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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?**

Equal access for all

Consistency across the education system in terms of access to the most up to date and relevant edtech tools.

Guidelines on good practice

How GenAI should be used, what are the limits and limitations for various age groups and cohorts.

#### **1. Professional Learning for Educators**

Need: Ongoing, hands-on training in effective, ethical use of GenAI tools.

Action: Embed AI literacy in teacher education and PD programs.

Create ethical guidelines for teachers.

#### **2. Equity and Access**

Need: Devices, internet, and tech-savvy support must be available to all students.

Action: Government investment in infrastructure; school-community tech hubs.

#### **3. Ethical and Responsible Use Policies**

Need: Guidelines around plagiarism, bias, data privacy, and misinformation.

Action: Develop and enforce AI use policies that include students and staff.

#### **4. Integration with Curriculum**

Need: Tools should be tied to learning goals—not used for novelty or automation alone.

Action: Collaborate with curriculum authorities to embed EdTech meaningfully.

#### **5. Student Digital and AI Literacy**

Need: Students must learn to critically evaluate and responsibly use AI.

Action: Create age-appropriate modules on how AI works, its uses, and its risks.

#### **6. Feedback and Impact Monitoring**

Need: Measure the effectiveness of tools in improving outcomes.

Action: Use research and teacher/student feedback to iterate and refine use.

EdTech and GenAI thoughtfully implemented with a clear focus on pedagogy, ethics and equity.

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

It needs to be meaningful, connected to the real world, and accessible to all educators and learners regardless of geographic or socioeconomic background.

Lesson Plans and curriculum need to have imbedded within them the connection to why students are studying the subject, topic or project and how it connects with the real world (work) or their career aspirations.

Lesson Plans and curriculum needs to include real world/ real work aspects where they can simulate, see or engage in real world activities and projects that connect content in context to the curriculum directly.

#### 1. Embed Real-World Context in All Curriculum Materials

Students need to see the relevance of what they are learning.

Curriculum and lesson plans should:

Integrate career exploration, industry case studies, and problem-solving tasks tied to real jobs. Include project-based learning (PBL) opportunities and simulations that reflect real workplace scenarios.

Feature cross-disciplinary links (e.g., maths in construction, science in climate action, humanities in public policy).

Example (Global Practice):

In Singapore, the “Applied Learning Programme” integrates STEM and humanities with real industry challenges, encouraging students to apply academic skills to societal and workplace problems.

<https://www.moe.gov.sg/secondary/schools-offering-full-sbb/school-specific-opportunities/applied-learning-programme>

#### 2. Centralise and Democratise Access to High-Quality Curriculum Resources

Currently, many teachers rely on social media, closed platforms, or paid providers for materials.

We need:

A national, open-access repository of curriculum-aligned, high-quality lesson plans and units—co-designed with teachers, industry partners, and curriculum experts.

Inclusion of annotated exemplars, assessment rubrics, and teacher guidance notes.

Searchable by subject, year level, skill focus, and career relevance.

Example (Global Practice):

New Zealand’s TKI (Te Kete Ipurangi) platform provides curriculum-aligned resources, strategies, and assessment supports that are teacher-reviewed and openly shared.

<https://www.tki.org.nz/>

#### Challenges

**Fragmentation:** Resources are dispersed across various platforms, leading to inconsistencies in quality and accessibility.

**Access Barriers:** Many platforms require institutional logins or paid subscriptions, limiting access for casual or relief teachers, and educators in remote areas.

**Lack of Real-World Context:** Existing resources often lack integration with real-world applications, making it challenging for students to connect classroom learning with practical, real-life scenarios.

#### Recommendations for Improvement

**Develop a National Open-Access Repository:** Establish a centralised platform offering high-quality, curriculum-aligned lesson plans and units, co-designed with educators and industry partners.

**Integrate Real-World Applications:** Ensure that lesson materials include connections to real-life contexts and careers, helping students understand the relevance of their studies.

**Enhance Accessibility:** Remove barriers by providing resources without the need for institutional logins or subscriptions, ensuring equitable access for all educators.

**Continuous Professional Development:** Offer training for teachers on utilising these resources effectively and integrating them into their teaching practices.

### 3. Professional Learning on Curriculum Design and Real-World Integration

Even with great resources, teachers need time and training to implement them effectively: Expand PD on curriculum unpacking, industry engagement, and career development and career-connected learning.

Support teacher release time for collaborative planning and curriculum contextualisation.

Promote use of AI-enhanced planning tools (e.g., MagicSchool.ai, Eduaide.ai) with appropriate guidance.

Example (Global Practice):

In Ontario, Canada, “Specialist High Skills Major” programs link subjects with local industry and include teacher training, leading to measurable engagement and career awareness outcomes.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/specialist-high-skills-major>

### 4. Involve Industry and Community in Curriculum Co-Design

A future-focused curriculum should reflect current and emerging workforce needs:

Establish local and national partnerships between schools, TAFEs, universities, and employers to co-develop case studies, micro-projects, and content.

Encourage teacher externships or placements in industry to improve authenticity and knowledge transfer.

### 5. Ensure Equity of Access Across Regions and Schools

Schools in rural, remote, and low-resourced communities must have:

Equal access to digital tools, internet connectivity, and up-to-date content.

Culturally relevant and contextualised curriculum materials that reflect local community needs and First Nations perspectives.

A focus on universal design for learning (UDL) and accessibility for diverse learners.

Improving awareness and access to high-quality, real-world-connected curriculum materials is essential to prepare students for a dynamic future workforce. Backed by open infrastructure, educator support, cross-sector collaboration, and a clear focus on meaning, purpose, and inclusion in every subject.]

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

There needs to be collaboration and consistency of access to quality career development practices, materials and resources. All students should have access to professionally qualified and well-resourced career development practitioners within schools and the community who understand the needs of their community and can help develop lesson plans and curriculum to connect young people with their preferred future.

Australia must treat career education not as a ‘nice-to-have’ but a core equity and future-readiness issue.

Recommendations:

Every student deserves access to a qualified Career Development Practitioner (CDP)

Career guidance must not be left to chance, overloaded teachers, or outdated one-off events.

Schools need funded staffing models to employ qualified CDPs, as is standard in countries like Canada, Finland, and New Zealand.

Career practitioners are supported with national professional standards, training, and networks and are currently being underutilised.

Embed career learning across the curriculum

All educators should be supported to make explicit links between subject content and future skills, industries, and occupations.

Use real labour market data, industry case studies, and problem-based learning.

Create a national digital career education platform

Include interactive tools, virtual work experience, micro-credentials, industry interviews, and teacher resources.

Make content inclusive of regional industries, First Nations perspectives, and emerging economy sectors.

Evidence:

The OECD's "Career Readiness" project (2021–2023) shows that teenagers with high-quality career development experiences are more likely to be employed, earn more, and make confident education choices. <https://www.oecd.org/en/about/projects/career-readiness.html>

The Australian Blueprint for Career Development and the National Career Education Strategy (2019) highlight that career development:

<https://www.dewr.gov.au/future-ready/resources/future-ready-student-focused-national-career-education-strategy>

Supports engagement and motivation.

Builds self-awareness and adaptability.

Reduces school-to-work transition gaps, especially for disadvantaged learners.

Call for National Collaboration

To build a future-ready workforce, we must ensure:

Consistency across states and sectors in accessing best-practice career development models.

Stronger partnerships between education, industry, and community to co-develop content.

Long-term investment in platforms, people, and pedagogy that link learning with life and work.

Preparing young Australians for a rapidly changing world of work requires more than updating the curriculum—it demands a systemic, equity-focused approach that connects learning to purpose, industry, and identity. Access to qualified career professionals, real-world-integrated curriculum materials, and responsible innovation in EdTech and AI are essential ingredients in this transformation.

### **Which of the following best describes you?**

Educator, TAFE Teacher and Qualified Professional Career Practitioner, Career Counsellor

### **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?**

Currently working as Career Counsellor in community not in schools. Career Practitioners working in secondary schools are members of the organisation that I work for though. Australian Centre for Career Education (ACCE)

**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?

I am not teaching in secondary schools, I am more working on the development of Career Development resources.

## 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?**

Standardised processes and procedures across states and institutions. Expand USI functionality to include broader types of learning like micro-credentials, workplace learning (employer access to sign off). Include functionality to add when the skill or experience happened and for how long, create and use a database of courses and content, specific skills and experience needed to suggest possible RPL opportunities and or assessment to verify and apply to a particular assessment, unit of study or course of study.

Potential improvements

Promote shared rubrics for assessing equivalence between qualifications across jurisdictions.

Introduce clear, sector-specific guidelines about acceptable timeframes for “currency of skills.

Allow demonstration through challenge tests, simulations, or supervised practical assessments.

Encourage mutual recognition agreements between institutions to standardise credit/RPL decisions.

Fund RPL advisors or navigators to support applicants in gathering evidence and understanding the process for skill shortage areas.

Simplify documentation requirements for older or informal learning.

Create a centralised and unified system that includes all accredited and non-accredited courses across all sectors and tracks a person’s full learning history across all sectors.

Training providers responsible for uploading and maintaining course offerings on TGA (Universities etc. new stakeholders) use Training.gov.au and add higher education and informal/ non-accredited learning and use this platform to assist with RPL as it keeps track of all previous training versions.

I have had experience with Credit Transfer and RPL with TAFE and University.

Sometimes it felt like it was more work to find the evidence than to just complete the units of study and remain current with what was being taught in the unit of study. It can be a long and time-consuming process. It was many years ago and I am not familiar with how this is currently being done.

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

I am a former VET student; I am a former university student; Was involved in the RPL process as a TAFE teacher and working in Credit transfer area

**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?**

##### **Individuals Do**

**Preferred learning style:** Many individuals, particularly visual or hands-on learners, benefit from workplace training as it allows them to learn by doing. This practical, scaffolded approach supports confidence-building and skill development over time.

**Career development:** Training provides a pathway to gain new skills, increase employability, or access promotions or new roles within an organisation.

**Relevance and immediacy:** Work-related training is often directly applicable to their current job, making the learning experience more meaningful and motivating.

##### **Businesses Do**

**Customisation:** Businesses can train staff according to their specific processes, quality standards, and values, leading to more consistent performance.

**Productivity and performance:** Investing in staff development can improve efficiency, reduce errors, and boost morale, which can translate into better business outcomes.

**Retention and engagement:** Offering training can increase employee satisfaction and loyalty, reducing turnover.

##### **Individuals Don't**

**Mismatch with learning preferences:** Some people prefer to understand theory first before applying skills practically and may feel anxious about learning "on the job" without prior preparation.

**Lack of time or competing priorities:** Individuals balancing work with family, study, or other commitments may find it difficult to participate in structured training.

**Perceived lack of value:** If training doesn't lead to clear career progression or incentives, individuals may not see it as worth the effort.

##### **Businesses Don't**

**Cost and time constraints:** Training takes staff away from regular duties, which may disrupt operations, particularly in small or under-resourced businesses.

**Lack of trainers or expertise:** Not all businesses have staff with the skills or willingness to effectively train others.

**Fear of staff leaving:** Some employers worry that investing in training may lead to staff taking their new skills elsewhere.

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

I believe industry must actively support and drive a sustainable pipeline of people who are training and ready to meet the current and future needs of the workforce. This is not

just a responsibility but also a strategic investment. As industries evolve through automation, digitalisation, and changing consumer demands, a business-led approach to skills development ensures that organisations remain competitive and resilient.

#### Key Roles for Industry

Co-designing training programs with education providers and government to ensure they are relevant, practical, and future-focused.

Provide industry tasters, videos and current information for young people to find out more about employment opportunities.

Investing in early talent development, including school-based apprenticeships, VET programs, and graduate pathways, to build interest and capability early.

Providing inclusive access to training opportunities, especially for underrepresented groups, part-time staff, or people in entry-level roles.

Embedding learning into the flow of work, using microlearning, mentoring, and on-the-job coaching that aligns with employee learning styles and operational needs.

Advocating for training standards and investment at an industry-wide level, helping to lift the skills base across entire sectors.

To meet the needs of a dynamic labour market, we need a collaborative approach, where businesses lead, governments support, and individuals are empowered. By doing so, industry helps ensure a reliable, job-ready talent pipeline that can support growth, innovation, and workforce sustainability.

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

Governments play a critical enabling role in making work-related training more accessible, relevant, and equitable. To support both employees and businesses, governments can:

#### 1. Fund Flexible, Targeted Training Programs

Provide subsidised, short-form and micro-credential courses that align with emerging industry needs (e.g., AI, digital literacy, sustainability).

Focus on priority cohorts like young people, older workers, migrants, and people returning to work.

#### 2. Support Small and Medium Businesses (SMEs)

SMEs often face the highest barriers to providing training due to limited resources.

Government could offer:

Training subsidies or tax incentives.

Shared training resources (e.g., regional training hubs, portable upskilling programs).

Wage support for trainees/apprentices.

#### 3. Strengthen Employer-Education Partnerships

Create frameworks that encourage collaboration between TAFEs/universities and employers, ensuring training is practical, job-relevant, and co-designed.

Fund Industry Advisory Groups to identify skills gaps and support course design.

#### 4. Make Training Accessible for Workers

Support paid training leave, so employees don't have to choose between income and development.



Ensure workplace training is portable, meaning skills gained are recognised across employers and sectors (national credentials).  
Build digital access infrastructure for online learning, especially in regional or remote areas.

5. Use Data to Drive Skills Investment

Leverage labour market data to forecast skills shortages and invest in the training areas that are most needed.

Improve public access to skills insights so individuals can make informed career decisions.

6. Lead a National Skills Strategy

Coordinate a long-term skills roadmap that brings together industry, unions, educators, and training providers to align national priorities with workforce development.

The government's role is to reduce financial, informational, and logistical barriers to training. By doing so, it ensures a more agile, future-ready workforce and supports inclusive economic growth.

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

I am a business owner; I am an employee/individual; manager or sole trader

**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)?**

No

**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?

I would have liked to update my Cert IV in TAE so I could be current and help out in our RTO however work declined due to finances, and I did not have the money at the time to pay for myself either.

**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?**

No

**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?

As a Sole Trader I do not have any employees. I have personally undertaken my own personal development and training for myself and my business. This cost around \$7,000 a substantial outlay for a small business but was an upgrade as part of my core business.

## **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.**

As an industry professional (TAFE Teacher, Career Development Practitioner (CDP))

While I have qualifications and experience in education, counselling, and career development, the lack of consistent national regulation in the CDP profession means these skills are not always formally recognised or fully utilised in roles across different sectors. This underutilisation affects not only professionals like me but also the clients we serve, who may not receive the highest standard of guidance unless the practitioner has proactively pursued professional-level training.

### **Job Security:**

The unregulated nature of the profession in many parts of Australia means career development roles are often casual, underpaid, or folded into unrelated job titles (e.g. "education support" "case manager," "student advisor") without recognition of the specialised skill set. Without mandated industry standards, CDPs face precarity and limited career progression.

### **Professional Recognition and Trust:**

Due to inconsistent or optional regulation, there is a lack of public awareness of what qualified CDPs do. This limits trust and means we are often seen as generalists rather than trained professionals with evidence-based approaches. This also makes it harder to advocate for funding or strategic roles within education, employment, or community sectors.

### **Safety and Quality Outcomes:**

Without occupational entry standards, individuals with minimal or no qualifications may enter the field and provide advice that directly affects a person's education or employment trajectory—impacting long-term livelihoods. This undermines quality and safety, especially for vulnerable populations like youth, migrants, or people with disabilities.

**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.**

In relation to Career Development Professionals I believe that all secondary schools should have the appropriate student to Career Practitioner ratio in place and that Careers Staff are professionally qualified with a minimum Grad Certificate in Career Development Practice. After providing Career Counselling for the past 11 years I have seen many people waste time and money completing courses that are not suitable for them. If the correct support was provided during their school years and before entering into courses, they could have avoided choosing courses that are not suitable and select courses that are aligned to their strengths, interests, personality and career aspirations more closely. If this was put in place and all students had equal access to professionally qualified Career Practitioners, it would be a huge saving long term for our economy. See

below details of cost when young people don't receive the right career counselling advice and guidance.

#### Economic Impact of Inadequate Career Guidance

##### 1. Lost Productivity and Skills Mismatch

A report by HEDx and Year13 found that poor career planning among Australian school leavers is costing the economy \$3.5 billion annually. This cost arises from mismatched skills, higher dropout rates, and inefficient workforce transitions. The study involved over 3,000 young Australians aged 15–24 and revealed that only one in four felt their school prepared them for further study or work. Many students feel overwhelmed by the university and career decision-making process, leading to disengagement.

##### 2. Costs of Early School Leaving and Disengagement

The Mitchell Institute's report "Counting the Costs of Lost Opportunity in Australian Education" provides comprehensive estimates:

For early school leavers, the fiscal cost to government is about \$334,600 per person, and social cost is approximately \$616,200.

For 24-year-olds who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET), the fiscal cost is around \$411,700 per person and social cost up to \$1.1 million.

These figures demonstrate the long-term economic impact of young people making misinformed career decisions or disengaging from pathways.

#### References for Research

Mitchell Institute – "Counting the Costs of Lost Opportunity in Australian Education"

Link: Mitchell Institute

<https://www.vu.edu.au/mitchell-institute/educational-opportunity/counting-the-costs-of-lost-opportunity-in-australian-education>

HEDx and Year13 report – Highlighted in The Australian

Article: "Confused students are choosing the wrong university degrees, research shows"

Link: The Australian

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

Consumer or member of the public; Educator or training provider; Employer or business owner; Industry association or professional-body representative; Licensed professional

**Which state or territory are you predominantly based in?**

Victoria