

e-WAALC NEWS March 2013

e-WAALC News is the electronic newsletter of the Western Australian Adult Literacy Council. The WAALC Executive Committee prepares and sends **e-WAALC News** to members five times a year.

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1. Welcome to 2013

On behalf of the Executive Committee, welcome to WAALC 2013!

The committee is very excited about the direction that Conference planning has taken this year, with a focus on what we do as adult literacy teachers, and how what we do has the capacity to change lives.

Some say that we learn how to parent from being parented, and that we learn how to teach from being taught by our teachers.

It is interesting to think about what experiences and ideas have shaped the ways you teach, and your interaction with the adults you teach. What personal values and/or beliefs, about how society should be, are reflected in that interaction?

Looking forward to an exciting year,

Susan Bates
Chairperson

2. WAALC conference 2013

WAALC invites you to participate in our 2013 state conference to be held at Central Institute of Technology on the 18-19 July 2013.

The theme of the conference, *Getting back to our roots: Literacy for empowerment* is a reference to the ideologies and practices that underpinned Australian adult literacy initiatives in the early years, during the 1970s and 80s. A Call for Presentations will be released soon.

Delegates at last year's Conference expressed an interest in exploring ideas about learner-centred assessment in the present climate which has a marked emphasis on accountability and reporting. We are interested in hearing from practitioners willing to share their assessment practices especially where balance between responsiveness to the learner and demand for accountability has been achieved.

3. Certificates in General Education for Adults Reaccreditation

The reaccreditation of the Certificates in General Education for Adults is progressing with the second Project Steering Committee (PSC) meeting held on 19 November. The final meeting was on 26 February 2013 and the next version of the CGEA is expected to be accredited and available by the end of April 2013. The current CGEA has been extended until 30 June 2013.

The major change will be the explicit inclusion of digital literacy in 'engage' and 'create' units.

4. PIAAC preliminary results released

The Australian Bureau of Statistics has just released the preliminary findings of the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). An iteration of the 2006/7 Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALLS), PIAAC assesses adults' proficiency in literacy and numeracy and problem-solving in a technology rich environment.

The Australian Council of Education Research (ACER), in its media release 'International study reveals serious adult literacy and numeracy problems', says 'Australia still has much to do in the area of workplace and vocational education and training (VET)'.

5. Does 1 = 1? Mapping measures of adult literacy and numeracy

The Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF) and the scale used for PIACC and ALLS both have five levels and on the surface seem quite similar. A new NCVER report prepared by Michelle Circelli et al does a close comparison of the two scales for the first time and finds that there is no simple equivalence between them. For example, reading and writing the ALLS level 3 was found to be roughly equivalent to ACSF 4 but for Numeracy and Mathematics the ALLS level 3 was partially ACSF 3 and partially level 4.

Despite these problems of equivalence, the introduction to the report states: "This research has shown that alignment between the two frameworks is achievable and that this alignment offers the potential for measuring progress against national objectives more regularly. Indeed, the ACSF offers a way of monitoring any improvements in adult literacy and numeracy in a more nuanced manner." *Does 1 = 1? Mapping measures of adult literacy and numeracy*, National Centre for Vocational Education Research, 2012

WAALC recommends all members read the [report](#) as adult literacy and numeracy practitioners will be central to the attempt to use the ACSF to measure progress against the targets in the National Skills and Workforce Development Agreement and the success of the 2012-22 National Foundation Skills Strategy for Adults.

6. Free numeracy resources for trades programs

Putting the Jigsaw Together is a resource package targeting the significant numeracy needs of learners coming through vocational education and training (VET) trades programs, as highlighted in Manufacturing Skills Australia's (MSA) recent national industry consultations on language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) issues.

These new MSA resources are designed as a series of tool kits to support VET trainers with practical strategies to assist apprentices to develop their numeracy skills.

Each tool kit includes: literacy and numeracy indicator tools, a comprehensive trainers' guide and a series of tools that target numeracy skill areas. The resource package builds on strategies for trainers introduced in the Making the Connection PD workshop for VET trainers (accessible separately).

See <<http://www.mskills.com.au/ShopProduct.aspx?pid=139>>

7. Language Literacy and Numeracy in the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

Innovation & Business Skills Australia (IBSA) have prepared information leaflets to assist registered training organisations (RTOs) and the VET workforce in understanding the implications of moving the current LLN elective in the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment into the core of the qualification.

This change is in response to the Australian Workforce and Productivity Agency (formerly Skills Australia) advice relating to raising LLN skills of the VET workforce and will be in place by July 2014. This will have implications for RTOs in delivering the Certificate IV and also for assessors in meeting the skill requirements to assess this qualification.

8. Foundation Skills Training Package update

IBSA has submitted the FSK Foundation Skills Training Package to the National Skills Standards Council (NSSC) for endorsement at their February meeting. All final components for endorsement can be found on the FSK Foundation Skills Case for Endorsement page.

9. Inviting new members

Do you know someone that might be interested in WAALC activities? Forward this newsletter to colleagues who you think should be a member of WAALC. Or perhaps invite a prospective member to attend events like our conference and AGM to meet other members. We encourage all adult literacy and numeracy practitioners in WA to join WAALC now and be part of the renewed national action to have literacy embedded in adult learning at all levels.

10. Issues? Contributions?

WAALC seeks to represent all adult educators who deliver adult literacy and numeracy programs in Western Australia. Let us know if there are issues that you think WAALC should take action on, or news to include in future newsletters such as vacancies, project reports or new resources of interest to our sector.

11. 'Contacts' update

Let us know if your address changes. If you don't want to receive this newsletter or wish to suspend it while you are away on leave, please email the WAALC secretary at info@waalc.org.au

e-WAALC News is the electronic newsletter of (WAALC) the Western Australian Adult Literacy Council.

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