

Australia's biannual VET eZine

MAY 2022

Volume 18 | Free



STAYING CONNECTED IN VET

**Towards a model for
self-assurance**

**Australian Skills
Classification expanded**

**Supporting Students with
Disability in VET**

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May 2022 Volume 18



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WELCOME

LETTER FROM THE CEO

Michelle Weaver

Welcome to the 18th edition of the ***Staying Connected in VET eZine***. I would like to say a huge thank you to all article contributors and advertisers for their input to this publication. Velg Training prides itself on being a conduit of information and knowledge-sharing, so we hope that this eZine fulfils its purpose to ***Educate, Inspire and Empower***.

2022 has brought a range of different experiences for many of us, particularly along the eastern coast of Australia, where those in flood-affected areas are still rebuilding their lives and businesses. Nationwide we are proactively pushing towards a new kind of normal, living as best we can with COVID-19 as international and interstate borders open, and booster vaccines continue to roll out. While many have suffered severe consequences: financially and emotionally, what is truly inspiring is that we've also become more adaptable and connected in so many ways.

It has been heartening to see the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) supporting RTOs to manage associated risks through the provision of information and assistance for those facing the challenges of natural disasters and the pandemic.

Here at Velg Training HQ, I have been incredibly fortunate to have such a passionate, resilient and flexible team that has started the year in full swing, despite the challenges faced this year.

We have spent a lot of time collating feedback and listening to suggestions from the VET sector. These inputs have genuinely shaped the "what, when and how" of our professional development offerings in 2022.

Our webinar program is bustling with an agile and responsive selection of professional development topics available, which has seen more than 3700 attendees. We are excited to have released our new **Master Mentoring** programs to assist in a planned but flexible approach to professional development through their 8-part series for administration compliance and trainers and assessors.

This May, we had the honour of facilitating our fifth annual VET CEO Conference for an intimate online gathering of senior leaders from RTOs. The week-long event aimed to help delegates take the **next step** feeling re-invigorated and empowered to move with positivity toward a flourishing future. Sessions were delivered by a fantastic lineup of presenters and focussed on managing time, staff and business building. With significant changes to the VET sector on the horizon, we were proud to host this opportunity for attendees to take the time to stop, review existing practices, and consider potential new approaches to managing their RTO.

Our second signature event, designed for anyone involved in VET programs in schools, the [QLD Schools VET Conference](#), is set to take place on August 5. Based on our liaison with key stakeholders, it has been purpose-built to ensure that the topics offered are meaningful and resonate. The live, online, multi-session format will allow attendees to select from three concurrent sessions that sit under the themes of student-centred, quality, effective practice and innovation. All those who register receive access to a bonus [10 hours of recorded PD](#) to access at a time that suits them.

We've been extremely busy ensuring that the [2022 National VET Conference](#) is locked and loaded and we are thrilled to be back at the beautiful Gold Coast again. We are eager to see delegates from around the country face to face in November, at one of the most favoured locations. This year we are offering three ticket types to cater for preference and circumstance: **face to face**, **virtual attendance** (sessions will be filmed and streamed live online) and **recordings only** (all recordings from sessions available post event to view for 30 days).

The carefully selected #2022NVC [program](#) will showcase a range of sought-after topics that have been developed to help VET practitioners **build their roadmap** regardless of the role they hold in their RTO. We are dedicated to truly enabling connection and collaboration so we have included the ever-popular **freestyle facilitation** electives on both days. These less structured sessions will provide a dedicated opportunity for delegates to network with others, share hints and tips and ask questions of the facilitators.

Many will be delighted to hear that our beloved Welcome Function will be back with a vengeance in 2022. We can't wait to host this incredibly fun celebration that will be sure to entertain and of course, include a range of games and prize giveaways. We hope to see you there.

With an ever-growing member base of more than 24,000 members and 30,000+ followers, we hope that we are hitting the mark when it comes to meeting the VET sector's needs. Velg Training looks forward to continuing to make life easier for the VET community by providing knowledge, professional development, products and services to support you.

On that note, I do hope you enjoy this edition of the eZine and wish each of you the very best for a year that is sure to be one of continued recovery, adaptation and evolution. **Enjoy!**



Michelle Weaver
CEO and Founder of Velg Training



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"2022 has brought a range of different experiences...
while many have suffered severe consequences: financially and emotionally,
what is truly inspiring is that we've also become more
adaptable and connected"



TOWARDS A MODEL FOR SELF-ASSURANCE

Saxon Rice, Chief Executive Officer, ASQA

I am pleased to provide an update on work progressing to [co-design a model for self-assurance](#) with and for providers. By working together, we aim to foster a culture of self-assurance and continuous improvement within the vocational education and training (VET) sector, in line with the recommendations of the [Rapid Review](#).

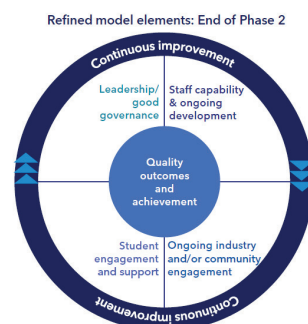
The development of the co-designed model is one of ASQA's key priorities to support the shift to self-assurance in 2021-22 and, once finalised, will provide a framework for the systems and practices providers can undertake to monitor quality and compliance and continuously improve their performance against the **Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015** (the Standards).

As part of consultations undertaken with the sector, we have found broad agreement with our working definition of self-assurance and continue to refine this based on feedback to support a shared understanding of self-assurance. We are currently testing the following definition of self-assurance with the sector:

Self-assurance refers to how providers manage their operations to ensure a focus on quality, continuous improvement and ongoing compliance with the Standards. It involves providers having systems in place to critically examine their performance against the Standards and training outcomes, on an ongoing basis, to meet obligations and identify ways to continuously improve.

Throughout the co-design process, we have worked with stakeholders to progressively refine a set of principles to guide the development of the self-assurance model.

Providers and stakeholders agree that the model should not be prescriptive



or encourage providers to take a 'tick-the-box' approach, but rather should be flexible and fit-for-purpose for all providers, regardless of their size, type, operating context and self-assurance maturity – how one provider demonstrates effective self-assurance may look considerably different to another, and the model – and ASQA's regulatory approach – should allow for this.

It should be a tool to support providers to assure themselves that they are meeting their obligations under the Standards without being an additional business process for providers or duplicating existing regulatory requirements.

It should also recognise and work in symphony with other regulatory requirements and approaches, including those of state and territory funding bodies seeking to similarly strengthen self-assurance as a tool for supporting providers to meet contractual arrangements, and support providers to streamline how they meet their various regulatory requirements.

Providers called for support to fully integrate self-assurance into their business. And, as a final principle, providers agreed that a model for self-assurance should be backed by effective support and guidance by ASQA.

In April, we published a draft model of self-assurance, and are now undertaking further consultation to refine and further describe the model elements.

The principles agreed to in the latest phase of the co-design process will continue to guide the development of the self-assurance model through the next phase of refinement with the sector.

We know that the transition of the VET sector to a culture of effective self-assurance will take time, and we have committed to a four-year journey to build capability, not only for providers, but also within our agency to shift its regulatory approach, over time, from input and compliance controls to a focus on self-assurance and excellence in training outcomes.

There will be further opportunities to provide input into this important work as we proceed through the next phase of the co-design process. If you have any comments or queries about the self-assurance model, please contact the project team at strategicroview@asqa.gov.au

Ty Emerson, ASQA Executive Director, will present "**ASQA Update: Findings Arising from the VET Delivered to Secondary School Students Scoping Study**", at the online [Queensland School VET Conference](#) on the 5th August 2022.

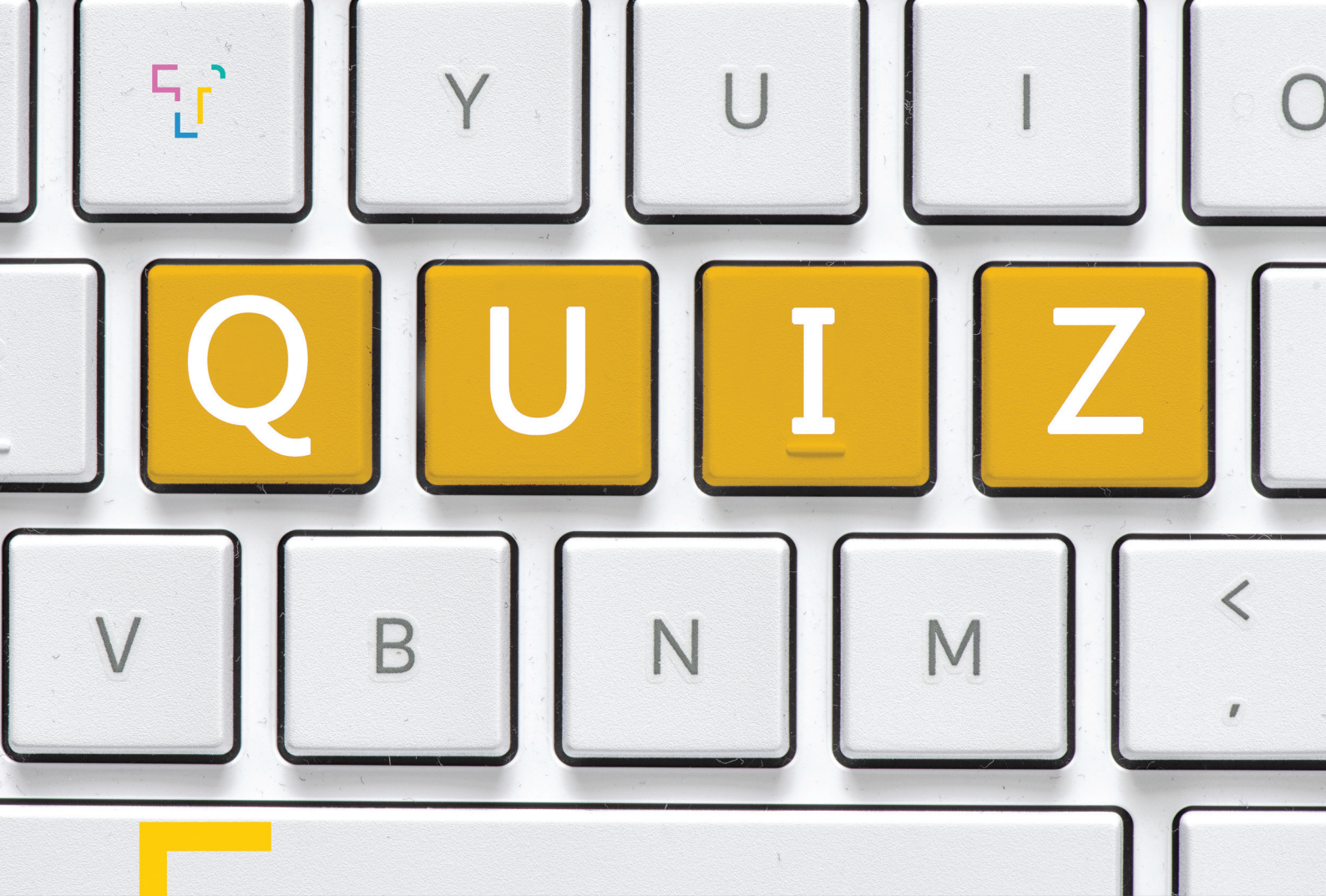
Saxon Rice, ASQA CEO, will present "**Updated from the Australian Skills Quality Authority**" at the [National VET Conference](#) at the Gold Coast on the 3rd November 2022.



Ms Saxon Rice has extensive experience across the VET and employment services sectors as well as the

public policy process. She has held a range of senior government, VET and management positions.

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Question Bank

John Smith, Assessor

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That's great, thank you.

Type your message...

January

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu
29	30	1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	03	31



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UNIQUE STUDENT IDENTIFIER (USI) – AN EDUCATION NUMBER WITH BENEFITS

Student Identifiers Registrar

Are you a Registered Training Organisation that supports students with language barriers to create their USI?

Did you know that the USI team can connect students with the [National Translating and Interpreting Service](#) (TIS), providing them with instant phone interpreting as well as pre-booked phone interpreting?

TIS National is available 24 hours a day, every day of the year for the cost of a local call for a person or organisation in Australia that needs an interpreter. Just ask your student to contact the USI team on 1300 857 536 and ask for the interpreting service. Alternatively, the student can call the TIS National number – 131 450 – and request them to contact the USI team to assist them with their enquiry.

Once a USI is created, it can unlock a student's training history, allow them to share their qualifications and help them on their education and work journey.

If you create a USI on behalf of your student they need to activate their USI – which only they can do - to access their account and get the full benefits?

Activating their USI account is quick and simple. When a USI is created on their behalf, the student will receive

“Encourage your students to **activate their USI account. Not only will students benefit, but so will you...”**

a link to their mobile or email address asking them to activate their USI account. The student then needs to set up their password and check questions ensuring the security of their USI account.

Having access to their USI account allows the student to:

- control their account details
- access their USI VET transcript, and
- give permission to their training organisation, employers and other third parties to view their VET transcript.

The VET transcript collates training outcomes in a single record and includes nationally recognised VET modules and qualifications completed since 1 January 2015. It's a great tool for students to have at their disposal, particularly when they are applying for a job.

Encourage your students to activate their USI account. Not only will students benefit, but so will you.

With their permission, you can view online and download a student's VET transcript and verify their history of nationally recognised training. It's easy to do and saves you time when the student is unsure of their previous training or can't find their original documentation.

To find out more about the USI, visit our website on www.usi.gov.au

The Student Identifiers Registrar is responsible for administering the USI initiative nationally and manages the USI Registry system which creates and stores USIs; and helps students and education or training providers access the USI Registry System to create, find, verify and update USIs securely.

EDUCATE

BUILDING DIGITAL LITERACY IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING...WHERE DO WE START?

Kerri Buttery, Founder, Digital Literacy Licence

The IMD World Digital Competitiveness Ranking, produced by the IMD World Competitiveness Center, measures the capacity and readiness of 63 economies to adopt and explore digital technologies as a key driver for economic transformation in business, government and wider society. Figures are released in September each year based on the performance from the previous year.

Before the pandemic began in early 2020, Australia was already facing a steady decline in our world-standing for digital literacy. Australia's [World Competitiveness Ranking](#) in 2015 was 9th. It slipped two years in a row in 2018 and 2019 to 13th and 15th, respectively.

COVID-19 then brought the onslaught of rapid migration to online platforms, which has significantly impacted our ranking: a further slide of five more places. With a current rank of 20th, our decline is accelerating, and we are getting left behind.

Digital literacy and digital skills are a huge focal point now as we move through the fourth industrial revolution (or Industry 4.0). A recent paper, [The Learning Country](#), identified that by 2034 technology will augment the jobs of 4.5 million Australian workers.

What does this mean for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)? When designing our training programs, we need to pay special attention to how we are increasing the digital literacy of our learners, working hand in hand with industry to determine what the workplace needs, not today but in the coming years. We need to explore the emerging technologies being used in industry and cultivate a passion in our

students for looking towards new ways of working.

We are navigating a digital world, from communication devices to transport, from retail to automated processing lines. The digital world is exponentially engulfing all aspects of our lives, whether we like it or not.

The next big question.....where do we start?

We start with upskilling our educators and our resource developers. Educational teams need to be digitally literate and digitally innovative - something that goes beyond knowing how to use a computer. Our educators need to be digitally literate before they can lead the next generation of learners into that digital space.

We do not yet have a digital skills framework **specifically for educators** in Australia.

However, we can look to Europe for inspiration with the [Digital Competence Framework for Educators](#) (DigCompEdu). This framework focuses on how digital technologies can enhance the process of teaching and learning and outlines 22 competencies organised into six (6) areas:

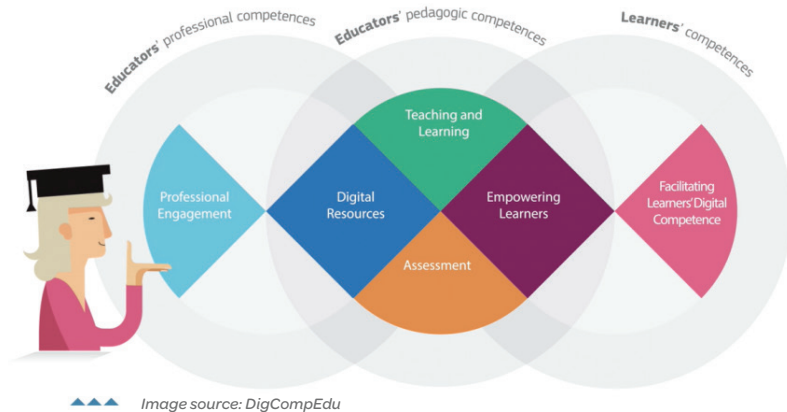


Image source: DigCompEdu

- Professional Engagement
- Digital Resources
- Teaching and Learning
- Empowering Learners
- Assessment
- Facilitating Learners' Digital Competence

For RTOs looking to increase the digital literacy of their educators, moving forwards with innovative training and assessment practices, undertaking a review of trainer and assessors' skills against the DigCompEdu framework is the perfect place to start!



Kerri Buttery is the founder of the **Digital Literacy Licence**, an innovative and engaging micro-credential

designed to increase digital capability for learners and educators, empowering them to navigate a digital world.



Let us help you



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INSPIRE



ENGAGING DISENGAGED STUDENTS

Sheridan Sugden, Founder & CEO, UBU Coaching

Students disengage from learning for many reasons; it may be their home life, bullying, learning difficulties, illness (physical or mental), anxiety, neglect, abuse, lack of confidence and more recently covid lockdowns. Whatever the cause teachers can be part of the solution. To re-engage your students, you must know them. This means shifting attitudes and being more mindful in both planning and offering flexibility with course delivery. Secondary students need reassurance, clarity and support in order to engage with learning.

It is important to remember that our students are adolescents whose brains are still developing, the frontal lobe is the last area of the brain to fully mature. This section of the brain includes the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for the skills we want to see in the classroom; allocating attention, organising plans and ideas, prioritising, forming strategies and controlling impulses. Adolescents are also undergoing hormone changes and trying to navigate life. Despite the pressures to commence teaching the curriculum right away, I recommend spending at least the first week's lessons getting to know your students. Discovering their learning styles will enable you to adapt your assessments to meet your student's needs. Are they taking your VET course out of interest, to gain a qualification or to meet Senior

Secondary Certificate of Education requirements? Was it their choice? If the decision was not the students, you need to point out the positives of VET to begin a shift in their mindset to engage with learning.

Teachers and students must have a positive attitude and a growth mindset to ensure engagement. Adolescents need to feel connected, supported and have someone who believes they can succeed. Use a mindfulness technique at the beginning of each lesson to bring their thoughts to the present. The attitude shift begins by using your knowledge of the students to assist them engage by offering choices for assessment (no more than three options). Sit down and engage in conversation about topics rather than stand at the front and give facts. Break the assessments up into a series of achievable tasks. We are lucky that Vocational Education and Training (VET) allows flexible delivery and assessment.

Students need to know what VET looks like, explain about units of competency, show them what you are looking for. If a student can understand the expectations, they can meet them. Change the classroom into a workplace, get the students involved in 'workplace policy' by allowing them to assist in writing behavioural and safe workplace expectations (WHS, communication

and HR units). Do a Term planner with the students that encompasses all of their commitments and subjects (organisation and planning units). Be their mentor and encourage discussion, cooperation and teamwork within the classroom.

Teachers who embark on a lesson understanding their students learning needs and why they chose the qualification, will change the student's engagement. Student focussed learning leads to a change in attitude, improved self-esteem and encourages a growth mindset. Changing to a supervisor / mentor and employee relationship shifts to a cooperative and engaging learning environment.



Sheridan brings together her experience in VET, management, psychology, coaching, positive education and

working with disengaged and learning support students to assist young people to find purpose, take responsibility and engage with education and life. As well as assisting teachers and parents to re-engage students using a range of positive strategies.



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JOIN US FOR THE #2022NVC CONFERENCE

#2022NVC CONFERENCE PROGRAM DAY ONE

Thursday 3 November 2022

7.00am	Registration			
8.45am	Official Open and Welcome			
9.00am	Update from the Australian Skills Quality Authority Saxon Rice - Chief Executive Officer, ASQA			
9.45am	Housekeeping and Message from our Platinum Sponsor			
10.00am	Morning Tea & Networking			
10.40am - 12.10pm	Compliance Arena 1A Working Towards Compliance: How to not be scared of audits David Garner	Hands On/Hands Up (Training) Central A Putting Creative Training Techniques into Practice Marc Ratcliffe	Deep Dive (Administration) Central BC Planning and Managing Self-Assurance Activities Angela McGregor	Digital/Online Rooms 5, 6, 7 10 Quick-Fire Findings from Research Dr Deniese Cox
	Regulator/Government Arena 1A TBC* TBC	Digital/Online Central A Academic Integrity in Online Learning Natalie Oostergo	Management Central BC Help Your RTO Grow and Glow Allison Miller	Assessment Rooms 5, 6, 7 Implementing the Rules of Evidence: A close look at issues and how to avoid them Coleen Rivas
12.20pm - 1.05pm				
1.05pm	Networking Lunch			
2.10pm - 3.05pm	Administration Arena 1A Individual Support Needs: Identifying and responding Angela McGregor	Training/Student Engagement Central A 10 Ways to Boost Your Facilitation Skills Jason Ash	Management Central BC Dynamic and Profitable Financials David Jepsen	Digital/Online Rooms 5, 6, 7 The Big Shift - Designing for Virtual Classrooms Neil Von Heupt
	Digital/Online Arena 1A Top Trends in Digital Learning Kerri Buttery	Regulator/Government Central A TBC* TBC	Training/Student Engagement Central BC TBC Tony Kirton	Assessment Rooms 5, 6, 7 Playing your Key Assessment Instruments ... the Right Way Melanie Alexandra
3.15pm - 4.00pm				
4.00pm	Afternoon Tea & Networking			
4.30pm - 5.15pm	Freestyle Facilitation Arena 1A Let's talk about Compliance David Garner	Freestyle Facilitation Central A Let's Talk About Training Marc Ratcliffe	Freestyle Facilitation Central BC Let's Talk About Administration Angela McGregor	Freestyle Facilitation Rooms 5, 6, 7 Let's Talk About Assessment Melanie Alexandra
5.30pm - 8.30pm	WELCOME FUNCTION!			

* Regulator/Government session titles & presenters are still to be confirmed

GOLD COAST | 3 & 4 NOVEMBER 2022

#2022NVC CONFERENCE PROGRAM DAY TWO

Friday 4 November 2022

8.00am	Coffee and Networking			
8.30am	Welcome Back to Day 2			
9.00am	Motivational Speaker James Castrission			
10.00am	Morning Tea & Networking			
10.40am - 11.40am	Regulator/Government Arena 1A TBC* TBC	Hands On/Hands Up (Assessment) Central A Walk the Talk: Practical assessments for knowledge evidence Jason Hinton	Training/Student Engagement Central BC A Road Map for Structuring Sessions Karen Dymke	Management Rooms 5, 6, 7 Life-long Learning Through Verifiable Credentials Toby Jones
	Management Arena 1A Unleashing Leadership: Creating a culture of brilliance Jason Blinman	Training/Student Engagement Central A Leverage the Power of Gestural Animation Tony Kirton	Hands On/Hands Up (Training) Central BC Embed the Learning and Build Confidence: Secure the road map Laurie Kelly	Compliance Rooms 5, 6, 7 Creating a Compliance Program Paul Pellier
12.50pm	Networking Lunch			
1.50pm - 2.50pm	Training/Student Engagement Arena 1A What Do You Get When You Mix LLN and VET? Chemène Sinson & Jo Medlin	Hands On/Hands Up (Training) Central A Scaffolding Strategies for Learning John Blake	Deep Dive (Management) Central BC Implementing Systems for Quality Self-assurance and Continuous Improvement Maciek Fibrich	Assessment Rooms 5, 6, 7 Designing Assessments Appropriate for the AQF Level Kevin Ekendahl
2.50pm	Afternoon Tea & Networking			
3.15pm - 4.00pm	Freestyle Facilitation Arena 1A Managers: Let's talk about your road map Jason Blinman	Freestyle Facilitation Central A Trainers/Assessors: Let's talk about your road map TBC	Freestyle Facilitation Central BC Administrators: Let's talk about your road map Angela McGregor	Freestyle Facilitation Rooms 5, 6, 7 Compliance Personnel: Let's talk about your road map TBC

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Virtual Attendance Ticket	\$950	\$1385	\$435
Recordings	Member	Non-Member	Members Save!
Recordings Only	\$660	\$999	\$339

All prices inclusive of GST

INSPIRE



AUSTRALIAN SKILLS CLASSIFICATION EXPANDED

National Skills Commission

The go-to source for discovering the breadth of skills that underpin jobs in Australia has been updated – with over 500 skills profiles for jobs added, bringing the total number to 1100.

In its latest release, the Australian Skills Classification 2.0 also brings in over 1000 flags for trending and emerging skills, that are growing in demand, or new to, particular occupations. This brings an exciting new level of dynamism to the classification by providing more up-to-date information on the skills employers are really asking for, and skills that are emerging and trending within occupations in the Australian labour market.

Since the Classification was launched 12 months ago, we have worked with many industry stakeholders to continue to refine and improve it, and added emerging occupations like Digital Marketing Analyst, Respiratory Scientist and DevOps Engineer.

“We’ve also improved existing profiles, added new specialist tasks, and enhanced the technology tools data...”

Other enhancements include greater coverage of occupations with VET pathways and incorporating specialisations of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO), to allow the introduction of roles that are growing in importance in the labour market, like Solar Installer and Wind Turbine Technician.

“More and more, employers, workers, education providers and policy makers are recognising that skills are the real currency of the labour market. The pace and scale of change to jobs and business practices since the COVID-19 pandemic, coupled with the restriction on movement of people across the globe, have led stakeholders to consider new skills-based approaches to workforce and talent strategies, learning and development, and economic policy. The Classification facilitates those changes,” Mr Boyton said.

The Classification breaks down occupations into three categories of skills:

- Core competencies: commonly used in all occupations (sometimes called ‘foundation skills’ or ‘employability skills’).
- Specialist tasks: the work activities a person undertakes specific to a job at the task, skill cluster and skill cluster family level

- Technology tools: such as software or hardware, used within an occupation.

Explore the [Australian Skills Classification](#) online. You can also download the supporting dataset, read the methodology paper and provide feedback to: skillsclassification@skillscommission.gov.au

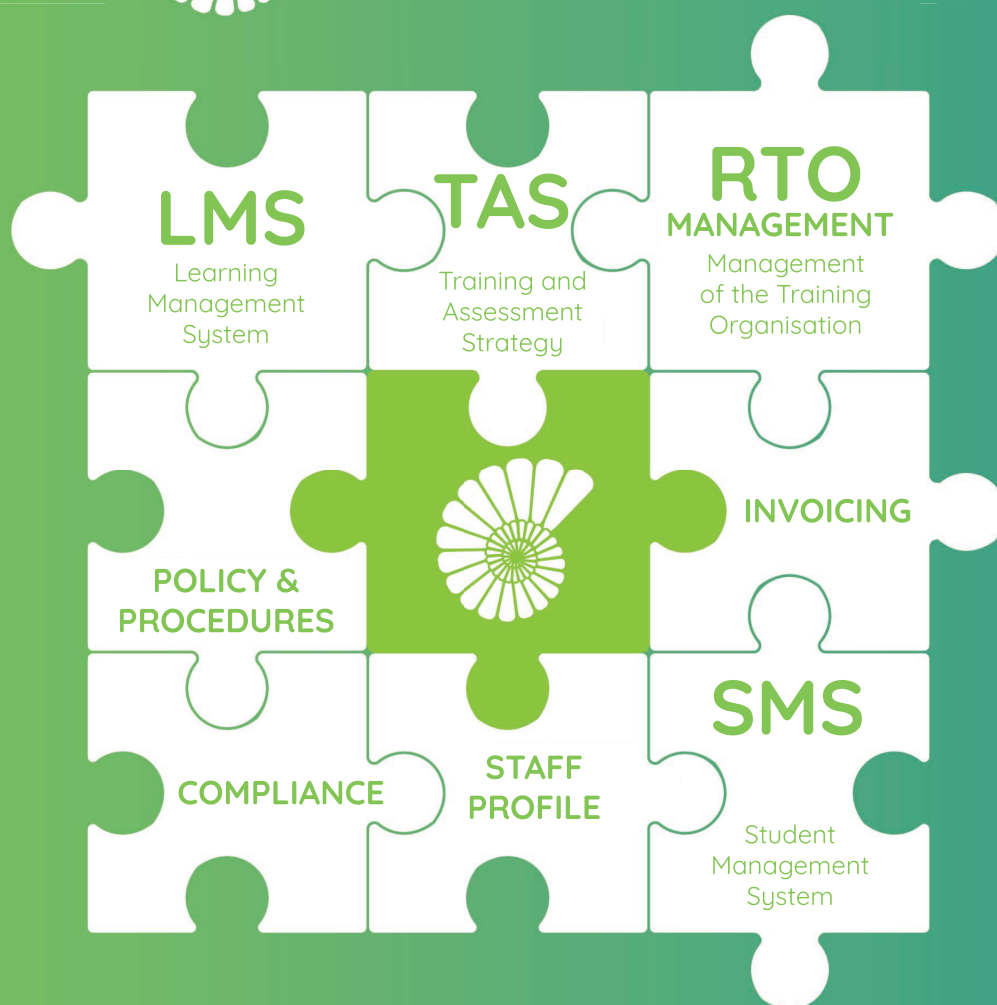
The National Skills Commission provides advice and leadership on Australia’s labour market and current, emerging and future workforce skills needs. We play an important role in simplifying and strengthening Australia’s VET system.

We understand which jobs are in demand, and what skills are needed, to help Australian’s build a strong future economy.





AMMONITE



The Ammonite system has been expanded and now includes these three new functions — providing even more of a complete solution for RTOs

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- ✓ Assessment Mapping
- ✓ Continuous Improvement
- ✓ RTO Management Meeting
- ✓ Assessment Validations
- ✓ Industry Validations

Policy & Procedures

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- ✓ Map to Regulators' requirements / Standards
- ✓ Built-in version control
- ✓ Full audit trail of versions and changes
- ✓ Ability to print as PDF
- ✓ Ability to link to courses

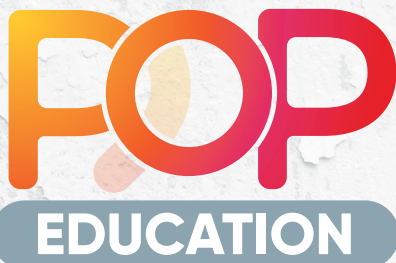
Staff Profile Function

- ✓ Vocational competencies
- ✓ Industry currency
- ✓ Formal training and skills
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- ✓ Compliant

These new functions are completely integrated within the Ammonite system and are dynamically populated ... as our customers would expect nothing less

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Pop Education are a team of education professionals who are committed to always exceeding expectations. Our expertise is regularly called upon to mentor and educate within industry and we contribute to professional development opportunities for industry. We employ the best — so we can deliver the best!

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A DIGITALLY SKILLED WORKFORCE IS THE ONLY OPTION

Patrick Kidd, DSO, CEO

Australia's workplaces are rapidly becoming more dependent on technology. But employers across the tech and non-tech sectors are struggling to find the right people with the right skills. The **Digital Skills Organisation's** (DSO's) recently released a discussion paper – **Towards a new model for the development of digital skills** - highlighting these issues.

Australia is forecast to need an additional **60,000** digital workers per year, over the next five years. It doesn't seem possible when there are only **7,000** students in Australia graduating with an IT degree in 2019, and fewer than **3,000** people completing a Cert IV in the Information and Communications Technology Training Package that same year. The skills gap is glaring and only getting bigger.

While these figures are concerning, they also present significant economic opportunities for businesses, students and employees alike. The economic contribution of the digital sector increased by 79 per cent since 2016, outpacing average growth in the economy by more than four times.

So, why are we experiencing such a shortage of digitally skilled workers?

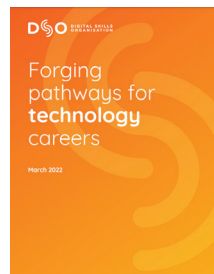
In the context of a rapidly changing digital economy, the education and training sector doesn't currently have the capacity to digitally upskill the workforce to meet the demand. There is also complexity in the sector which makes it difficult for learners to identify which skill sets they need to enter

the workforce and to upskill. This also hinders employers, by not being able to prioritise the time and costs to engage with in digital skills training that will help their business prosper.

To solve this, we must simplify digital training to reflect skills employers need making it more up-to-date, adaptable and flexible. The DSO's approach will do this through bringing together three main elements; Digital Skills Pathways, Digital Skill Standards and Digital Centres of Excellence.

Digital Skill Pathways set out to provide a signposted journey that leads an individual or organisation to understand the skills needed for occupations. Importantly, these are shaped by industry demand and underpinned by a common language.

You can read more about Digital Skill Pathways by visiting our [research page](#).



These pathways lead to **Digital Skills Standards** that describe the skills and the associated level of performance to undertake specific functions in the workplace. Standards allow learners to have something which they can be assessed against and give employers more confidence about the people they employ.

New level of responsiveness and ongoing collaboration is built into the model to ensure that training remains technically current and responsive to employer demands. This is where organisations like the DSO will play a crucial role in facilitating and maintaining links between industry and **training providers**.

The third and final piece of the puzzle is **Digital Centres of Excellence**, working closely with the training organisations to co-design training with employers from the start.

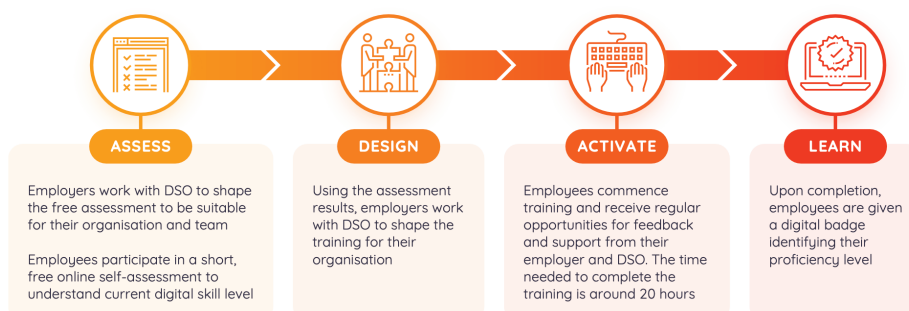
This is the time for action. Solutions are available, and DSO is leading the way to implement them but we need your help. We welcome your feedback and comments to help inform the refinement of the model. Provide feedback [here](#).



Patrick Kidd commenced as CEO of the DSO in October 2020. He brings substantial

experience in training, stakeholder management and digital transformation. Prior to his appointment, Patrick worked for Infosys, where he led the program team implementing a large-scale digital transformation program into Services Australia. From November 2016 to October 2020 Patrick was a Principal consultant with Deloitte with a focus on strategy, operations and change.

How the Skills Standard Pilot works



EMPOWER

KNOW YOUR 'WHY' AND LEARN THEIR 'WHY NOT'

Dr Deniese Cox, Founder, [TeachingOnline.com.au](https://teachingonline.com.au)

Picture this – you fire up your computer, turn on the camera, take a sip of coffee, and dive into the live online session that you're hosting for your students. The on-screen gallery fills with camera feeds and students who are brimming over with readiness to participate ... they can't wait for the signal to turn those microphones on and jump into the discussion.

Reading this, some educators are nodding along, having experienced the rush (and satisfied exhaustion) that comes from those golden teaching moments. Other educators are shaking their heads in dismay – does such nirvana exist online?

As an online education consultant, one of the most common questions I'm asked by educators who have shifted online is *"how can I make my students turn their camera/microphone on?!"*.

Here are my two tips – know your 'why' ... and learn their 'why not'.

Why is it important for you that students turn those cameras and/or microphones on? Is that the only way that they can validly contribute to the conversation, to authentically participate? Yes, there are some learning activities where these are essential tools, but that's not true for all activities. Before you dive into cameras/microphones being a baseline expectation, know your purpose

behind those tools and communicate those reasons for your students.

Now, let's turn our eye to those students – their 'why not' is likely more nuanced than simply being shy or disengaged.

When I started teaching online many years ago, my engineer-students were living and working on drilling rigs in remote regions of Indonesia. Selected to learn with me as part of a future leader's scholarship program, at the start of the course they didn't know who else would be online. Most assumed they were the only one sitting on an upturned crate in the jungle with a tin roof and dirt floor ... they assumed everyone else was wearing a suit in an air-conditioned office. Self-conscious about their physical environment, they determinedly kept those cameras off! Upon learning that they were all in similar environments, photos went flying back and forth. Yet those cameras still stayed turned off because of internet restrictions. It didn't affect learning.

Today I see a range of valid reasons come up again and again when I talk to students about their reasons for not turning on cameras or microphones. Feeling self-conscious about physical surroundings is a real issue for some. Also, many are in a shared space when learning, so turning the camera on would mean family members may be

visible. Students understandably don't want children to be inadvertently seen on camera, especially when sessions are recorded.

Another reason given by many for not turning on their camera is bias. Many students report appreciating the anonymity that can come with learning online – the opportunity to contribute to conversations without judgement around age, gender, cultural heritage, physical appearance etc. Students love that text-based comments made online can stand alone, without any of the baggage that may have been experienced in their face-to-face lives.

So, when it comes to any online learning strategy where you're experiencing a barrier or pushback, know your **why**, and learn about students' **why not**. It's from this foundation that those golden teaching moments can then be built.



Dr Deniese Cox is an established online VET practitioner and researcher, and the founder of TeachingOnline.

com.au. She provides professional development for educators who want proven, actionable strategies to achieve a better online experience.



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EMPOWER

HOW COVID-19 IMPACTED VET IN AUSTRALIA

National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)

Three years on since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the full extent of its impact on the VET sector is still emerging.

NCVER looks at the impacts on training delivery, how industry adapted, and commencements and outcomes of those who completed an accredited qualification from 2019 to 2021.

Delivery shifted online and blended learning to stay

More than half (52.1%) of those who completed an accredited qualification in 2020 had their training shift online. Of those, 46.3% faced at least one challenge with online learning¹.

Despite this, satisfaction with training was high. Most qualification

completers were satisfied with their training overall (89.1%) and most of those whose training shifted online were supported by their training provider in transitioning to online learning (86.1%).

Blended learning is here to stay. Providers have indicated they plan to continue offering online training along with face-to-face delivery, even after all COVID-19 restrictions are lifted².

Graduate employment declined in 2020 then improved slightly in 2021

Employment outcomes of VET qualification completers were significantly affected in 2020 when most of Australia was in lockdown.

The proportion of qualification completers with an improved employment status dropped from 65.8% in 2019 to 56.0% in 2020¹. Likewise, the proportion of those employed after training dropped from 76.6% in 2019 to 68.6% in 2020¹.

Females aged between 20-24 years were particularly hard hit, with 8.3% of those who completed their qualification during 2019 not in employment at the end of May 2020 having lost their job due to the COVID pandemic³. Students who completed their qualifications in the fields of education of in Food, Hospitality and Personal Services; and Creative Arts, had the highest proportions of those who were not employed at the end of

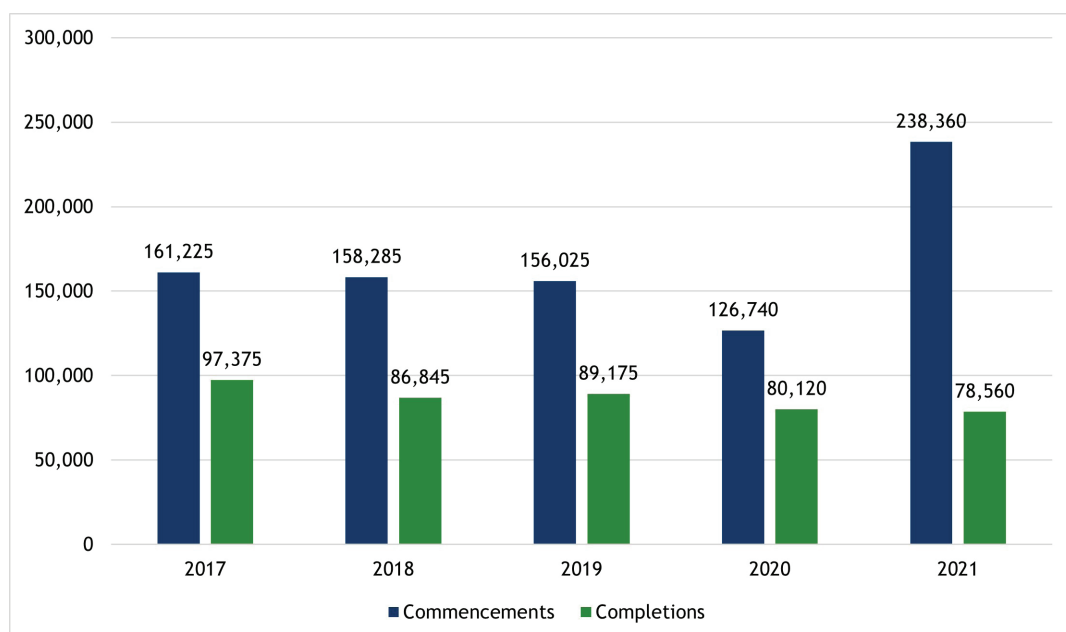


Figure 1: Contract commencements and completions (12 months ending September 2017-2021).

Source: NCVER 2022, Apprentices and trainees 2021 - September quarter DataBuilder



May having lost their jobs due to the COVID-19 pandemic³.

“Most qualification completers were satisfied with their training overall...”

In 2021, employment outcomes improved. Those who had an improved employment status after training increased by 4.6 percentage points from 2020, while those who were employed after training increased by 3.5 percentage points¹.

Apprentice and trainee commencements declined then increased by 2021

While the number of apprentice and trainee commencements had been declining before the pandemic, it further decreased in 2020 when most of Australia was in lockdown (Figure 1).

Given the heavy emphasis on workplace-based training in

apprenticeships and traineeships, it is not surprising that the impacts on apprentices and trainees in 2020 were significant, coinciding with national restrictions intended to slow the spread of the pandemic⁴.

The Administrative and Support Services, Construction, and Accommodation industries experienced some of the largest decreases in contract commencements in 2020 compared to 2019⁵. These were some of the sectors most impacted by the pandemic and are also those in which employers tend to opt for apprenticeships and traineeships over other forms of training.

Other sectors also affected by the pandemic were Transport, postal and warehousing, and Information, media and telecommunications, Retail trade, and Agriculture, forestry and fishing.

By 2021, however, contract commencements markedly increased to 238,360 (Figure 1) compared to 2020. It is important to note that the most significant spike in contract commencements occurred in October 2020 when the Boosting Apprenticeships Commencements wage subsidy was introduced⁴.

As one might expect, the industries with the highest commencement increases in 2021 were the ones mentioned previously that had

experienced the largest decreases in the previous year due to COVID-19 restrictions. Three years on since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the full extent of its impact on the VET sector is still emerging.

¹ NCVER 2021, [VET student outcomes 2021: DataBuilder](#)

² Hume, S & Griffin, T 2022, [The online delivery of VET during the COVID-19 pandemic: part 2](#), NCVER, Adelaide.

³ White, I 2021, [VET student outcomes 2020: impact of COVID-19 on domestic students](#), NCVER, Adelaide.

⁴ Hall, M. 2021. [Apprentices and Trainees 2020: Impacts of COVID-19 on training activity](#)

⁵ NCVER 2022, [Apprentices and trainees 2021 - September quarter DataBuilder](#)

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) is the national professional body responsible for collecting, managing, analysing and communicating research and statistics on the Australian vocational education and training (VET) sector.



EMPOWER



SUPPORTING STUDENTS WITH DISABILITY IN VET

Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET)

The [Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training](#) (ADCET) works to improve access and participation of students with disability in tertiary education across Australia. ADCET provides resources, guidelines, and webinars that support and educate disability practitioners, academic staff, and teachers from the Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) sectors on accessible and inclusive education.

In December 2021, the Department of Education, Skills and Employment funded ADCET to undertake a national program of works to assist VET providers in supporting students with disability.

There are three distinct projects within this program of works, that aim to support and transform the capacity of the wide range of VET providers.

Project One: Develop resources to build Registered Training Organisation (RTO) capability

In consultation with the VET sector, this project is developing a suite of resources that will build an RTO's capability to support students with disability and more effectively apply the Disability Standards for Education.

Some of the resources we're developing include:

- An overarching introductory guidance document and infographic
- Practice guides
- Practice illustrations
- Checkpoints of practice and templates

Project Two: Develop resources for course designers to support removing unnecessary barriers for students with disability

A guide will be developed to support applications for course accreditation to become more inclusive across all regulators, and also provide information to those looking to accredit courses. Training package approvals processes will also be considered to ensure that disability is explicitly included as an equity cohort. Self-assessments will be created to help potential developers address the need to include people with disability within their design phase.

Project Three: Review enrolment practices for students with disability

This project is reviewing and analysing positive elements of the enrolment process, as well as identifying critical issues that students may face.

We're producing an Inclusive Enrolment Practices Guide to assist

VET providers in supporting students with disability through enrolment. The guide identifies critical enrolment issues and contains illustrations of positive practice as well as downloadable Practice Guides which map positive enrolment elements that the project has identified.

The three projects are nearing completion and resources will be available for VET providers to use soon. To keep up to date, sign up to receive the Disability in VET project [newsletter](#).

Additional resources

ADCET has a wealth of information available now for VET educators about inclusive teaching including training and professional learning resources on our [Inclusive Teaching for VET Educators](#) page and a range of [guidelines for supporting students with disability](#).

For more information on the work of ADCET, please visit www.adcet.com.au.



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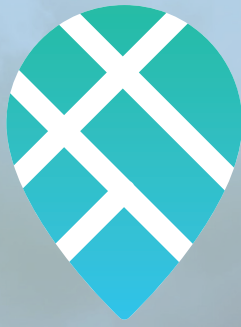
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