

Don Perlgut
Community Colleges Australia

VERTO Conference
Blue Mountains

28 April 2022



Great to see you today in the Blue Mountains



What We Will Cover Today



1. Community Colleges Australia – What do we do and how we do it
2. The Federal Election – What CCA wants
3. Australian adult and community education (ACE) – history, scope, size and impact
4. New South Wales ACE
5. What does NSW ACE do best?
6. NSW Department of Education Issues
7. Data Outcomes

What CCA Does



CCA is the peak national body that represents community-owned, not-for-profit education and training providers.

Our vision is for dynamic and vibrant communities, informed and empowered through learning. To make our vision a reality, we work to empower Australia's community education sector by increasing the awareness of the sector and its place in the economic and social fabric of our nation.

CCA advocates at all levels of government on the value of the community education sector, and for our members' activities and programs.

CCA Activities



COMMUNITY EDUCATION
**STUDENT
OF THE YEAR**



CCA Annual Conference
Rebuilding Community
SYDNEY 2022



Engaging Indigenous
Communities



Australian Adult and Community Education



The History: NFP community-based learning links directly to 1913 ([WEA](#)) and even 1833 ([SMSA](#)).

The Branding: Often confused with TAFE and private for-profit providers.

The Business: Public perception of non-accredited adult education.

The Numbers: 400+ ACE training providers (RTOs), mostly located in Victoria & NSW; >2000 non-RTO ACE providers deliver pre-accredited, pre-vocational and personal interest learning.

Students: Of the 3.9 million VET students in 2020, **386,400 (9.8%)** studied with a not-for-profit ACE provider (decrease of 21% - 102,700 – on 2019, due to COVID-19 impact).

Other VET sectors: **TAFE** (20.1%, 792,700 students); **private** for-profit providers (71.9%, 2.8 million); **universities** (1.8%, 75,100); **schools** (2.8%, 111,000 students); & **enterprise** providers (2.4%, 95,600 students).

Best Performance of any VET sector at lifting unemployed people into employment: **12%** of NSW community education graduates moved from unemployment to employment in 2020.

Aged Care: Very important role in the state's [aged care training and workforce](#), with 23% of Certificate III Individual support (Ageing) government-funded students in NSW (19% in VIC).

The Federal Election: What CCA Wants

Ensure that:

1. the next Government of Australia puts in place policies and programs that support the purpose, activities and sustainability of the ACE sector; and
2. CCA has as many friends in parliament, across all political parties and independents, with a special focus on where our members operate.



Commitments We Seek from the Next Government

- **National learner re-engagement and outreach strategy** that focusses on the [disadvantaged and vulnerable learners](#) who have withdrawn from accredited VET because of COVID-19 concerns about participating in face-to-face training.
- **A national-state-territory policy statement** on [the value and place of ACE](#) and its place in Australian education and training, which updates the 2008 Ministerial statement.
- **An infrastructure funding program** that enables ACE providers to modernise both physical facilities and improve digital connectivity, based on a model established in 2009 by the Commonwealth Government with \$100 million “[Investing in Community Education and Training program](#)”. Investing in ACE providers [makes economic sense](#).
- **Development a comprehensive national VET policy**, in conjunction with the states and territories, including [adult literacy and numeracy](#), part of which includes a **regional and rural VET policy**.
- **Proper VET funding:** Australian VET continues to be the poor cousin (“forgotten middle child”) of Australian education: [going backwards](#) for many years.
- **Ensure that Commonwealth VET initiatives** such as the Foundation Skills for Your Future and the [VET Student Loans program](#) are accessible, applicable and relevant to community education providers.

What CCA Seeks from Government – part 2



Reversal of national and state policies that have “marketised” VET

Also known as “user choice” – a term that does not describe the full impact of how profound the policy has been. With 72% of all VET students, for-profit providers have effectively privatised Australian training, at the loss of TAFE & the NFP ACE sector.

[Research shows](#) that disadvantaged and outer regional students have missed out because of this policy.

Contrast this to two educational sectors in Australia – schools and universities – where for-profit education remains small in universities (@5%) and almost non-existent in schools.

CCA opposes further privatisation and actively campaigns to roll back existing VET marketisation.

Innovation in Community Education Providers

- Community support because of NFP status and mission to do good: ***“Our mission is to positively transform the lives of individuals, families and communities.”*** ([VERTO](#))
- Build on local and regional strengths **to create pathways**
- Develop and sustain partnerships between government, not-for-profit community and businesses
- Collaborate with other ACE providers, leveraging collective strengths
- Quality lateral “just in time” solutions adapt as needs change
- Funding from non-local sources, leveraging to assist local community and economic development
- Culture of entrepreneurship and “can do”



Why do ACE providers exert so much strategic influence?

1. Flexible, agile and quick, employing a wide range of tools and freedom to take risks
2. Not bound by government structures like TAFEs
3. Complement state & national programs to develop job skills, encourage economic development & enable citizen participation
4. Collaborations with government, NFPs & businesses
5. Not beholden to private shareholders to make profit like for-profit providers
7. Invest in local communities, building human, social & economic capital
8. Small class sizes, personal support, learner-centred

Special Assistance Secondary Schools



The NSW ACE sector's “ace” card is our ability to reach, engage and deliver outcomes for Australia's most vulnerable and disadvantaged through the NSW ACE Program, Smart & Skilled Program and other training activities.



64.2% most disadvantaged students – bottom two SEIFA quintiles, compared to 46.2% TAFE & government providers, 52.3% private for-profits and 50.9% other VET providers



ACE Highest percentage of VET students with disabilities

16.7% students with a disability, compared to 9.6% of TAFE & government providers, 7.2.% of private for-profits, and 6.1% of other VET providers



ACE Older Learners

35.5% older (age 45+) students, compared to 20.1% TAFE & government providers, 25.7% private for-profits and 12.1% other VET providers



ACE Indigenous Students

11.5% of ACE students are Indigenous, compared to 7.9% of TAFE & government providers, 7.5% of private for-profit providers and 7.0% other VET providers.



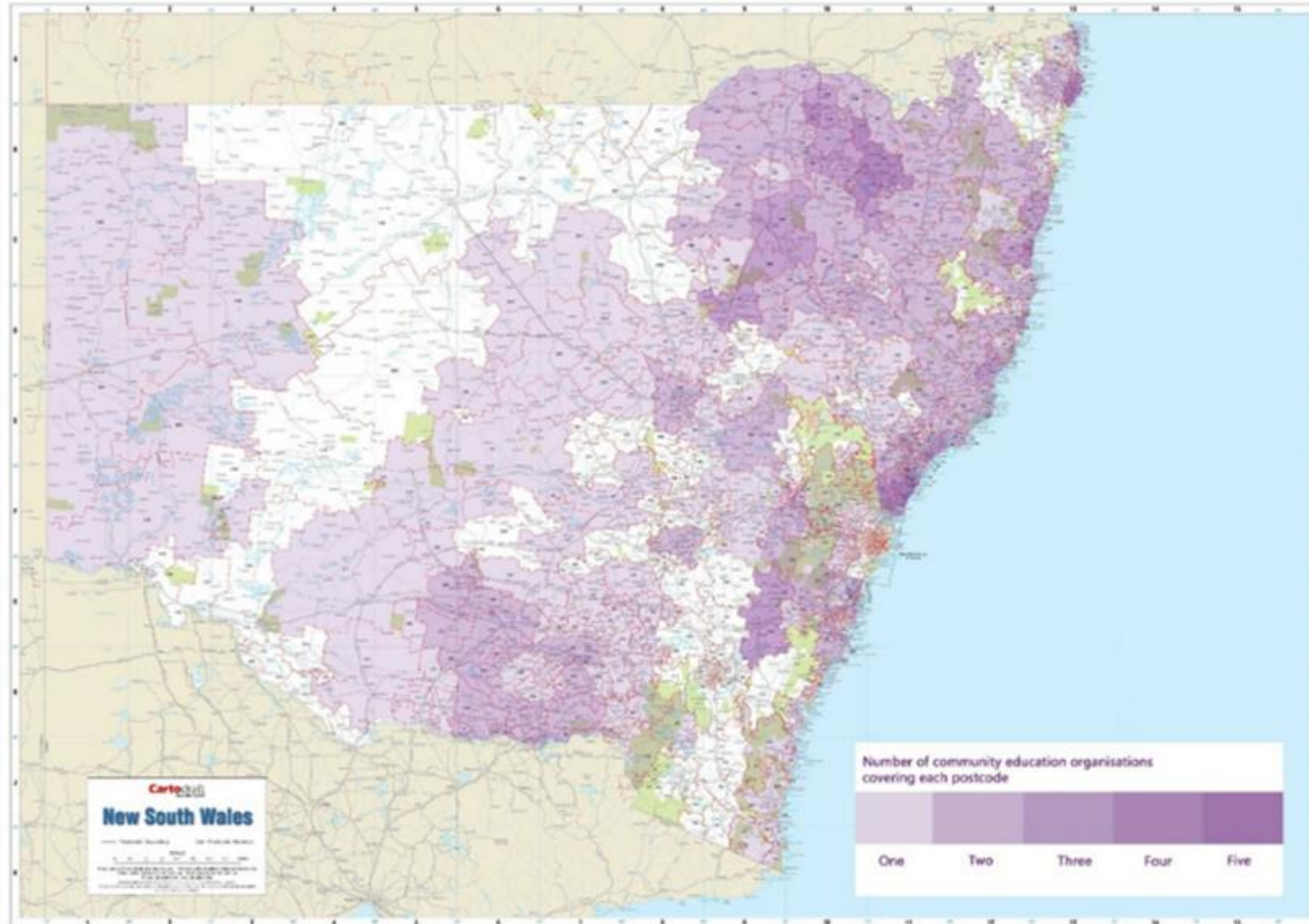
Photo: Graduating Indigenous land management trainees at Port Macquarie, courtesy of Mid North Coast Community College and Birpai Aboriginal Land Council, Port Macquarie.

ACE Rural and Regional Focus

62.1% regional & rural students,
compared to 31.0% of TAFE &
government providers, 30.7% private
for-profits, and 36.2% other VET
providers



NSW Regional ACE Coverage



NSW ACE Engages Women

61.2% NSW ACE provider government-funded VET students were female, compared to 57.9% of TAFE, 51.8% of private for-profit providers, and 51.4% of other providers.



- Funding for the ACE Program (previously known as the “ACE CSO” program) remains static at approximately \$25 million/year.
- 2021/22 received CPI increases to the contract dollar amounts, future increases uncertain.
- Despite recommendation of CSO Review, still one year contracts; three year contracting high on CCA’s (and members’) priorities.
- Following Treasury’s lead, all Departments are moving to outcomes-based reporting and funding. This has started in Smart & Skilled and within ACE contracts, but COVID impacts have stopped many of these efforts within ACE.
- The Department highly respectful of the impacts of COVID and natural disasters, including the slow training uptake of our more vulnerable cohorts, particularly in metro areas. On top of the 35% waiver and infrastructure allowances, working with individual ACE colleges.
- The Department is preparing new contracts for 2022/23; we expect further emphasis on outcomes. These are to be issued to providers in late May/early June.

Outcomes Measurement -1

Five CCA member CEOs have been exploring outcomes measurement and methodologies to ensure that the sector is guiding the decision making in government, rather than the other way round.

Measuring the impact of programs and evaluations is expensive and not funded. ACE providers want to be able to better demonstrate the value of what they do.

CCA has been working with **Latitude Network**, a social measurement and impact consultancy firm, and five ACE providers to develop common metrics and to implement a system where this data can be collected, collated and analysed.

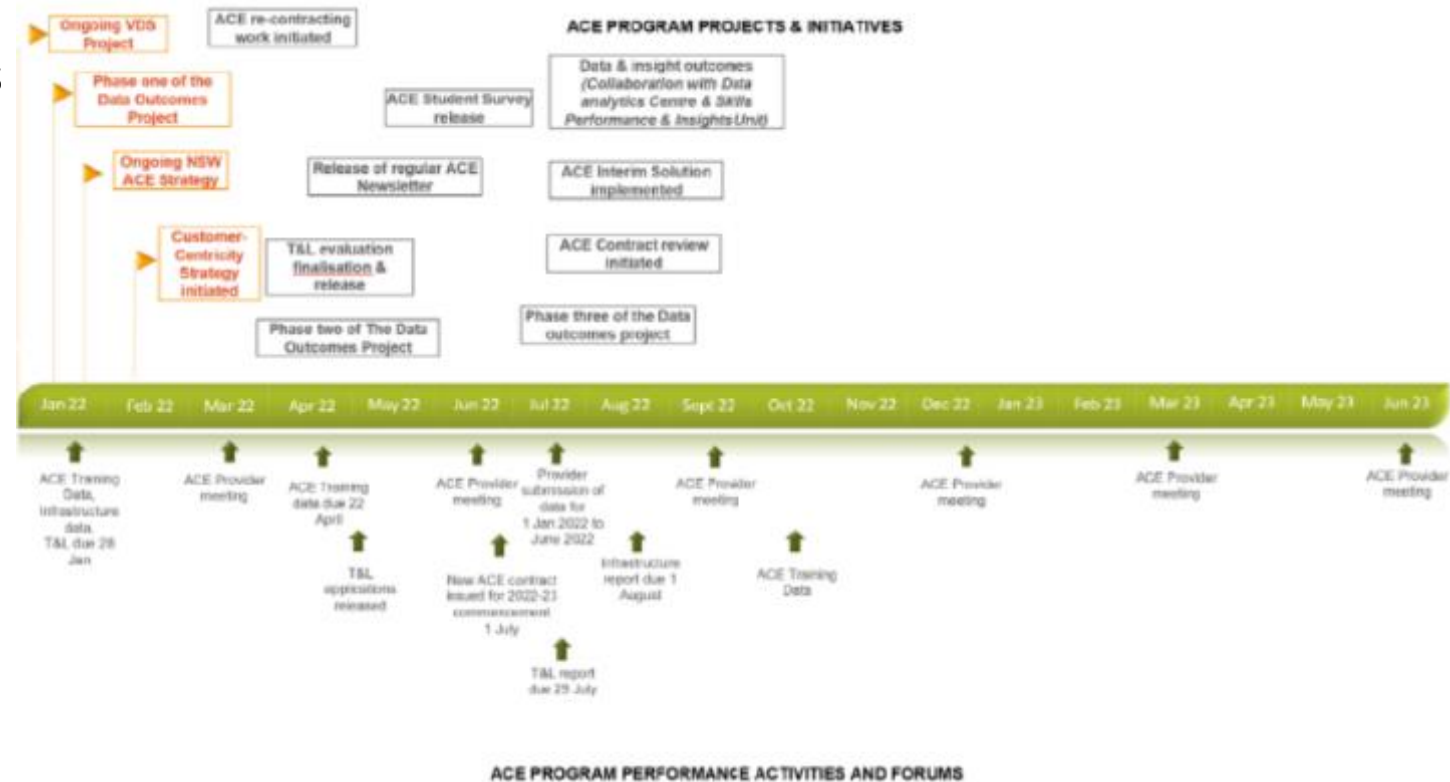
- **Phase 1** - working together to develop a common standard of metrics that can be collected and shared to provide insights across participating colleges. (Almost complete.)
- **Phase 2** – to take those standards and **implement them in the existing data collection systems** of each organisation and start collecting common data. It will also develop the tools to collate and manage the collective data and report back on results through interactive dashboards.

L A T I T U D E

NSW Department of Education future planning

- Focus on driving a customer-centric culture
- Establishment of NSW ACE Strategy (on hold)
- Increased communication, meetings and forums
- Establish a newsletter specific to ACE sector
- Service satisfaction survey to all approved ACE providers
- Teaching and Leadership evaluation review
- ACE Provider Contract Terms & Conditions review

These will inform how Department “establishes strong collaboration and customer-centric principles in the way we work with the sector and how we implement the necessary improvement initiatives to further enhance delivery to all students across NSW.”



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