

A snapshot of a selection of items added to VOCEDplus

DECEMBER 2024 / JANUARY 2025

The [full list](#) of new additions to VOCEDplus is available at www.voced.edu.au

Skills development policies to date are not keeping up with the required pace of change

Education and skills policies for a sustainable future

Empowered citizens, informed consumers and skilled workers: designing education and skills policies for a sustainable future / Deborah Nusche, François Staring, Marcia Rocha and Cian Montague.

Paris, France: OECD, 2025. 111 pages.

The challenges posed by climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution have become defining issues of our time. These crises are global in scope, affecting all regions of the planet, with impacts felt across all sectors of society. This report takes a strategic life-span perspective on education and skills policies for a sustainable future, spanning from primary schooling to higher education and lifelong learning. Drawing on multi-disciplinary insights and examples of policies and practices from around the world, it provides actionable insights and recommendations on the role that education and training systems can play in fostering transformative change and building resilient societies. Key recommendations focus on equipping individuals with the skills needed for changing labour markets in response to the greening of economies and societies.

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The report makes 41 recommendations in relation to the workforce needs of Australia's food production, manufacturing, transport and distribution industries and identifies key opportunities to improve outcomes for students, workers and employers

Food supply chain workforce development in Australia

An essential ingredient: the food supply chain workforce / Djuna Gladanac, Tamika Stasiuk, Ashlyn Pedrotti, Kayla Slade, Paul O'Shea, Andrew Edwards, Vincent Law and Brad Waters.

Canberra, Australian Capital Territory: Jobs and Skills Australia, 2025. 266 pages (full report) + 30 pages (summary report).

The Australian Government commissioned Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) to undertake a capacity study on the workforce needs of the food supply chain. The study focuses on the key challenges and opportunities that can be addressed through the national skills system. This final report provides critical evidence, insights and recommendations to support workforce planning, policy development and program design. The study finds that the food supply chain workforce is essential but facing challenges, including issues specific to regional, rural and remote Australia and the availability of accessible education and training. The study highlights the value of work-based learning models, such as apprenticeships and traineeships which provide practical skills and 'earn while you learn' opportunities.

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Public support is strong, with 76% of people prioritising greater apprenticeship opportunities over university expansion

Policy makers could consider enhancing monitoring efforts and supporting future international research with longitudinal surveys

Educators are concerned about the ethical implications of artificial intelligence and its possible threats to the integrity and reliability of knowledge

Saving apprenticeships in England

Saving apprenticeships: a policy primer / Alison Wolf.

London, England: Social Market Foundation, 2025. 44 pages.

In this report, the author calls for the new Growth and Skills Levy to focus on young people, have greater local involvement, and distinguish between apprenticeships and workplace upskilling. The report outlines short- and long-term strategies for creating a skills system that adequately encourages genuine apprenticeships. Key findings include: (1) Apprenticeships are critical for filling skill shortages in key industries like construction and IT, addressing youth unemployment, and driving economic growth; (2) Young people aged under 19 made up only 23% of apprenticeship starts in 2023/24 compared to 41% in 2008, and 49% of apprenticeships are now taken by individuals aged 25 and older; (3) The apprenticeship levy is being primarily utilised by large firms; and (4) There has been a disproportionate decline in apprenticeship opportunities in poorer regions.

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International surveys explore educational outcomes

Transitions through education and into the labour market: exploring educational outcomes and equity gaps using international surveys / Samo Varsik.

Paris, France: OECD, 2025. 75 pages.

Transitions through education are crucial for students' development and success. Progressing to higher levels of education can lead to improved outcomes in and through education. This paper uses four cross-national surveys to review the progression of approximately one birth cohort through education into the labour market, focusing on gaps by gender, country of birth and parental education. Results reveal disparities at every educational level, but these gaps are not necessarily persistent, as some countries manage to maintain relatively narrow equity gaps. While it is not possible to directly link specific policies to these outcomes, the paper maps policy interventions in areas such as education governance, educational interventions and monitoring of outcomes offering insights into strategies easing transitions through education for diverse groups.

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Educators and artificial intelligence in Canada

How are educators navigating the AI revolution? / Adam Vanzella Yang and Daniel Akira Stadnicki.

Ottawa, Ontario: Conference Board of Canada, 2024. 19 pages.

With increasingly powerful generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools available to students, post-secondary institutions (PSIs) have been playing catch-up to adapt to a new reality. There is an increasing push toward embracing generative AI in teaching and learning settings, with a parallel focus on the development of AI literacy and related skills. This data briefing investigates the perspectives of Canadian PSIs on and experiences with generative AI use for teaching and learning. It draws on the Conference Board of Canada's national survey of 402 educators to provide data-driven insights into the rapidly changing landscape.

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Training needs to be flexible to meet changing needs and priorities as learners grow in confidence and willingness to engage more deeply with work

LLND skills development in Australia

Building language, literacy, numeracy, and digital skills with Aboriginal rangers in the Northern Territory / Jaemie Page.

Australian and international journal of rural education, volume 34, issue 3, November 2024, pages 115-125.

Ranger programs across North Australia are a success story, providing important environmental, social and cultural services that help people get back out on their Country to do vital work, such as carbon abatement fire programs, weed and feral animal management, cultural site maintenance, and Learning on Country programs for youth. Many rangers struggle with the English language, literacy, numeracy and digital (LLND) skills needed to participate effectively in work and training. The Batchelor Institute Conservation and Land Management team have developed effective language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills programs through Foundation Skills Training being delivered across the Northern Territory top end and recently Uluru. With extensive knowledge and experience in ranger work, trainers can develop and adapt language, literacy, numeracy and digital skills programs that are contextualised to the work of rangers and meet their needs as well as those of their host organisations. Secure, targeted funding can provide long-term support to further develop these programs and better prepare and support learners with training and work. This document outlines existing work and how it can be expanded across the region.

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There is potential for higher vocational qualifications to grow in the UK, as they represent a relatively low proportion of overall education, relative to other OECD countries

Higher technical education in England

Higher technical education in England, United Kingdom: insights from selected international experience / Stewart Butler and Nerea Martinez Yarza.

Paris, France: OECD, 2024. 131 pages.

A system of higher-level vocational courses can equip young people and adults with the advanced skills that employers are looking for in modern and dynamic labour markets. In England, these courses are collectively known as Higher Technical Education (HTE), classified at level 5 in the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). In recent years, English HTE has struggled with its identity, scope, and esteem, as previous attention brought academic higher education to the masses. This report supports ongoing reform efforts by comparing England's HTE system with successful models in Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, and Sweden. It underlines the importance of a coherent educational vision supported by quality governance and strong employer engagement. By learning from these countries, England can create a robust policy framework and foster collaborations to ensure the success of its HTE reforms.

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