



Name: Working with Women Alliance, Australian Multicultural Women's Alliance

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Improve school student outcomes with the best available tools and resources

What (if anything) needs to be done to improve the use of edtech tools (including GenAI) in schools?

To improve the use of edtech tools, including GenAI, in schools, it is essential to recognise that these technologies often carry inherent gender, racial, and disability biases. We must not use biased tools to educate children, as this risks embedding existing forms of toxic gender norms and discrimination into learning environments. When such tools are used, they must be subject to regular and rigorous audits to identify and address these biases. Without ongoing oversight, we risk replicating and reinforcing inequities rather than challenging them.

What more (if anything) needs to be done to improve awareness and access to high quality lesson planning and curriculum materials in schools?

There must be increased and consistent funding for education research focused on eliminating bias in these resources. It's also essential to address the leaky pipeline of women and girls in STEM by ensuring that materials actively support their participation and retention. Additionally, respectful relationships and gender equality curriculum should be developed and delivered in collaboration with experts in the field, ensuring that content is accurate, inclusive, and effective.

Is there anything more you would like to say about edtech, GenAI or lesson planning and curriculum materials?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Which of the following best describes you?

Advocacy groups

Are you currently using any edtech tools (including learning games and GenAI) to support teaching and learning in the classroom?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If yes, what has been your experience with using these tools?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Are there things you would like to do with GenAI or edtech tools that you can't do currently? What's stopping you from doing these things?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If no, can you tell us why you are not using any edtech tools?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Do you access lesson planning and curriculum materials online?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If yes, what has been your experience with using these tools?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If no, can you tell us why you are not using online lesson planning and curriculum materials?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Support the workforce through a flexible post-secondary education and training sector

Credit transfer and recognition of prior learning

In your experience, how well does the credit transfer and recognition of prior learning system operate in Australia? Does it adequately support students to move between courses or have their work experience recognised as part of a qualification? Are there ways it could be improved?

Women are significantly less likely than men to have their prior learning formally recognised. This is especially concerning given that the training required to enter feminised industries, such as childcare, is becoming increasingly onerous and expensive, despite offering much lower wages compared to male-dominated fields like construction or mining.

The current system places a strong emphasis on minimum qualifications in female-dominated sectors, often failing to recognise lived and caring experience as skilled labour. This approach undervalues the expertise many women bring to these roles and can create unnecessary barriers to entry and progression.

For migrant women, the process of having skills recognised is often time-consuming and expensive, which derails migrant women from progressing in their careers and makes them settle for underemployed positions that don't match their skill level. This can inhibit their future career trajectory, affect their social and economic standing, and compound further vulnerabilities for those women seeking to build lives as single mothers or survivors of family, domestic, and sexual violence.

There is also a policy imbalance, with fast-tracked qualification pathways being prioritised for male-dominated industries like construction, while the care sector continues to be overlooked. This creates a gendered disadvantage that the current system must address if it is to truly support mobility and recognition of prior learning for all Australians.

Which of the following best describes you? Please select all that apply.

Advocacy groups

In the past 3 years, have you applied for credit recognition or recognition of prior learning (RPL)?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If yes, what was your experience in applying for credit recognition or RPL like?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If no, can you elaborate on why you didn't apply?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Work related training

What are the main reasons individuals and/or businesses do or do not participate in work-related training?

Feminised industries such as the community and care sectors are often underfunded and lack the financial resources to invest in ongoing training for their workforce. For many women, the cost of training is simply unaffordable, and caring responsibilities make it difficult to find the time to participate.

While paid practical placements are a positive step, the financial support they offer is often insufficient to cover living costs, particularly for those with dependents. There is also a broader issue of return on investment - many women question whether additional training will lead to better-paid opportunities. For example, the cost of training to become a social worker is high, yet the wages are relatively low compared to the high earnings and lower training costs in male-dominated fields like mining.

There are also issues around accessibility and access to training, such as location, delivery modes, and eligibility, which can also be significant barriers, particularly for those already disadvantaged by gender, income, or caregiving responsibilities.

What role, if any, should businesses be playing to address any barriers and better support the offer of work-related training to employees?

Businesses have an important role to play in addressing barriers to work-related training, particularly for women. One key action is to collect and analyse data on who is accessing training opportunities and how funding is allocated. By tracking this information, businesses can identify gender disparities and take targeted steps to ensure women have equitable access to training and professional development.

What, if anything, could government do to address barriers and better support the offer of work-related training to employees?

The government has a big role to play in addressing barriers and better supporting work-related training, particularly for women. Currently, there are clear gender disparities in how support is structured. For example, the Key Apprenticeship Program offers apprentices, primarily in male-dominated fields, \$10,000 incentive payments to cover training costs. In contrast, women entering feminised professions such as social work and healthcare are often required to complete unpaid placements with no equivalent financial support.

Additionally, women graduate with higher levels of HECS debt than men yet can expect lower salaries both upon graduation and across their careers. This creates a long-term financial disadvantage that training policy must address.

The Building Women's Careers initiative is a step in the right direction and should be expanded into other male-dominated industries. Importantly, the effectiveness of such programs should be actively measured to ensure they are genuinely contributing to workforce diversification.

Finally, the government should support the development of gender equality frameworks, including integrating critical content, such as menopause, contraception, and reproductive healthcare, into medical school curriculum. These measures would help ensure training systems are more inclusive, equitable, and reflective of the needs of all Australians.

Which of the following best describes you? Please select all that apply.

The participant did not respond to this question.

For business owners, managers and sole traders, how many employees do you have?

The participant did not respond to this question.

For employees/individuals, have you participated in any work-related training in the last 12 months that did not relate to general compliance (such as WHS)?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If yes, can you elaborate on the reasons for the training and any benefits you received from doing it?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If no, can you elaborate on any challenges or barriers you faced in attempting to undertake work-related training?

The participant did not respond to this question.

For business owners, managers or sole traders, have you provided or supported your employees to participate in work-related training in the past 12 months?

The participant did not respond to this question.

If yes, can you elaborate on the reasons for the training and any benefits you or your employees received from doing it?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Can you describe whether you accessed any government assistance, what type, and the amount received? If you didn't access any financial assistance, please tell us the reasons why.

The participant did not respond to this question.

If no, can you elaborate on any challenges or barriers you faced in attempting to provide or support your employees to undertake work-related training, such as the time or cost, availability of relevant or high-quality courses, and level of interest from your employees?

The participant did not respond to this question.

Balance service availability and quality through fit-for-purpose occupational entry regulations

What are the effects of occupational entry regulations? Please describe your experience and name the specific occupations you are referring to.

Occupational entry regulations can have significant and often unequal effects, particularly in feminised industries such as childcare, social work, and aged care. Women are increasingly required to prove that their experience is 'skilled', as more formal and informal entry requirements are placed on these professions. For example, minimum wages in these sectors are often tied to holding specific qualifications, which can overlook or undervalue practical experience, especially caregiving experience gained outside formal education pathways.

Migrant and CALD women face additional barriers. Their prior work experience from outside Australia is frequently not recognised, despite the fact that this experience brings valuable cultural knowledge and skills. This lack of recognition not only limits their career opportunities but also deprives organisations of the enhanced cultural competencies these women could offer.

Do you believe current occupational entry regulations are proportionate to the level of risk associated with different professions? Why or why not? If not, do you have any suggested improvements to regulations to better reflect risks? Please name the specific occupations you are referring to.

Current occupational entry regulations are not always proportionate to the level of risk associated with different professions. In particular, the lack of systemic and cross-jurisdictional regulations for childcare workers increases risks to both children and staff, especially in for-profit childcare centres. To better reflect the responsibilities and potential risks in this sector, there is a need for consistent, national regulatory standards that ensure high-quality, safe, and accountable care across all service types.

Which of the following best describes your connection to occupational entry regulations? Please select all that apply.

The participant did not respond to this question.

Which state or territory are you predominantly based in?

The participant did not respond to this question.