

Dear Sir/Madam

VET Sector professional development

I write in response to the invitation to provide feedback to Departmental plans for professional development in the VET sector published in the February edition of VETinfoNews.

Our organisation represents the interests of literacy and numeracy professionals working in the VET sector in WA. Up until the present time the Department has offered specialist services to these practitioners that have been valued by both public and private providers. The services have been underpinned by having specialist staff and dedicated funding.

It is not clear from the information you have published whether you intend to maintain these specialised services. The formal information is scant: we read that you intend to 'reshape' the hosting of VET forums and that this will become the responsibility of the Communication and Marketing division. Information coming from informal sources tells us that the dedicated specialist literacy position in the Sector Capability team has been abolished along with the other positions in the team. Can you verify that this the case?

If, as we suspect, it is the case, we draw your attention to the following issues:

- The loss of the position may also indicate the loss of dedicated funding.
- There are several very well established and highly valued professional development programs that may suddenly cease to exist.
- The maintenance of centrally coordinated curriculum and professional support programs contributes directly to building quality, consistency and accountability in a deregulated market.
- Language, literacy and numeracy, as well as other foundation skills, continue to be a requirement if the goals of the WA State Training Plan are to be realised.

- You explain that you have been consulting with stakeholders but as yet you have not consulted with our organisation although, as the peak body, we are clearly a stakeholder.

As a peak body we request detailed information on the Department's plans to continue support for the following well established, highly valued and important programs and initiatives:

- Teach Me Grammar program
- CGEA and CAVSS professional development workshops
- The ALaN WA Network and Newsletter
- The Regional Scholarship Program which enables regional and remote practitioners to attend LLN events and professional learning.

We would like to be assured that these programs, as the very minimum, will continue to be funded. We would be interested in discussing further with you how these services can be retained if your Departmental restructuring means that you will no longer have the capacity to manage them.

On 15 April we will be holding our annual State Conference attended by practitioners from across the state representing the Government, non-government and volunteer sectors. We invite you to provide a statement clarifying the future of professional development and curriculum support for adult literacy and numeracy at that event.

We can be contacted at info@waalc.or.au or 0449897582.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Margaret McHugh', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Margaret McHugh
Chair, WAALC

8 March 2019