



Name: Australian Digital Inclusion Alliance (ADIA)

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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?

Digital inclusion is a vital consideration in any discussion around the use of technology in schools. This includes digital inclusion in the broader community context, where challenges around access, affordability and ability impact how households can engage in the digital world, and the capacity of school students to participate in technology-based learning within and outside the classroom.

The Australian Digital Inclusion Alliance (ADIA) (<https://www.digitalinclusion.org.au/>) is a shared initiative of more than 500 businesses, not-for-profits, community organisations, academics and individuals working collectively to elevate the imperative for action on digital inclusion. It is worth noting important resources, such as the Australian Digital Inclusion Index (<https://www.digitalinclusionindex.org.au/>) and the work of organisations such as Telstra Foundation (<https://telstrafoundation.com/>) to understand the broader issues and impacts of digital inclusion on school-age children.

Schools play an important role in helping develop the capacity of young people to engage effectively in the digital world, including how they can continue to advance their skills through ongoing education, training and the workplace. However it is important to note that schools do not exist in isolation, digital inclusion is a multifaceted challenge and it requires a coordinated response across various parts of government in partnership with the digital inclusion sector and community.

One vital aspect for the effective use of technology in schools is ensuring that all students have access to appropriate devices, generally a laptop computer. Significant numbers of students cannot afford and do not have access to laptops and evidence shows there is great benefit in ensuring devices are made available. A notable pilot provided laptop computers to disadvantaged school students. Surveyed before receiving a donated laptop, 84% of students indicated that they struggled to complete school work. Surveyed subsequently nine months later, 97% of students reported that the device had positively contributed to completing their work.

ADIA is a strong supporter of sector efforts to establish a National Device Bank for the purpose of collecting, refurbishing and distributing appropriate devices for disadvantaged students and other people in need. There is strong sector momentum - through organisations such as WorkVentures, Good360 and Good Things Australia - to bring such a program to life, while ADIA has outlined the key issues and opportunities further in a public paper, A Digital Inclusion Approach to Device Donation and Reuse (<https://www.digitalinclusion.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/A-Digital-Inclusion-Approach-to-Device-Donation-and-Reuse.pdf>).

It is very positive to see that the Commission is also considering the use of GenAI in schools. The rapid growth and new opportunities presented by AI will continue to impact across society and the economy. Challenges exist around issues like safety and confidence, as well as ensuring that people have the capacity to maximise the value of emerging capabilities.

The increasing prevalence of AI is one significant reason that ADIA is advocating for a stronger focus on digital skills and literacy, and this should also extend to the school environment. This focus would have the effect of both providing confidence and skills to utilise GenAI effectively in the classroom as well as foundational skills that assist students in later life.

Again, improving digital skills is a multifaceted challenge, and requires coordination across different parts of government and the education sector. In this regard, ADIA advocates for the implementation of a common language for digital skills and literacy to ensure consistency in assessing, teaching and developing digital skills, and helping individuals, educators, policymakers and organisations adapt to the evolving digital landscape. A common language also enables the setting of a benchmark for digital ability - an articulation of the minimum level of digital ability we aspire for people to achieve. Regardless of where that benchmark is set, the common language should also incorporate the 'on-ramps' or early beginner levels of skills that people need to attain to begin their digital ability journey, including at school age.

We believe that the European Commission-developed Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp) presents an optimal opportunity for Australia to implement a consistent approach to describing digital capability, and note the existing work of the Future Skills Organisation to explore its adoption in the Australian context.

We urge the Commission to elevate the importance of digital inclusion, especially the aspect of device availability and affordability, into any consideration of improving the use of technology in schools.

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

As above.

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

As above.

Which of the following best describes you?

Advocacy Group

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

No

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?

Not our space.

Do you access lesson planning and curriculum materials online?

No

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?

Not our space.

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?

The participant did not respond to this question.

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

The participant did not respond to this question.

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?

The participant did not respond to this question.

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

The participant did not respond to this question.

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

The participant did not respond to this question.

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.

The participant did not respond to this question.

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.

The participant did not respond to this question.

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.