between stakeholders, particularly between VET and equity support organisations or specialists, and especially at the local level. Various groups have their own favourite expressions, jargon and understandings and projects help to break down these barriers. For example, 'assessment' and 'disability' mean different things for different stakeholder groups. Unintended benefits often flow from professional conversations.

A main benefit of collaboration is that it helps increase individual practitioners' capabilities. For instance, there is evidence in the profiles of the development of innovative approaches to teaching, learning and assessment strategies – and to administration – to meet the needs of equity groups. There is at the same time an interest in collaboratively exploring, with specialists, the challenge of meeting the needs of all learners by using inclusive practices and 'universal' design.

There is also evidence in the profiles of a move from a previous focus on delivery and support with special needs groups to a new focus on assessment leading to employment outcomes. A lot still has to be done, but practitioners are developing an enhanced understanding of other's language and systems.

Teachers learning from the VET 'journey' of imaginary Annie

This project took a client-centred approach to developing practices, processes and documentation to support the implementation of AQTF Standards. The participants came from different sections and locations within TAFE Tasmania and represented four Training Package areas - Business Services, Amenity Horticulture, Hospitality and IT. External participants, including a member of the Community Reference Group for TAFE Tasmania's General Education Program, provided additional input.

An imaginary student with an intellectual disability called 'Annie' was taken from initial enquiry stage through to the achievement of a qualification. 'Annie's' presence and personality was always at the forefront of discussions, to temper organisational requirements and administrative convenience, while the participants worked through the training, assessment and administration requirements involved with her progression through the system. In her VET journey, 'Annie', like many people with a disability, undertook a mix of general education and Training Package units. Several unplanned learning outcomes ranged from directly experiencing 'synergy in action', when individual strengths contributed to a greater group output, to understanding of how the 'paper trail' works.

*Institute of TAFE Tasmania*

#### Designing access to VET programs for mature age workers with an acquired disability

Members of this community of practice included Mature Worker Program Project officers, staff from RTOs, DET NSW project officers, and local employment services providers. Learning exactly what constitutes a disability in the context of training and developing a stronger sense of how assistance can be provided were highlights of the project. By developing networks with local training providers, MWP project officers improved their understanding of the obligations of training providers – in relation to AQTF Standards – to students with disabilities. This new knowledge is already driving some of the changes in the service that clients are receiving through the mature workers program.

*NSW – Department of Education and Training - Training and Development Unit*

#### Private RTO staff practicing skills in inclusion

To improve the quality of its practice in relation to the AQTF Standards all staff were involved in workbased professional development about the inclusion of people with disabilities in training. The project was designed to augment the existing skills and understandings of the participants who came from both the administrative and teaching areas of the college.

The project activities highlighted the need to establish a process for student enrolment and induction at Martin College, particularly to encourage students to disclose any disability that could impact on their learning. This would involve both teaching and administrative staff.

Through the Reframing the Future project, participants developed skills in self-assessing their knowledge and practice. They were also able to establish a network of disability specialists - based on their three guest speakers - to contact if faced with a problem dealing with a person with a disability. The participants also realised that developing skills and knowledge about inclusion is very much an on-going, constructive process.

*Martin College - Cairns*

#### Research informs a model of skills recognition for people with an intellectual disability

Participants in this project set out to find current research and information about assessment recognition processes for people with an intellectual disability in the VET system, to evaluate it and then to use it to develop models of assessment for their clients and employees. They found that the most valuable sources of specialist information on this topic are probably in unpublished 'grey matter' sources.

Participants came from Barkuma Industries, a business services provider; Personnel Employment, an open employment agency; and Disability Training Australia, an RTO. Representatives from Interwork, a specialist employment agency and RTO also participated.

The participants used their new understandings about knowledge with the information they found through research and other sources including their own experience, to develop a process

for skills recognition involving a partnership between the worker with a disability (and their advocates), the employer, disability employment agencies and registered training organisations.

This project also helped improve communication about workplace assessment between the business units and the organisations involved. Participants found ways to sell the benefits of recognition of current competence to employees and employers: 'we now know what we need to know to promote the process'. The businesses involved also understand the VET assessment system better. The Reframing the Future project outcomes will be further utilised in the Skills Passport Project by Disability Training Australia for the Association of Competitive Employment (SA) during 2004.

*Barkuma Inc – Disability Training Australia*

### *Strong interest in improving assessment strategies*

One of the major findings from these forty eight Reframing the Future equity projects is the high level of interest among RTOs in improving assessment strategies for equity groups, in line with AQTF Standards 8 and 9. Practitioners are focusing their efforts on concepts such as 'reasonable adjustment' and recognition of current competencies. There is also strong interest in developing assessor networks and assessment tools.

### **A Reasonable Adjustment Action Group develops expertise**

The group was formed by volunteers from different delivery teams across the Institute to address the vexing issue of reasonable adjustment for students with a disability. Participants used storytelling to relate issues from different vocational areas and to look at generic, systemic alternatives rather than compartmentalising 'problems' to individual delivery issues for specific staff members.

A teacher summarised what changed for her as a result of being involved: 'I have learnt so much from working on this project. I don't have to know all the answers. I now have a network of people I can refer to who face situations just like mine and we can work out possible solutions together.'

The Institute now has a network of individuals dispersed through delivery teams who have specific knowledge and practical understanding of reasonable adjustment. The project team has identified three systemic solutions to recommend to the Academic Board. And a working party has formed to develop and modify equitable and clear processes for people with a disability who need flexibility in their training or assessment. Working party members include the Institute's Disability Services and Risk Assessment and Quality Assurance Officers.

*Cooloola Sunshine Institute of TAFE*

### **Developing inclusive practices for students with a psychiatric disability**

Some teachers' perceptions that providing adjustments for students with a psychiatric disability might compromise an assessment event were recast as 'using modified modes of assessment' by the project coordinator and facilitator. This enabled participants, mostly sessional teachers, to reconsider their thinking and to review their practice.

*TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute*

### **Network demystifies assessment issues and streamlines processes**

This project brought together, in an Assessor Network focused on assessment of learners with disabilities, a group of participants who had known each other for some time but had never met face-to-face. Organisations represented were drawn from two states and from rural, city and regional locations.

A two-day Assessor Network Forum resulted from extensive consultation with the participants which engendered a high level of ownership of the program. Guest speakers included representatives from the two relevant state training authorities. The 29 participants included

trainers and assessors, support workers, training managers, employment placement officers and administrative staff - all with diverse levels of experience.

Participants demystified issues and streamlined assessment strategies, processes and tools at the Forum. Afterwards individual participants took their new levels of knowledge and experience back to their own workplaces, with renewed enthusiasm. Topics covered at the Forum included the AQTF Standards; how assessment processes can be adjusted to support learners with disabilities; and understanding the national training system and ANTA strategies such as Bridging Pathways.

Organisations involved in the network benefited by being able to access a range of moderated assessment processes that were developed at the Forum. They are also more confident that the assessment decisions of their staff are valid and reliable.

*Directions Australia*

### *Disability challenges are surmountable*

In the profiles, sometimes the issues posed by disabilities in relation to training seemed insurmountable: for example, how to meet the needs of prisoners with intellectual disabilities. However, developing a sound grasp of the national training system and disability support systems led many participants to invent innovative client-focused solutions.

#### Helping prisoners with intellectual disabilities

*'Currently people with intellectual disabilities may not have the same opportunities as a prisoner without a disability to develop their educational and work skills within the prison environment'*. The Department for Correctional Services set out to redress a few of the non-systemic causes of this situation through a staff development project for prison education officers. Professional development for these officers is rare, as most are employed as hourly paid instructors.

The project achieved two outcomes. Firstly, the participants grew in their understandings about learning difficulties, learning disabilities and mental illness and the associated training issues and strategies. Secondly, they used this knowledge to develop case studies about a particular learner that included new ways they had tried to engage the person in learning, as well as how they now tried to facilitate the person's learning.

The workplace learning/case study methodology worked very well in this context as it enabled the prison education officers to take ideas back into their workplace and encouraged the use of experimentation and reflection to identify the best possible strategies for individuals.

Participants were introduced, many for the first time, to flexible learning resources such as ANTA toolboxes, which they critiqued for their suitability for learners with intellectual disabilities. Consequently, proposals have been put forward to increase access to improved IT systems within the prison system for both learners and educators.

*Department for Correctional Services*

#### Co-mentoring unlocks teaching and assessment strategies for students with mental illness

Participants chose a co-mentoring (or peer-level mentoring) methodology rather than the perceived hierarchical arrangement of a mentor/mentee approach on the basis that each person had something to offer the other.

Co-mentors were used for debriefing, sounding out new ideas, expanding knowledge about mental illness and resources and increasing awareness of potential situations. Keeping a journal was felt variously to be a release, a structured reflective tool, a way of thinking about the big picture, and a method to organise notes and key issues. In addition, through being involved in the Reframing the Future project, participants have become more aware of the relevant legislation and the AQTF Standards, in addition to TAFE NSW organisational policies and procedures.

As a result of the project, participants said they have more strategies, greater confidence and less stress in managing both learning and classroom management situations involving students with mental illness. Because of the co-mentoring methodology they felt less isolated in their workplace, even when their mentor lived on the other side of the state.

*TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute - IT, Arts and Media Division*

#### Trade delivery staff learn about disabilities

The twenty trade delivery staff who participated in this project were from the automotive, construction, horticulture and metals areas.

Linkages made to relevant Commonwealth and state legislation and the AQTF Standards stimulated open and broad discussion about changing practice in order to work more sensitively with all students. Practical utilisation of teaching, learning and assessment supports such as adaptive technologies, computerised assistance, a slower pace, interpretive approaches and individual tutoring were introduced as rights for the student and tested by the teachers in their workplace.

Discussions about undisclosed disabilities led many of the teachers to talk from personal experiences, such as the prevalence of arthritis among carpenters and the ability of industry to adjust machinery and invent technical aids to support the continued employment of existing workers. It then made sense to do the same for students: that is, to make adjustments to training and assessment to account for a disability. The Project Coordinator, commented that the teachers ‘came up with their own examples about disability from everyday life – they normalised the odd’.

Another rich area for discussion involved the relationship between perceived ‘school learning deficits’ and taking up a trade. So it also made sense to look at the actual literacy and numeracy levels required by Training Packages and to provide students with appropriate, thoughtfully designed competency-based learning contexts, resources and assessment tasks.

Participants expressed a greater level of unease about dealing with students with intellectual, psychiatric and mental disabilities. However, as the project was facilitated by the student support unit, a more trusting relationship opened up and led to a better exchange of information and referrals between the unit and the trade areas. The student support unit found the support of the Program Delivery Manager to be a key factor in engaging the interest of the trade areas and teachers participating in the project.

*The Bremer Institute of TAFE*

#### *Indigenous people can guide RTOs*

In those projects where strong partnerships were formed between Indigenous people and RTOs, the flow of information was two-way. RTOs conveyed technical information and Indigenous participants explained the different perspectives they bring to training.

For instance, one project focused on knowledge management strategies which led to an awareness about how difficult it is to move from a Western-based approach where individuals manage and hold information to an Indigenous-style where practice is informed by collective wisdom. Often the key to successful projects was VET practitioners carefully listening to Indigenous participants and then trying different solutions.

#### Culturally appropriate assessment guidelines and tools developed

With input from a Koorie child care worker, the participants realised that some assessments could be done as group work, which is a preferred method of learning in Koorie culture. They

also looked at the reasons why learners may not be keeping up with work or might not turn up at assessment time. As a result, one of the trainers tried using oral assessments in the workplace with her Koorie students rather than written assignments. She was convinced that the Training Package criteria could be fully met with this form of assessment.

A key concept discovered by the participants was that assessment is a continuous circular process between the learner and the assessor which involves gathering evidence, providing feedback, then allowing for reflection, action, review and further assessment. These insights have formed the basis of new tools and assessment guidelines that may be useful throughout the whole organisation.

*Ballarat University TAFE Division.*

#### Indigenous RTO refreshes teaching strategies, listens to learners and improves retention

The staff discovered that what impacted most on successful completion was sporadic attendance. Other class members, as well as learners who missed classes, were affected because some people always took class time to 'catch up'. The staff team decided to establish a 'Catch up Class' and continuously evaluate its effectiveness. Student feedback indicated that 'shame' was associated with going to a session called catch up class so the name was changed to 'Tutorial Support'. The sessions were then opened up to any students wanting some extra assistance or practice.

Refinements were suggested in weekly staff meetings and these included the development of a referral sheet with assessments attached; extension work suggestions provided to the tutor by the teacher; and using the class for practice opportunities in basic skills. One student commented 'That class helped me stick with the program.'

The project has also enabled the staff team to develop an overall student management plan so that both the class teacher and the tutor can communicate about the program of work for an individual student. Next year, as a result of the activities of this Reframing the Future project, Abmusic plans to introduce a two-week orientation and student evaluation period for each new intake. Students' learning gaps will be identified upfront and they can then be grouped appropriately into ensemble groups. This process will also take into account their family connections.

*Abmusic Aboriginal Cooperation*

#### Exploring a recognition process for Indigenous Sport Development Officers across WA

Much that happened through this community of practice was subtle. While some paper-based resources were developed, the most valuable knowledge was the intangible knowledge that was identified, developed and shared between the members. Through the development of knowledge about the national training system and recognition of current competence processes, the community created Indigenous advocates for skills recognition. It is highly likely that the relationships formed through this community and the knowledge held will be passed on through Indigenous networks.

The non-Indigenous members, in turn, learnt about Indigenous approaches and some of the inherent cultural and historical challenges that Indigenous people face when accessing training or assessment. The project coordinator commented 'The value of this kind of development of people cannot be easily measured and certainly should not be underestimated.'

*WA Arts, Sport and Recreation Industry Training Council*

#### *Having time and space to learn and reflect is refreshing*

Evidence is abundant in the profiles of the need to look outside one's immediate environment and day to day work pressures to reflect on and practice new ways of knowing and doing in the VET system. A sense of renewed vigour and enthusiasm for moving forward into new domains is featured in many profiles.

Network supports employment goals of young people with disabilities

Key education and training, disability and employment services providers on the Sunshine Coast of Queensland formed this network. The group acted as an 'employment incubator' focusing on young people who, with some support, may obtain employment.

The members found that no one member held all the up-to-date information and knowledge that needed to be shared for the network to move forward, such as information about traineeships. In response, individual network members brought to the Network's forums the knowledge they had acquired from distinct job roles. Members also searched the Internet to find out how other OECD countries were solving issues of access and equity in training and employment. As a result they felt they developed a big picture view of their work and this started to drive the network's collective vision, encapsulating training pathways for their focus cohort.

A benefit for network members and their organisations was a better understanding of their various roles and responsibilities. This understanding is useful in a system in which differing fiscal and policy guidelines apply to organisations with different but related or linked functions and outcomes for clients. Another benefit from participation in the network was the development of collegial relationships between agencies that are to some degree business competitors. The network changed competitive, business relationships to a more cooperative relationship based on a community development model.

*Cooloola Sunshine Institute of TAFE*

#### **Cross industry collaboration supports young people with disabilities**

Perhaps the most important benefit from the Reframing the Future project for the organisations involved was the facilitation of cross industry collaboration on a topic so integral to achieving successful outcomes for young people with disabilities. It has opened doors to new industry partnerships, partnerships with RTOs and to innovative change in workplace training within participating organisations. Many participants said they felt they were going back to their workplaces to change things – 'Now that I know what to work on'.

*The Spastic Centre of NSW*

#### **Small private RTO explores reasonable adjustment solutions**

This small private training provider combined, on the one hand, face-to-face presentations from guest speakers on particular disability areas and industry requirements with, on the other hand, team-based work activities and trials of new processes, tools and resources. Staff researched readily available resources on websites to adapt for their students' needs, training contexts and levels. The disabilities researched included specific learning disorders such as dyslexia and attention deficit disorder. Staff then explored practical strategies to reasonably adjust training and assessment to fit the individual student's needs, taking into account Training Package and industry requirements.

New strategies included changing how learning material and assessment tasks were presented to students as well as negotiating additional time for learning or assessment with the student. Staff then shared their experiences and new learning with each other at scheduled staff meetings. Facilitator Karen-Anne Montgomery reported that: 'The new skills achieved by the RTO staff, particularly sessional staff, means they can now develop innovative training and assessment strategies, processes and tools to support particular students with specific disabilities.'

*KAL Multimedia Training*

### **Conclusion**

Building capacity in the VET system to achieve the vision set out in the ANTA strategies 'Bridging Pathways' and 'Partners in a Learning Culture' is possible provided opportunities and encouragement are available for the various stakeholders, particularly VET practitioners, to make the connections – with each other; with research, with good practice; with the learning and assessment contexts for students; with information about specific conditions or situations; with the benefits of

collaboration, cooperation and partnerships, with experts, with industry, with specialist employment organisations, with the local community... the list appears to be endless - in each of the 48 ways there are probably another 3 ways that describe with whom or what connections need to be made, why they must be made and how they might be nurtured.

Implementing the national training system and enhancing outcomes for equity groups in VET are both complex undertakings, requiring the skill, energy and commitment of VET organisations, practitioners and clients working alongside their colleagues in equity organisations. The opportunities within the national training system that enable providers to introduce flexibility and innovation into delivery and assessment processes and to engage industry and the community in the process have been explored, utilised and challenged by these 48 workbased learning projects.

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