



**Victorian
Skills Authority**



International
Specialised
Skills
Institute



est. 1991

Connecting new educators: a strategy for empowerment

Kay Schlesinger, 2023

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Acknowledgments

The Awarding Body – International Specialised Skills (ISS) Institute

The ISS Institute plays a pivotal role in creating value and opportunity, encouraging new thinking and early adoption of ideas and practice by investing in individuals.

The overarching aim of the ISS Institute is to support the development of a ‘Better Skilled Australia’. The Institute does this via the provision of Fellowships that allow Australians to undertake international skills development and applied research that will positively impact Australian industry and the broader community.

The ISS Institute was founded in 1991 by a small group of innovators, including Sir James Gobbo AC, CVO, QC, and former Governor of Victoria, who had a vision of building a community of industry specialists who would lead the up-skilling of the Australian workforce. The Fellowship program builds shared learning, leadership and innovation across the broad range of industry sectors worked with. Fellows are supported to disseminate learning and ideas, facilitate change and advocate for best practices by sharing their Fellowship learnings with peers, colleagues, government, industry and community. Since its establishment, ISS Institute has supported over 450 Fellows to undertake skill and knowledge enhancement across a wide range of sectors which has led to positive change, the adoption of best practice approaches and new ways of working in Australia.

The Fellowship programs are led by our partners and designed to achieve the needs and goals desired by the partners. ISS Institute works closely to develop a Fellowship program that meets key industry priorities, thus ensuring that the investment will have a lasting impact.

For further information on ISS Institute Fellows, refer to www.issinstitute.org.au

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The Victorian Skills Authority works in partnership with the International Specialised Skills Institute by funding the VET International Practitioner Fellowships. The Fellowship program focuses on developing opportunities within the VET sector to assist in building an Education State in Victoria that produces excellence and reduces the impact of disadvantage. In addition, the program is funded to support the priorities of Skills First, including developing capacity and capability, innovative training practices and increasing teacher quality within the VET sector as well as building industry capability and developing Victoria’s current and future workforce.

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Executive Summary of the Fellowship

This Fellowship afforded the opportunity to improve the way new Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Higher Education (HE) educators were supported at an organisational level by creating sectorial wide/national awareness. It was initiated by the unprecedented program, developed by the author at Melbourne Polytechnic, shared with the Australian sectors across a two-year timeframe and culminated in the recent Fellowship connections in both Canada and the USA.

4 The research methodology of recorded interviews offered an approach to partner with international organisations focussed on empowering new educators in schools, Universities and within a Polytechnic.

The clear aim of the Fellowship is to implement national awareness and improved practices to empower new educators in organisations: within pedagogical /andragogical contexts but also within organisation processes.

The Fellowship also aims to unlock conversations about leadership awareness and subsequent actions for both insightful and pragmatic support of new educators.

An explanation of the Fellowship

This Fellowship investigates improved ways to support new educators as they enter Vocational and Higher Education.

This Fellowship is based on the further development of the innovative program initially designed by the author and implemented at Melbourne Polytechnic in 2020: The Community of Support for new teachers (COS). This program, new to the VET/ HE sector, is designed for beginning educators with 0-2 years' experience, is focused on the development of innovative/high impact teaching strategies while also placing an intentional focus on the creation of a supportive, connected community.

This Fellowship aims to share international approaches which empower new educators.

The intended outcome has four interrelated components:

1. To improve the educational experience for new educators
2. To improve the educational experience for students who share a learning community with new educators
3. To upskill leaders to work effectively and provide organised structures to support new educators in areas of high impact
4. To offer organisations an approach to retain new educators and avoid time and money in the continuous cycle of employment and reemployment.

The benefits of the Fellowship to the Victorian education sector

The author has worked with beginning teachers over the past 30 years across School, University and Higher Education sectors. It became apparent that an organised support structure for beginning teachers was imperative. This is not merely for the purpose of sustained employment, although this is certainly a positive attribute, but a more altruistic imperative which models and shares with new educators the art of teaching. It provides ongoing opportunities to trial new teaching activities and approaches, contextualised for specific cohorts and review implementation approaches within a safe, supported and connected community environment where important, encouraging relationships are established and developed.

This approach has been recognised by the OECD as a means to empower new educators and retain them within the VET workforce.

Well-targeted incentives and support are proven to be effective to attract and retain VET teachers. These include ... induction and mentorship programmes for novice teachers... (OECD Teachers and Leaders in VET 31.3.2021 p.2 <https://www.oecd.org/skills/centre-for-skills/Teachers-and-Leaders-in-VET-Policy-Brief.pdf>)

The VET sector is an ageing sector and supporting beginning educators is not only a smart but prudential initiative. Expressed concisely, if we do not support our new educators, we will not have adequate educator numbers in the future.

...in many countries the VET teaching workforce is ageing, ... On average across the 26 OECD countries with available data, 44% of teachers in ... VET programmes were over 50 years old in 2018, compared to 41% in 2013. (OECD Teachers and Leaders in VET 31.3.2021 p.2 <https://www.oecd.org/skills/centre-for-skills/Teachers-and-Leaders-in-VET-Policy-Brief.pdf>)

The notion of developing pedagogy/andragogy in new educators has also been recognised by the OECD – this is the founding and pivotal approach in successful new educator programs.

...initial education and training for VET teachers appears to be weaker in developing the required pedagogical skills than training for general education teachers. Those VET teachers who benefitted in their initial education and training from training in specific teaching responsibilities or tasks (eg.general pedagogy, subject-specific pedagogy, subject content and classroom practice) are found to feel more prepared for taking up these responsibilities in their teaching. (OECD Teachers and Leaders in VET 31.3.2021 p. 3 <https://www.oecd.org/skills/centre-for-skills/Teachers-and-Leaders-in-VET-Policy-Brief.pdf>

New educators usually enter the VET sector having completed TAE40116 Certificate IV Training and Assessment (or its equivalent). This qualification includes some basic teaching skills in the two Delivery Units of the course, but often this is the only limited experience a new educator will have in the selection and implementation of teaching strategies.

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This Fellowship aims to share with the sector/country and internationally, improved strategies to empower new educators to ensure that they are connected within their organisations, effective in their roles and consequently, choose to remain within their educational settings.

Justification and background of the Fellowship

Experience working with new educators in the TAE40116/ TAE50116 / Trainers under Supervision, with the VET Development Centre, supervising new educators in Secondary schools and working in HE to supervise student placement in schools has demonstrated that this is a vital part of gaining, maintaining and empowering educators in our organisations.

Misko, Guthrie and Waters (2021) have indicated that over 51% of the TAFE sector in Australia are employed on a casual or sessional basis. This has real implications for the way new teachers are supported. This notion of VET training is reinforced in the Standards for Registered Training organisations 2015. Section 1.13, Part c states that training and assessment is delivered only by persons who have: “current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning that informs their training and assessment.” The entrance point to a career in VET teaching, in particular, is through a sessional or contract pathway: consequently, this can often mean that supportive professional learning opportunities are not afforded our newest educators who are employed in such classifications. In short those who require crucial, initial support are not given access to such opportunities.

In addition, many new educators maintain their connections to industry, running their own businesses or working in their respective sectors while teaching on a casual basis. The consequence of this transition places a twofold pressure on new educators: learn the art of teaching /organisational requirements and nuances while also working actively in industry. It is in essence like being positioned with one foot on a pier with one foot on a small rowboat which is constantly moving!

New educators across the VET sector often lack the substantial support they require to learn the craft of teaching. In many cases induction into teaching is not a focus nor is mentoring or coaching. New educators in HE often have no formal teaching qualifications or experience in learning the art of teaching yet are expected to professionally and successfully educate their students.

Repeatedly the sector employs new VET educators only to see the new educators leave VET teaching after a short time due to inadequate support structures to assist new educators in understanding their roles and the importance of engaging strategies to engage diverse student cohorts. A program that intentionally supports new educators is particularly well suited to TAFES and RTOs that employ new VET educators with little, if any teaching experience.

The current community for new educators, is already showing improvement within the organisation in terms of new educators learning, selecting, implementing and refining/contextualising appropriate and innovative teaching strategies. It has also focused on the establishment of important connections for new educators to their teaching teams, leaders, students and each other. Such a program has a place in many RTOs that employ new teachers to teach Vocational and Higher Education courses.

The sector can improve the way it supports and empowers new educators. Such improvement has organisational financial gains and improved student experiences which will be witnessed in more positive student engagement in learning. There are also obvious benefits for new educators and more diversely all educators within organisations as innovative practice is shared amongst teaching teams.

This Fellowship seeks to broaden the intentional support for new educators by researching and investigating the way leading Canadian/American educational organisations support and empower their new educators.

The countries visited in the Fellowship

Initially research was conducted to investigate international organisations that focused on the successful support of new educators. Pre departure Zoom sessions with the New York Department of Education laid the foundations for future meetings and sharing. The large numbers of new educators entering the New York Education Department each year (4000-5000 each year) indicated that the established systems and programs would provide valuable ideas and insights.

The author had previously visited Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) in 2016 and 2017 so knew of some of the programs instigated: in particular, the Teaching Excellence Foundation program for new educators. It was of great interest to witness how this program had developed and to continue the educational relationships previously established.

Online research suggested that Boston College, USA, University of Calgary and Mount Royal University, Calgary, Canada had some interesting ideas around the support of new educators within a Higher Education setting. Several of the leaders in these organisations also had experience working across sectors to empower new educators.

The goals of the Fellowship

This Fellowship aims to share across Australia and internationally improved ways to support and connect new educators as they enter Vocational and Higher Education.

It also aims to increase awareness of the experience of new educators and the pressures they experience within organisations. This increased awareness also aims to advance improved practice to support new educators.

In addition to increased awareness and positive practice associated with the active and intentional support of new educators, is the increased connectivity required by new educators to their organisations, their teaching teams, each other and their students.

The Fellowship aims to focus attention on development of the craft of teaching so that new educators, students and organisations can experience the positive benefits of such an approach.

Furthermore, the Fellowship intends to increase leader insight into the experience of new educators and model strategies that effectively support new educators. An extended benefit is the improvement of employment outcomes for organisations that employ new educators.

Improvement opportunities for the Victorian and/or Australian VET Sector

It has become apparent as a result of the interviews and experiences from all seven shared meetings that the issues surrounding new educators are common within different countries and different sectors. What is of particular interest is the way in which we can share our approaches/resources to empowering new educators. The ten recommendations offer clear focus areas for improved practice.

Major findings from the research

The clear and definitive findings suggested that connection of new educators is vital. Intentional connections to place, people and organisation empower new educators and alleviate the sense of isolation and exclusion.

Professional learning, addressing the specific needs of the new educators, offered in a collegial environment, is important in the first two-three years of the educator's career. Inherent to such programs is the development of a go to 'teaching toolbox': an important aspect of the new educator's growth in the early stages of their experience.

In addition, the support of mentors, coaches and positive experienced educators have been found to substantially empower new educators in their work.

Leader awareness and subsequent supportive action is imperative as is the construction of a community for new educators where they can learn the art of teaching and form substantial supportive relationships.

The way new educator effectiveness is evaluated is the final area for consideration. The author contends that multi-sourced information which includes new teacher reflection is best placed to result in continuous and supported improvement.

Working collegiately with Human Resource teams to improve onboarding experiences is also an area ready for improvement as is the gathering of new teacher voices/ideas to articulate real issues with possible solutions.

Fellowship Findings

On 2.9.2021, the developing Fellowship research was presented to an online audience at the VET Development Centre. (VDC) (227 Participants of varied educational roles) As part of the session, responses were elicited in the form of an interactive poll. Here are the statements together with the collated responses.

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	Consistently supported by my organisation	Sometimes supported by my organisation	Very occasionally supported by my organisation	Not supported by my organisation	
1. Considering my early teaching experience, I was:	26%	41%	23%	10%	

	A mentor or coach	An experienced leader	Other new teachers	A group in the organisation	Nowhere
2. The support offered to me as a new teacher came from: (more than one response possible)	18%	66%	26%	6%	10%

	Always	Sometimes	Not usually	Never	
3. New teachers are well supported in my organisation	30%	52%	15%	3%	

	Always	Sometimes	Not usually	Never	
4. My organisation mentors/ coaches new teachers	23%	46%	26%	5%	

	Yes it would	Possibly	Not for our organisation		
5. A Community of Support could be adapted to the needs of my organisation	75%	24%	1%		

On 23.9.2021, Fellowship concepts were again presented to a large audience of over 200 educators at the VET Development Centre. As part of the session, responses were elicited in the form of an interactive poll. Here are the statements together with the collated responses.

	Always	Sometimes	Not usually	Never	
1. New teachers are well supported in my organisation	27%	52%	15%	6%	
2. My organisation mentors/ coaches new teachers	18%	50%	21%	11%	

	Yes it would	Possibly	Not for our organisation		
3. A Community of Support could be adapted to the needs of my organisation	60%	39%	1%		

To summarise the poll results regarding new educators being supported in organisations, on average 71.5% of responses indicated that new teachers were ‘sometimes, not usually or never’ supported. This widespread, haphazard, and often absent support is disturbing as it reinforces the 300+ coaching messages received, confirming a sense of isolation and lack of preparedness for the teaching role requirements. The lack of organised, targeted support for new educators around effective teaching is an area for improvement across organisations.

In contrast on average 99% of respondents indicated that a Community of Support type approach ‘could or could possibly’ be adapted to the needs of respondents’ organisations. This clearly indicates the sectors’ readiness and recognition of the importance of this type of program to support new educators. Thus subsequent and relevant considerations are raised: how can the sector best learn to support new educators? Who can offer support in this area and when can this positive support be initiated?

At the completion of the first year of the Community of Support program (2020) for new educators at Melbourne Polytechnic, an evaluation was conducted to provide feedback about the innovative program. New educators were asked to provide feedback on a Microsoft Form, to rate their teaching skills at three different points of time: When beginning teaching at Melbourne Polytechnic, after

three months of participation in the Community of Support and after eight months of participation in Community of Support.

Each rating was considered on a 10-point scale. Here are the results.

Rating of teaching skills:

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- When beginning teaching at Melbourne Polytechnic 3.2
- After the first three months of the program (March 2020) 4.2
- After the first eight months of the program (October 2020) 7.8

Clearly the responses display an emerging confidence and teaching skill level. To witness a more than doubling of the initial scores by the end of years' program is a dynamic and notable improvement. Such results further reaffirm the importance of such an affirmative program across the country.

Summary of targeted findings from interviews:

- Fordham University, New York, USA
- New York City, Department of Education- Human Capital Partnerships
- New York City, Department of Education- In-service Teacher Development
- Boston College, USA
- University of Calgary, Canada
- Mount Royal University, Calgary, Canada
- Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Calgary, Canada

Summary of targeted findings from Fordham University, New York, USA

- Teaching skills are the missing area for new educators who are employed at the University.
- Time management is a challenge.
- The Faculty Chair serves as the mentor for the first year.
- New educators select their own mentor from their teaching team or another area, in the second year.
- The Quality of Teaching and professional Development committee holds an initial session with all new educators.
- There is a three-year plan for new educators.



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- The faculty chair organises a lunch for all of the departmental mentors to acknowledge their contribution.
- The Dean has a lunch with all new educators each year.
- There are also informal mentors who might share a meal together.



Summary of targeted findings from New York City, Department of Education- Human Capital Partnerships,

- New educators find onboarding process difficult. An onboarding Roadmap has been developed which covers all the sequential steps of the process. This has received very positive responses from new educators.
- Working with students from diverse language backgrounds is a concern for new educators.
- Working with students with special needs is a concern for new educators.
- A New teacher survey is distributed twice a year: in Spring and Autumn. It contains questions about onboarding, Professional Learning and pre-service requirements. There are 5 or 6 categories. The responses to the surveys inform the focus of Professional Learning sessions for the year.

- Leaders are also a focus as they investigate the main concerns for new educators and how might they best support them.
- Interview processes are also reviewed to determine effectiveness in gaining and understanding new educators.
- There is an online toolbox for new educators.
- A welcome letter goes to individual new educators each month.
- There is a new teacher newsletter distributed each month.
- New teacher week is run in Summer and consists of one day of sector wide Professional Learning sessions and two days school-based sessions.
- A live chat is set up to answer inquiries/address problems from new educators.
- There is a new teacher mailbox where all e mails are answered with a fast turnaround.



Summary of targeted findings from, New York City, Department of Education- In-service Teacher Development

- Mentoring is the most important process to support new teachers. It is a non-paid role.
- The professional Learning areas focus on teaching for new teachers, implicit bias, mentoring, HR processes and advanced teacher evaluation programs.
- Teachers are required to receive a year of mentoring – the way this is implemented depends on the individual school. One year is interpreted as 10 months over 40 hours.
- The central office runs some optional professional learning or mentors. A Certified mentor completes 9 two-hour models (offered both synchronously and asynchronously). This program is having a great impact on both mentors and new educators.
- Data from the two new teachers' surveys has confirmed that mentors who have completed the certification effect the biggest impact: the support offered from these mentors has the most positive impact on new educators.
- Some mentors are seen as 'quasi administrators' /others see the role as a partnership. The latter are the most successful. Mentors are not the direct reports for new educators.



- Important to the relationship is trust and confidentiality. A coaching approach which asks the new educator, "What do you need?" is a great start.
- Useful Professional Learning idea: watch a video of a scenario in a classroom, then reflect and discuss the scenario. Could use a google form for the discussion on an individual basis. This approach could be useful with new educators, mentors and leaders.
- Sexual and gender identity are areas covered in the initial professional learning sessions: these are often new concepts for educators.
- Encouraging a Libertarian voice in students is also a focus of the professional learning.
- Teachers of colour are supported to provide role models in schools.
- New educators who are women of colour have the highest attrition rate /lowest employment rate.
- Useful reference might be: Costa, A,L., Garmston, R,J., Hayes, C (As told to),



Ellison, J, (As told to) (2015) Cognitive Coaching Developing Self-Directed Leaders and Learners. USA

Summary of targeted findings from Boston College, USA

- Finding new educators and encouraging them to invest time in learning the art of teaching is extremely important. This is undertaken as a partnership approach and is referred to as individual consultations /collaborative problem solving.
- Gaining the trust of the new educator is important in the context of voluntary engagement. This partnership between The Teaching Excellence team and the new educator is confidential.
- There can be a lack of time to learn what is required in the role.
- There is a broad array of expectations on new educators which include: the need to develop teaching skills contextualised for learners, the challenge of using technology, navigating new systems and building human connections.
- There can be a sense of isolation within both the organisation and within the teaching team.
- Time management is a skill to be learnt in managing research and teaching.
- New educators are hesitant to admit issues as they are keen to be seen as ‘coping’ within their role.
- Student evaluations can place pressure on new educators: they must balance the ‘safe

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and sound student preferred teaching strategies' with the introduction of new methodologies which can create greater creativity.

- A new teacher program is offered by invitation from the Provost (Chief Academic Officer) It includes a partnership with the Teaching Excellence team.
- Mentoring is a voluntary practice within the Department. There is a presumption that mentors know how best to support new educators.
- Resource development is offered as a four-hour program.
- New educators can take part in a voluntary program around active learning and inclusivity.
- It would be useful to have a common/shared understanding of what defines good teaching within the organisation.
- Small Group Instructional Diagnosis (SGID) include focused student groups in the class to give the faculty feedback. This offers faculty the ability to reflect on timely feedback around their teaching.

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Summary of targeted findings from the University of Calgary, Canada

- There are multiple demands on new educators: they are required to wear multiple hats. They must acclimatise to the new organisation and learn the teaching component.
- A new generation of academics are connecting research to teaching practice and are keen to develop integrated careers.
- Professional Learning is offered around assessment to improve practice.
- Teaching certification is based within the organisation and is an optional program for educators. It is a 13-week program and runs for 3-5 hours per week. It is a comprehensive program and is BOL (Blended and online) "The most important part of these programs is the interaction between the participants - sharing their experiences."



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- One certification course is around leadership and mentorship. It is based on a peer approach to teaching people how to mentor. It is led by the Vice Provost and Lead Educator. Participants select any type of educational leadership they would like to lead, such as brown bag lunch and learn or 1:1 peer mentoring for their graduates.
- Teaching squares are utilised. Four educators from diverse areas join together to reflect on their teaching. This process is informal and self-forming with the purpose of overserving each other and affording an opportunity for self-reflection. The focus of the self-reflection: ‘how I could improve teaching and learning’?
- It is important that mentors are not the direct reports of the new educators.
- Bringing new educators together is the most important thing the organisation does! Connecting people.
- Judgements around new teacher effectiveness has in the past relied on student ratings. There is a racial and gender bias in this. The process is currently being reviewed. Currently, the main type of feedback is obtained from students: peer feedback is entirely voluntary. All departments have ‘their own take on this’ but it is seen as a threat.

Summary of targeted findings from Mount Royal University, Calgary, Canada

- New educators attend 3 half days of onboarding: a small amount of this time focuses on teaching skills.
- There is also a voluntary program to work with 10-12 faculty members to take part in a deep dive into an area to gain increased understanding. (eg. Universal Design for Learning: UDL)
- The organisation has a high expectation around student engagement in learning: new educators require support to develop these skills.
- Higher Education is organisational centric in Canada. There exists a core value of teaching at Mount Royal.
- Creating the community is very important – building a culture around teaching in the organisation (as opposed to research.)



- A Professional Learning Community meets monthly to connect faculty and generate topics of interest. Some of these are then presented at the annual conference.
- Another strategy to connect new educators is the construction of Triads. Three educators from diverse areas opt to work together - they meet when they want and decide on their own focus. This can also include a social focus. The Partnership component is central to new educators creating a reciprocal relationship.
- The relationship component for new educators is extremely important - build the relationship first and then new educators will engage with the Teaching and Learning Centre to increase teaching capability.
- The best learning is through the consultation process which involves confidential coaching opportunities. The discussion focus can be specific to the new educator and allows a deeper dive into what is happening and then making supported readjustments to practice.
- Some new educators receive feedback from their Academic Chairs and peers.
- There is an application process to become a mentor which includes a one-year commitment. This role is a step towards educational leadership. There is formal and extensive training to observe others as a mentor.
- The student evaluations carry a lot of weight- they are important in the process for contract faculty to be rehired.
- A concern is new educators feeling isolated and suffering in silence: they may not tell anyone they are experiencing difficulties for fear of negative employment prospects.
- New educators require support in Assessment and Curriculum Design.
- Online teaching has been isolating for new educators who do not have connections within the organisation.
- “I’m constantly amazed that we throw people in ... good luck!!”

Summary of targeted findings from Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, Calgary, Canada

- The Teaching Excellence Foundation runs twice a year and targets new educators/faculty. Most participants have less than a year teaching experience. This is paid Professional Learning.
- Faculty have no formal teaching qualification.
- “The first year of teaching is difficult and the objective is to survive. They are being thrown into the deep end straight away.”
- The Teaching Excellence Foundation gives practical applications and develops coaching relationships. “The ongoing building of relationships is a big part of what we focus on.”



- Some of the issues affecting new faculty: student interaction, classroom management, grouping of students and interpersonal relationships.
- There is a need to give new faculty just what they need to know. “We empower them by action”.
- The onboarding new faculty should be integrated with HR working in partnership with Learning and Teaching support. This type of collegial partnership is important.
- Some teaching areas use mentors to support new faculty.
- Team teaching with an experienced faculty member is useful.
- Teaching squares are used to share faculty teaching skills. Four instructors from different programs form a group and simply observe each other to gain new ideas.
- Educational Developers take an informal coaching approach with the Teaching Excellence Foundation members. They observe the teaching up to twice a year and encourage professional reflection. A useful phrase: Can I look at anything in particular for you?
- The mentor or coach is not the line manager, but other educators .
- Recognition for the mentor is at the discretion of the teaching area.

Summary of all findings listed in priority order to impact effective sector wide improvement

1. Intentionally connecting new educators to their organisation, teaching teams, other educators, leaders and students is paramount.
2. Targeted professional learning for new educators is vital. Developing applicable teaching skills is crucial both in an initial induction to teaching and beyond. Sequenced learning, within a community, should also address student engagement/ management, resource development, bias/inclusivity, students with additional learning needs, online teaching and learning and self-reflection.
3. To support the sector in working effectively with new educators, external consultants with proven expertise in this area, could offer strategic approaches which in turn could build capability within organisations. Setting up a national program for new educators in VET in particular, would be a valuable consideration: this would provide support particularly in smaller organisations where required expertise is not apparent. Sharing expertise, proven approaches and useful resources is an insightful approach.
4. Leaders in organisations need to be attuned to the issues affecting new educators and work positively and strategically to support and maintain new educators within their organisations. Supporting new educators needs to be an ongoing discussion for discerning leaders.
5. A mentor/ coach is vital to a new educator. This person should be a confidential and positive support in providing guidance and should be attuned to the new teaching experience without presumption. The role is essentially: how can I help? The mentor or coach should not be a direct report for the new educator. The role of the mentor should be recognised within organisational role expectations.
6. Working collegially with other positive educators will build a sense of confidence, connection and increase the new educators teaching toolbox. Team teaching, and shared teaching observations in various sized groups for the purpose of self-reflection/continuous improvement are extremely valuable.
7. In organisations where new educators (in their first 3 years) are employed, a Community of New Educators (CONE) program would be extremely useful. This would include the development of a relevant community, the offering of varied and relevant Professional Learning targeted to the need of new educators and the allocation of mentors or coaches.
8. Human Resource teams should work in partnership with Learning and Teaching teams who support new educators to improve the entry point experience. HR teams should provide an onboarding roadmap for new educators to clarify the initial entry point requirements and sequential processes.

9. Gathering the voice of new educators is important to understand the way the sectors can more effectively support their needs. Organisational surveys (which can be confidential) and small focus groups offer this possibility.
10. Evaluating new educators with a single source approach will not give authentic or useful information. Evaluating practice needs to be carefully considered, transparent, involve the voice of the new educator, be multi sourced and focus on reflection and continuous improvement.

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of your findings

- There is an initial monetary cost associated with supporting new educators – such an investment will be returned by lessening turnover of new educators.
- A program to support new educators needs to be contextualised, intentional and well organised – this requires the insight of leaders and utilisation of expertise within and outside organisations.
- There continues to be an assumption that the TAE entry qualification will be an adequate introduction for effective teaching. Additional support/mentoring/ coaching/professional learning for new educators is required when they arrive at a new organisation.
- The role of a mentor should not be allocated to a line manager as a matter of convenience, as new educators are less likely to be honest about their teaching experience with a person who controls their employment.
- The challenges of supporting mentors are numerous, especially when their roles are seen as a voluntary contribution to an organisation. Experienced educators can be hesitant to take on such a role if it is too formal and bound by numerous parameters: conversely, if some support is not accessible educators can be unsure of how to mentor a new educator. It is a Catch 22 situation.
- In streamlining HR practices there is a requirement for educators to partner with HR teams to develop a streamlined onboarding roadmap: this implies a willingness from both areas to work collegiately.

Major findings:

Organisations in different countries experience similar issues surrounding new educators.

Connecting new educators to each other is vitally important in creating a sharing of knowledge, problems solving and creating a spirit of community which counteracts the isolation associated with the position of new educator.

Connecting new educators to their teaching teams and their organisations is vital if the new educator is to have a sense of belonging and association.

The expectations placed upon new educators are huge and often overwhelming:

- To understand the structure and expectations of an organisation
- To discover the relevant personnel/roles within an organisation
- To locate relevant documentation required to undertake their roles
- To manage the varied aspects of their teaching roles
- To construct learning programs and resources appropriate for their students
- To construct aligned and relevant assessment
- To assess as the standards and organisation policy and procedure requires
- To appear confident and professional to maintain their positions or employment status
- To gain positive student feedback in the form of summative evaluations

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Large organisations often cannot articulate how many new educators enter the organisation as the information is decentralised and as a consequence, some new educators do not receive the required support at the appropriate time. A process to identify new educators upon arrival is essential.

In addition, sessional and ongoing educators are seen as being differently employed with differing access to Professional Learning and educational support. Some sessional educators in the sector receive little if any support in their initial time as an educator. This ultimately disempowers and disconnects them as educators, and as a consequence may well contribute to their decision to leave an organisation.

Professional Learning led by ‘educating educators’/ skilled consultants is important. Areas of focus can include but are not limited to:

- Connecting new educators in small and larger groupings offers the opportunities to learn the art of teaching/ activities to use with learners.
- Discussions and opportunities to view “good teaching and learning in our organisation” and beyond: this may be supported by a Capability document or the observation and sharing of teaching practice.
- Collaborative problem solving is important for new educators to lessen the feeling of isolation and uncertainty.

- Investigation of inherent bias to ensure the creation of an inclusive environment for learners.

Onboarding processes are often overwhelming and not adequately explained to new educators. An Onboarding Roadmap which explains process and requirements in a simple format is required in all organisations.

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It is valuable for Human Resources and Teaching teams to work in partnership to make the initial organisational experience positive.

Educating organisational leaders as to the main concerns for new educators will mean that such an awareness is more likely to translate to improved practices to support new educators.

Planning to support new educators should initially at least plan for the first three years of their teaching careers.

New educators require developed resources that they can utilise with their learners. Support in the implementation of the resources is also of importance.

Sharing issues associated with being a new educator is best undertaken with expert educators who are not a direct report for the new educator. New educators should know that their communications are totally confidential.

Informal processes around gaining familiarity with leaders, other educators and organisations are well placed and offer long term gains.

Investigating and leading mentoring within an organisation to support new educators is valuable in both formal and informal settings.

A welcome letter and ongoing communication/newsletter with new educators will develop a sense of community and ongoing support.

Surveying new educators is worthwhile to ask about their concerns and ways that they would value being supported.

An online live chat is useful at varied times to answer specific new educator queries: technology, assessment, teaching etc.

An online toolbox/ teaching activity site is useful for new educators to use when they require the information.

Timely, focused Podcasts are useful to new educators to focus on specific aspects of teaching and learning.

Recommendations for the Victorian VET sector

- Increase the discussion around new educators in both Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training sectors. Actively schedule these discussions at different levels of organisations to include relevant Education Departments together with boards and operational areas within organisations.
- Establish a team of educational consultants who are available to the sector to support organisations specialising in new educator support systems: raising organisational awareness, connecting new educators to their communities and growing the teaching skills required of effective new practitioners.
- Provide organisations with strategic support in planning contextualised programs which will actively support new educators to increase their skills, improve the educational experience of students and ensure new educators remain in organisations. Include in the programs ongoing, positive and useful communication to new educators.
- Empower organisations to provide ongoing Professional Learning for new educators which recognises the sequential and prioritised needs of new educators, particularly relating to the art of teaching.
- Increase the number of supportive cross organisational communities for new teachers such as the VET Development Centre, New Teacher Fellowship. Such opportunities build not only teaching skills but cross sector relationships which support sustainable development for new educators.
- Encourage large organisations to develop a Community of New Educators to focus on connectivity and learning the art of teaching to ensure the numerous gains can be experienced within a broad range of organisations.
- Establish a state-wide, Community for new educators (CONE) which could be both face to face and online to provide connectivity and share innovative teaching practice /share issues particular to new educators.
- In considering or making judgements around the effectiveness of new educators employ a transparent, multi-source approach to gain authentic or useful information. Evaluating practice needs to be carefully considered, involve the voice of the new educator, be multi sourced and focus on reflection and continuous improvement rather than performance appraisal.
- Improve the onboarding processes associated with employing new educators: provide a clear roadmap of the process component and requirement in an overview and allocate personnel to guide the process.

Overview of Fellowship International connections

Date and time	Country and location	Organisation	Type of activity and purpose
Monday 28.11.2022 3:00 pm	New York, USA	<p>Aida Nevarez-La Torre Associate Professor Curriculum and Teaching</p> <p>Fordham University Graduate School of Education Division of Curriculum and Teaching 113 West 60th Street New York City, New York 10023 Room 1102-A, Phone: 212-636-6475 Email: nevarezlator@fordham.edu</p>	Meeting – Interview to share practice
Tuesday 29.11.2022 10.30 am and 12 noon	New York, USA	<p>Makeda Lewis Program Manager - Systems Engagement Strategy Team</p> <p>Human Capital Partnerships - Office of Teacher Recruitment and Quality I DHC 65 Court St in downtown Brooklyn NYC Department of Education Mlewis52@schools.nyc.gov</p> <p>Howard Fineman Senior Director, In-service Teacher Development</p> <p>Office of Teacher Development Division of Teaching and Learning, NYC Department of Education 131 Livingston St. Brooklyn, (718) 935-3139 hfineman3@schools.nyc.gov</p>	<p>Meeting- have already met on Zoom for one hour session – relationship has been initiated. E mail communication has been ongoing.</p> <p>Meeting – Interview to share practice</p> <p>Meeting- have already me on Zoom for one hour session- relationship has been initiated.</p> <p>E mail communication has been ongoing.</p> <p>Meeting – Interview to share practice</p>

Wednesday 7.12.2022 11 am	Boston ,USA	<p>Stacy Grooters Interim director -Center for Teaching Excellence</p> <p>Boston College (Jesuit) O'Neill library, Suite 140 Commonwealth Ave, Chestnut Hill, MA 02467, United States</p>	<p>Meeting – Interview to share practice</p> <p>Sent focus questions and introductory PowerPoint previous to meeting</p>
Friday 16.12.2022 2.30 pm	Calgary Alberta, Canada	<p>Kim Grant Kimberley A. Grant, PhD Educational Development Consultant</p> <p>Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning University of Calgary 434 Collegiate Blvd NW, Calgary AB T2N 1N4 T: 403.220.6481 grantka@ucalgary.ca</p> <p>Teaching and learning Centre University of Calgary</p>	<p>Virtual introductions through Norm Vaughan</p> <p>Meeting – Interview to share practice</p> <p>Sent focus questions and introductory PowerPoint previous to meeting</p>
Monday 19.12.2022 8 am	Calgary Alberta, Canada	<p>James Beres James Beres BA, B.Ed., M.Ed. Educational Developer</p> <p>Centre for Academic Development and Innovation (CADI) Southern Alberta Institute of Technology Senator Burns, NN504 1301 16 Ave. NW, Calgary, AB T2M 0L4 james.beres@sait.ca centre.adi@sait.ca,</p>	<p>Observation of New teachers program, Teaching Excellence Foundation, for new educators at SAIT</p> <p>Meeting – Interview to share practice</p> <p>Sent focus questions and introductory PowerPoint previous to meeting</p> <p>Meeting to investigate the experiences of an educator working with new teachers/ instructors in a large organisation.</p>

Collegial relationships and future sharing

- Kim Grant, University of Calgary, has asked me to speak to their Community of Practice around supporting new educators. Kim has accepted an offer to be a visiting ISSI Fellow in 2023. Kim and Kay are planning a professional learning session together.
- Stacy Grooters, Boston College, has expressed an interest in an Educator Capability Framework to be shared and discussed.
- Howard Fineman, New York Department of Education, has expressed an interest in maintaining contact and further sharing our findings and programs.
- Makeda Lewis, NY Education Department, has indicated a willingness to share the Roadmap for onboarding new educators.
- James Beres and Matt Karns from Southern Alberta Institute of Technology have expressed an interest in maintaining contact, especially in regard to developing the capability of new educators through a Capability Framework.

Considerations and Next steps

- Organisations have a broad focus – sometimes there is a lack of skilled personnel and allocated resources to work with new educators. Many organisations do not have personnel with developed background in effective teaching and learning approaches available to be shared with new educators.
- Some leaders within the sector have a notion that new teachers are expendable.
- TAE educators do not always possess the skills to embed teaching methodology into the delivery of the program and miss the opportunity to model effective teaching activities/ strategies within the initial entry level qualification.
- Some organisations hope that the entry point TAE qualification provides an adequate entry point, and the new educators will arrive with an array of teaching activities to implement with students at their disposal.
- Mentors need some guidance and recognition of their roles. Mentoring, if entirely informal, is not organisationally focussed or sustainable.
- Confidentiality around coaching new educators is important – it is important that it is not utilised as a method for performance appraisal.
- Human Resource teams are not always able to identify brand new educators (0-2 years) or distinguish them from experienced educators new to the organisation.

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Next steps for the Fellowship implementation:

- Implement the VET Development Centre Program for new educators for 2023.
- Share findings with the VDC audience at an Illuminate forum, or similar, as a result of the Fellowship
- Continue to communicate with connections from the TAFE Directors conference 2022.
- Reach out to the Office of TAFE Coordination and Delivery to share research findings and possible shared Initiatives
- Send this report to all TAFE CEOs across Australia – offering specialised support for implementation to best connect and empower new educators.
- Mentor leaders at Holmesglen as they implement a contextualised Community of new Educators (CONE)
- Continue to have collegiate discussion with organisations who are considering how best to support new educators.
- Follow up with VELG after having an article published in 2022 around the support of new educators: Professional Learning session/ possible Conference presentation in 2023..

- Continue to inform the TAFE Director's sub-Committee: Workforce Attraction and Retention
- Work collegially with Dr Kim Grant from the University of Calgary in an ISSI partnership, to share innovative practice with Australian educators.
- Discuss with TAFE Queensland a contextualised approach to support new educators across Queensland
- Continue to post on LinkedIn around strategies to support new educators/ leaders supporting new educators.

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Considerations for the Department of Education and Victorian Skills Authority

- Continue to discuss with the Department of Education optimum approaches to support new Educators entering the VET sector.
- Discuss with the Department of Education ways to embed teaching skills into the TAE entry qualification delivery.

Future optimism beyond the Fellowship

- Working as an educational consultant to support organisations to empower new educators.
- Future dissemination opportunities about the Fellowship research. Explain and expand upon the written report and the ways it could be utilised to support the sector.
- Partner with organisations to support and empower new educators.

Impacts of the Fellowship

Personally

The Fellowship afforded me the opportunity to travel after more than two years of working in isolation. It provided something to plan and anticipate: it provided an opportunity to reconnect with friends and other educators in Calgary. It provided an amazing opportunity to reconnect internationally and share the experience with my husband.

In addition, the Fellowship provided an opportunity to increase personal confidence around both my experience and achievements. The opportunities to share my research and findings have increased sector confidence in my ability and conversely this has alerted me to the very real value I can add to the sector as an expert in the field of new educators.

Professionally

The Fellowship experience offered the author a formal avenue to extend current practice and consolidate the work of many years. It offered an opportunity to renew professional enthusiasm for empowering new educators and give credence to work undertaken to improve the sector.

The Fellowship also provided a great opportunity to share my expertise via the VET Development Centre and other organisations. It afforded the opportunity for a broad array of organisations to witness the work I have been undertaking through forums such as Illuminate and numerous conferences such as TAFE Directors Australia. In short it offered a new purpose and focus: an amazing opportunity for which I am extremely grateful.

Organisationally

The Fellowship experience offered Melbourne Polytechnic an opportunity to share innovative and leading practice and make strategic and purposeful connections with other organisations across the country. It reconfirmed the ground-breaking work I have been developing with new educators.

Increased leader recognition from the CEO to Executive Director has also been a recent outcome. The CEO request to present at TAFE Director's Australia in November 2022 reinforces this recognition.

In addition, we have been able to document program values and attributes and secure COS marketing material to promote the program and create brand recognition.

The program has been further recognised by the extension of the new educator mentoring program. Where mentors have not been allocated to new educators within teaching teams, a central mentor team will now take on this role as an interim measure until departmental mentors have been established.

Communications with People and Culture have also implemented a direct report of educators employed within the organisation on a monthly basis; this further ensures that all new educators are connected with the author and invited to enter the COS program.

Community of Support for new educators is inspiring other organisations to improve the way in which they connect and support new educators with effective student-centred teaching and learning.

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Broader VET Sector

There have been numerous consultations and discussions focusing on improved support of new educators with organisations in the VET sector across the country.

Presentation to Executives from the Department of Education to clarify issues that impede the effectiveness of new educators and strategies to empower and connect these educators within organisations.

Presentation to ISSI Fellows during monthly meetings have also been a venue to further disseminate ideas and current developments. A number of Fellows have spoken to their current organisations about the need to support new educators.

A sequence of presentations at the VDC Illuminate Forums have further shared the innovative, new educator practice with educator and leaders across the country. Such presentations highlighted the challenges new educators face, the program structure, leadership considerations, coaching, mentoring and Human Resources and funding considerations.

The Fellowship offered the VET Development Centre the opportunity to partner with the author to curate a program for new educators across Victoria to further develop the art of teaching and make connections between group members.

The Fellowship offered the VET and HE sector an opportunity to share best practice in empowering new educators and improve current organisational practices. It offered real direction in terms of sustained employment and leadership practice while also providing a nuanced model to contextualise teaching activities and approaches, within a safe, supported and connected community environment where important relationships are established.

Summary of impact: implementation of the Fellowship findings

The Fellow aims to share and showcase with the sector the Community of New Educators. (CONE)

Kay plans to also continue professional writing to inform the sector around nuanced approaches to support new educators.

In addition, the VDC New Teacher Community of Practice is planned and currently being developed to continue in 2023. This program will include a larger number of new educators and increase in diversity in 2023 to include Language Literacy and Numeracy and working with students with a diverse range of educational needs.

The Fellow will continue to present support structures for new educators to the Workforce development Sub Committee (and extended audience) of TAFE Directors Australia.

The Fellow will also continue to mentor organisational leaders to implement structures to support new educators.

Kay will continue to communicate with the Department of Education to consider the optimum approach to support Industry experts entering the TAE qualification to transition from industry to teaching positions.

Sector Engagement (Dissemination)

The following record indicates the varied ways that this Fellowship has improved the Victorian/ Australian Education and Training sector.

- 13.7.21 New teachers at Melbourne Polytechnic - presentation to Professional Teaching Practice (40 minutes)
- 14.10.21 Empowering New Teachers A Community of Support at Melbourne Polytechnic 2021 Presentation to Business, Advanced Manufacturing and Logistics (30 minutes)
- 30.10.2020 Melbourne Polytechnic Annual Conference: One Great Day: New teacher insights - Hosted panel of new teachers to talk about their experiences and answer questions (30 mins)
- 2.9.2021 Empowering New Teachers: Community of Support VET Development Centre 2021, 350+ people in the session (90 minutes)
- 23.9.2021 Empowering New Teachers A Community of Support Illuminate Forum. VET Development Centre (60 minutes)
- 7.10.2021 Empowering New Teachers A Community of Support Canberra Institute of Technology 2021 (60 minutes)
- 15.10.2021 Empowering New Teachers: Support for new educators at Holmesglen 2021 (Followed by another meeting with 2 leaders) (60 minutes)
- 18.10.2021 Keynote VDC presentation annual Conference :10 Ways to Empower New Teachers for Success A Pathway for Organisational Improvement
- Explore evidence-based approaches to supporting new teachers in varied organisations including 10 areas that organisations can implement for substantial improvement in the experience and educational outcomes of new teachers and subsequently their students and 10 approaches that will build organisational connectivity and productivity (45 minutes)
- 10.12.21 Annual Melbourne Polytechnic Conference – chairing a panel of new teachers discussing their experiences in the sector (40 minutes)
- 6.10.21 10.11.21 8.12.21 Setting up a mentoring program for the VET Development Centre – Family Violence program (4 hours presenting)
- 25.3.22 Discussion with Michele Tocci: Chisholm Institute – supporting new teachers (30 minutes)
- 7.4.22 Empowering beginning teachers at MP: A Community of Support update Professional Learning Professional Teaching Practice team (45 minutes)
- 22 x 90 minute Professional development sessions for new teachers at Melbourne Polytechnic – investigating teaching activities/discussion of achievement/ Problem solving

- 200+ 30-minute Individual Coaching sessions working with new teachers
- 29.6.2022 30-minute discussion with Dr Neil Morris around new educators in the United Kingdom after attending his session: Technology Innovation and Change
- 20.7.22, 10.8.22, 7.9.22, 19.10.22 4 full Days designing and implementing: Teaching Fellowship for new educators across Victoria – covered in the program 33 teaching activities for use with their students- the VET Development Centre
- 27.7.22 Illuminate session Vet Development Centre: Empowering educators new and experienced (90 minutes)
- 24.8.22 Meeting with Managers, Directors, Executives from Department of Education to discuss the support of new educators/ the ways in which Community of Support has empowered Melbourne Polytechnic staff members beyond new educators.
- 15.9.2022 Melbourne Polytechnic Annual Conference: Hosted a panel of new educators and mentors to discuss the COS program and the challenges facing new educators and mentors
- 20.10.22 Presentation to Professional Teaching Practice at Melbourne Polytechnic : Sharing research ideas: possibilities and learning (30 minutes)
- 20.10.22 Presentation to ISSI Fellows explaining Fellowship focus and places to be visited in the USA and Canada (10 minutes)
- 16.11.2022 Presentation to TAFE directors Australia, Adelaide. Envisaging a sector that empowers new educators: challenge accepted! (20 minutes)
- 7.2.2023 Presentation to The Workforce development Sub Committee of TAFE Directors Australia (30 minutes)

Conclusion

This Fellowship can improve the VET and HE sectors. It offers well researched evidence as to processes and innovative practice best placed to support new educators.

The ongoing sector wide discussion which has now begun is imperative: involving leaders and educators in such a dialogue will have positive implications for learners, teaching teams and organisations.

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The Fellowship findings reinforce the importance of new educator connectivity. Intentional connections to place, people and organisation empower new educators. It also reinforces the significance of specific professional learning, offered in a collegial environment together with the support of mentors, coaches and positive experienced educators. In addition, it has been found that the positive evaluation of new educators is best undertaken using multi-sourced information which includes new teacher reflection to result in continuous and supported improvement.

In closing there is effort to be undertaken, working collegiately with Human Resource teams to improve onboarding experiences as is the gathering of new teacher voices/ideas to articulate real issues with possible solutions.

This work has begun but it is now up to the sector to improve our practice to ensure that new educators are supported, valued and as a consequence work effectively in our organisations.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Acronyms/ Definitions

Andragogy	The science of art of teaching adults/ the study of different teaching methods
BOL	Blended and online
Coach	An experienced educator working one-to-one with a new educator,' to model and observe classroom practice and to support reflection and professional conversation.' AITSL
CONE	Community of New Educators: a program for new educators in their first 3 years of teaching
COS	Community of Support - a program to support new educators
ISSI	International Specialised Skills Institute
Faculty	Teaching staff
HE	Higher Education
Libertarian voice	Research indicates that students who believe they have a voice (libertarian voice) ... are seven times more likely to be academically motivated than students who do not believe they have a voice. (Quaglia Institute for School Voice and Aspirations, 2016)
Mentor	A trusted and experienced educator who supports new educators to make connections and understand the work environment within a learning and teaching environment
Pedagogy	The science of art of teaching children/ the study of different teaching methods
Provost	Chief Academic Officer
SGID	Small Group Instructional Diagnosis
TAE	Training and Assessment Training Package
TAE4016/22	The entry point Training and Assessment qualification within the TAE Training package. The suffix 16 indicates the 2016 version of the qualification and the suffix 22 indicates the 2022 version of the qualification.

- UDL** Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a set of principles for curriculum development that give all individuals equal opportunities to learn. This approach is underpinned by research in the field of neuroscience and is designed to improve the learning experience and outcomes for all students, including students with disabilities, students from diverse cultural and socio-economic backgrounds, mature students and international students. UNSW Sydney
- VET** Vocational Education and Training
- VDC** VET Development Centre

Appendix 2: Biography and Qualifications

Developing the capability of new educators has been Kay Schlesinger's passion and central to her professional work for the past 30 years. Kay has worked in numerous educational sectors, including a position as a Deputy Principal where she took responsibility for the professional development of educators.

In the last 20 years Kay has worked in VET and Higher Education. Kay has received awards for Teaching and Adult learning in the VET sector and instigated a Community of Practice at Box Hill Institute around interactive teaching strategies. She has continually demonstrated innovative approaches to teaching a diverse range of students: in 2018 Kay presented at the AVETRA conference around Interactive Teaching and Learning Strategies.

In 2020 Kay was awarded an International Specialised Skills Institute Fellowship by the Department of Education for her innovative work with new teachers at Melbourne Polytechnic. She has presented to various forums including TAFE Directors Australia and the Department of Education.

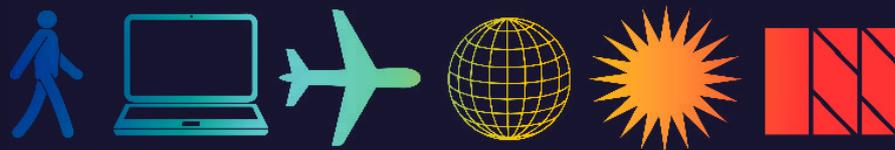
Kay has also designed programs around Industry mentoring and was one of the keynote speakers at the 2021 VDC Annual Conference where she addressed: 10 Ways to Empower New Teachers for Success. A pathway for organisational success.

She has been published in VELG Editorial VET eZine in November 2022: New educators: present, productive, and positive in our organisations. Kay has also been invited to speak at the VELG annual conference in 2023 .

Kay wrote and implemented an innovative teaching program for new educators across Victoria which was presented at the VET Development Centre in 2022/3. She has mentored and advised varied organisations around Australia around optimum ways to empower new educators.

Kay will work as an educational consultant in 2023 to support organisations as they empower new educators. She will also offer to the sector a range of professional learning opportunities.

- Master of Education, Edith Cowan University
- Bachelor of Education, Deakin University
- Diploma of Teaching, Australian Catholic University
- TAE50116 Diploma of VET Box Hill Institute
- TAE50216 Diploma of Training Design and Development, Melbourne Polytechnic
- TAE40116 Certificate IV TAE, Box Hill Institute



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