

SUBJECT: Welcome to 2023 and thank you



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Dear colleagues,

Welcome back to 2023. On behalf of the Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board, I hope you are well and that you managed to have a relaxing break before getting back into the swing of this year.

We hope that the year has started well for all providers. We are hearing that there are positive indications that student enquiries are stronger which is pleasing given the challenges faced in recent times. This year our collective focus remains on engaging our learners as this is the essence of what you all do so well. We need to continue to engender in our learners a sense of belief and confidence; provide a welcoming environment and a positive learning experience; and support them to set meaningful goals so they can see the possibilities the future may hold. It also remains a focus for the Board to build the sector profile and ensure it is recognised for the significant impact it makes on many individuals as well as supporting and contributing to the social and the economic and social recovery efforts of the Victorian Government.

One key update was to provide the sector with an update of the ACFE Board's focus for this year. The Board priorities for 2023 have been finalised. These will be shared with the sector as well as our Regional Councils. Before this can be done, we need to ensure that the priorities are aligned to the annual Statement of Expectations Minister Tierney provides to the Board each year, which the Board needs to deliver on. Once the Minister's annual statement is received by the Board and any adjustments to the Board's priorities are made for the year, the final version of the Board 2023 priorities will be sent out to the sector and Regional Councils in the near future.

Considerable work has been undertaken by the Board and the ACFE Division to develop these priorities, which clearly articulate the strategic focus and the expected outcomes of the Board and will further progress the Minister's vision for the Learn Local sector expressed in the Ministerial Statement and the Board's own Strategy. There has also been some critical and important thinking to look at the future as part of the Board's forward road map. I want to assure you that advice and input from the sector and our Regional Councils has been considered wherever possible and factored into the Board's strategic thinking, focus and outcomes. I hope you can see this when you receive the 2023 overview.

I would like to provide you with some initial advice on the Board's priorities that will give some context when you read them. The ACFEB 2023 priorities have been underpinned by a set of key principles the Board felt were important to guide the work of the ACFE Division, to achieve the Board's strategic intent and measures both short term and for the future. The principles include: a learner focus — underpinned by a demonstration of learner need from engagement through to employment; leadership by the sector on the work wherever possible; building sector capacity to deliver to learners by developing centralised resources, new delivery models and strengthening partnerships; fostering and supporting innovation and collaboration; having agile procurement and responses for sector led work; ensuring the Board's strategic intent, priorities and success measures are effectively translated and implemented by the department and finally having strategies and projects that are implemented in a streamlined, simple and timely way to ensure impact and support the achievement of success.

You will have seen a memo to the sector from the Division outlining the opportunities and funding available to the sector to undertake key development work that are part of the Board's 2023 priorities. These opportunities are aligned to the principle of using and building the skills, knowledge and expertise you have and capitalising on your leadership and knowledge of our learners and their needs. The Board would like to encourage you to be involved in this work.

2023 will build on strategic work from previous years across our learners, our people, our partners and the Board's leadership and focus aligned to the Ministerial Statement on the future of Adult Education. This year our focus strongly remains on our commitment to engaging individuals in our communities. It is the foundation and core purpose of the Learn Local sector to build the confidence and core skills of our learners to enable them to have the same opportunities as others and thrive in their lives or pursue study or work. The focus of the Board is to ensure those who would benefit from pre accredited Learn Local delivery are supported and that there are a range of initiatives to assist you to best meet learner needs. Our sector is part of the wider educational skills system, and our innovative and different approaches and work can be further strengthened by supported partnership efforts with community agencies, employment organisations, industry partners, TAFE institutes and local government, among others.

2023 sees the dedicated ACFE Division shift over from the former Department of Education and Training to the Department of Jobs, Skills Industries and Regions. The Division will look at the possibilities that will open up because of this enabling better to linkages to industry and employment services agencies, how best to support you to do this and ensuring pre-accredited training is recognised as a critical element of the post-secondary system in Victoria and place-based solutions.

I am sure that the sector and Board, with the support of the department, will continue to strive to support our learners and demonstrate commitment, resilience, and innovation to achieve the Minister's vision. I am proud to have been part of the ACFE Board and to have been involved with the Learn Local sector to implement such an important reform agenda and to be able to advocate for its work, its impact, and its value. I know that Victoria stands tall among the states and territories of the Commonwealth in delivering world-leading adult community education programs and outcomes. We must ensure that this important role goes from strength to strength.

As I mentioned in my last communique, I will be finishing this role on 31 March. I am especially keen to see you all at upcoming ACFE events; the rescheduled 2022 Learn Local Awards Gala Ceremony on February 24, and the Regional Council Plenary event in Bendigo on 3 March and to have the chance to acknowledge your work and commitment in a more personal way.

You can find out more about the Awards and purchase tickets on the [Learn Local Awards](#) website.

As always, take care and I do hope to see you at these events. If I don't have that opportunity and even though I will be sending out one final communique with the 2023 priorities, I would like to convey my sincere thanks and appreciation of all that you have done and do; it's been a privilege to have worked with you and for you. Keep up the amazing effort and passion you have for our learners and the Learn Local sector.

Best wishes



Maria Peters
Chairperson
Adult, Community and Further Education Board
