HumanAbility

VET Workforce Report

Industry specific VET workforce report
2026





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Executive Summary

The care and support sectors together employ just over 20 per cent of the national workforce. They include aged care and disability services, children's education and care, health, human (community) services, and sports and recreation, and they are critical at all stages of life. Combined, their employment is projected to grow faster than any other part of the economy.[i]

The Vocational Education and Training (VET) workforce is crucial in supporting the future care and support workforce. However, the workforce is under pressure, and the future supply of teachers, trainers and assessors is not expected to keep up with growing student demand.[ii] In response to predicted workforce shortages and increasing challenges, the Australian Government developed the *VET Workforce Blueprint*.[iii] This work identified key actions to understand, grow, retain and develop the VET workforce. As one of 10 Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs), HumanAbility received funding to conduct a 3-stream research project specifically for the care and support VET workforce (October 2024 to June 2026).

The research conducted under the project uncovered that industry professionals are interested in becoming teachers, trainers and assessors to share their knowledge and shape the future workforce.[iv] Pay, benefits and career advancement also play a part in people moving into VET. Despite strong motivation to join the VET workforce, there are issues in retaining teachers, trainers and assessors, who are affected by mounting pressures which push them to retirement or back to industry:

- fragmented onboarding with little mentoring
- barriers in forming long standing relationships with industry
- increasing administrative and compliance responsibilities
- growing pastoral responsibilities
- absent career pathways and challenges accessing development
- frequent policy, regulation and training package changes.

To respond to some of these challenges, this work designed and delivered solutions:

1. **VET trainer and assessor mentor framework.** A framework to position mentoring as a developmental, strengths-based practice that supports capability building, professional identity, cultural safety, and workforce sustainability. This framework was designed in partnership with NACCHO (National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation).

2. **RTO – Industry partnership model and toolkits for maintaining industry currency.** Co-designed with stakeholders and tested with 7 organisations across 4 states. The pilot demonstrated that partnership-based approaches can strengthen industry currency and improve the relevance of teaching delivery.

This report details key project outcomes, findings and recommendations that have implications for HumanAbility, government, registered training organisations (RTOs) and industry. Future research and scaling of tools and resources have been identified and explored in detail.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are drawn from findings of this research, supported by survey data, stakeholder consultations and open-ended responses from VET professionals.

They are directed towards government, the care and support sectors, RTOs, and HumanAbility as the JSC leading this work. For each recommendation, actions should follow Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) First Nations VET workforce design principles.

Recommendations are split by action type: Scale and adopt (tools and strategies that can be adopted and used now), build and reform (design, funding or development required) and investigate and evidence (additional knowledge or insight required).

Scale and adopt	Stakeholder
Adopt and scale HumanAbility's industry currency model and toolkit to strengthen RTO-industry collaboration and guide the process of maintaining meaningful industry currency activities	Government, RTOs, Industry, HumanAbility
Scale VET trainer and assessor mentor framework to support developing and embedding mentor programs within RTOs, particularly for First Nations VET professionals	Government, RTOs, HumanAbility
Support administrative and pastoral responsibilities and ensure manageable workloads to allow teachers, trainers and assessors to focus on core duties	RTOs
Provide year round, secure employment for teachers, trainers and assessors where possible to improve job security and enable greater workforce planning	RTOs
Promote secondary school pathways into VET to strengthen the pipeline, without overburdening those working in industry sectors	Government, Industry
Build and reform	**Stakeholder**
Fund scalable, sector wide professional development infrastructure to enable consistent access to high-quality professional development	RTOs, Industry
Create a framework of pathways within the VET workforce with flexibility to show professionals where and how they can develop	Government, RTOs
Ensure workplaces are physically and culturally safe to increase retention of staff and reduce discrimination and racism	RTOs
Strengthen Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) processes to remove barriers to application, expand talent pool and capture existing workforce capability	Government, RTOs, HumanAbility

Strengthen authentic, sustained place-based relationships with communities to improve the workforce pipeline and student and VET professional experience	Industry, RTOs
Invest and promote digital literacy support to reduce teacher, trainer and assessor capability gap, improve student outcomes and enable a skilled future workforce	RTOs, Government, HumanAbility
Provide funding for professional development opportunities to enable all teachers, trainers and assessors to access meaningful and impactful development activities	RTOs, Industry
Support 'Grow Your Own' pathways from internal networks to build RTO capability to navigate fluctuating workforce needs	Industry, RTOs
Investigate and evidence	**Stakeholder**
Continue to fund longitudinal VET workforce data collections to build sector knowledge and provide evidence for decision making	Government
Conduct ongoing research into key challenge areas and pilot solutions to enable RTOs and industry to navigate key challenges	Government, HumanAbility
Evaluate and optimise 'Earn While You Learn' pathways to understand their impact and assess opportunities for improvement	Government, RTOs, HumanAbility
Investigate how to lift VET prestige by exploring and testing campaigns to challenge negative perceptions and create a clear VET professional identity	Government, HumanAbility, RTOs

Background

Australia's care and support sector (aged care and disability services, children's education and care, health, human (community) services, and sport and recreation sectors) employs approximately one in 5 workers – almost 3.4 million as of February 2026.[v] It is also the largest and fastest-growing part of the Australian economy; a conservative estimate of overall projected employment growth in the health care and social assistance sectors is 23% by May 2035 (**Table 1**).[vi] The VET sector workforce plays a crucial role in equipping the future care and support workforce with the skills needed to deliver essential services that contribute to Australians' health and wellbeing.

The workforce is at risk of not keeping up with demand, particularly for teach, train, and assess roles. Employment projections by Victoria University for JSA (2024) suggest that VET teachers, trainers and assessors' employment demand is likely to grow by 12% in the next 5 years, and 21% within the decade,[vii] exceeding employment projections for total occupations. This occurs in the context of strong and continued growth in the industry workforces themselves, with key skills shortages identified in the aged care and disability services sectors and the early childhood education and care sector.[viii]

Table 1: Predicted industry workforce growth

	Predicted growth by May 2035
Residential aged care services[*1]	24.5%
Other social assistance services	16.2%
Children's education and care	9.8%
Health	27.6%
Sports and recreation	12.0%

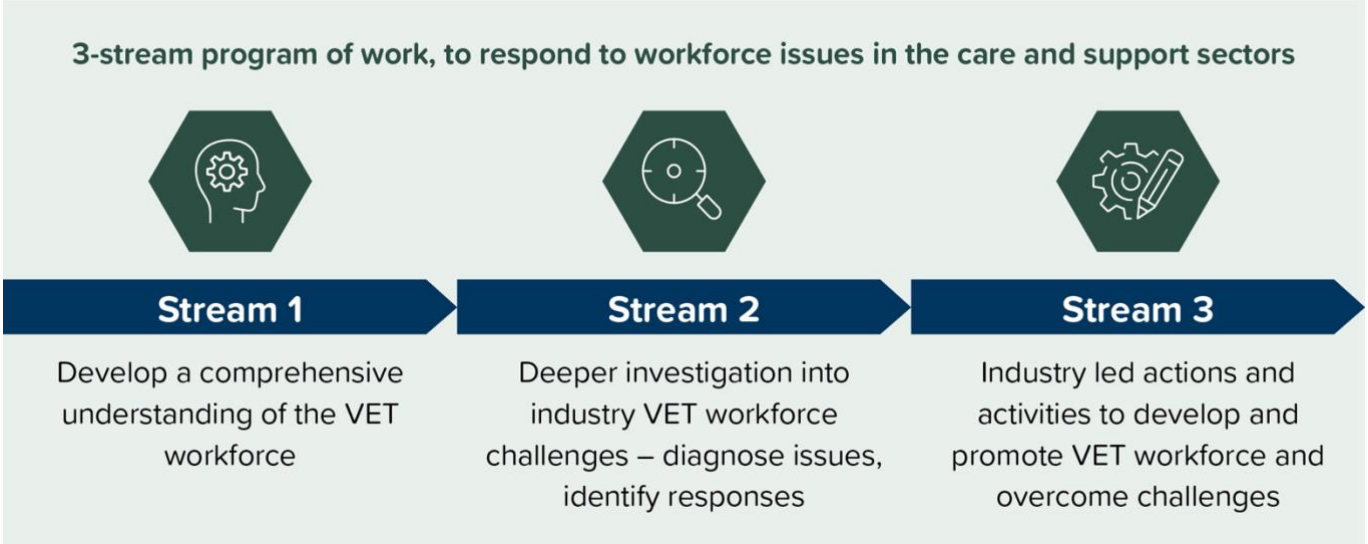
The *VET Workforce Blueprint*, developed by the Australian Government in collaboration with states and territories, provides a roadmap to grow, support, and sustain this VET workforce, and is funded by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR). This blueprint was a response to stakeholder consultations and data that highlighted concerns about the VET workforce supply. Data and knowledge gaps were noted at the industry, sector, and subsector levels, indicating a need for focused research to generate a clearer and more nuanced understanding of specific sectors challenges. In response to these workforce challenges, the blueprint identified three goals:

[1] Sectors are defined by Job and Skills Australia

- **Grow the workforce:** Increase the number of people entering the VET workforce to ensure long-term supply of staff to support quality training.
- **Retain and develop the workforce:** Improve retention and support workforce capability to ensure a sustainable, highly skilled, and quality VET workforce.
- **Understand the workforce:** Develop data collection systems for the VET workforce and undertake foundational work and research to better understand the various roles and pathways across all VET contexts.

HumanAbility was one of the JSCs to receive government funding to conduct research to identify and respond to VET workforce challenges within its sectors. The JSC projects were set to contribute and complement the opportunities and actions identified in the VET Workforce Blueprint.

HumanAbility commenced a 3-stream program of work, to respond to workforce issues in the care and support sectors. Initial research (October 2024 to June 2025) involved HumanAbility undertaking industry-specific VET workforce studies to develop a contemporary understanding of industry-specific roles, including at JSC and sector levels, and pathways, recruitment, and retention. Research from July 2025 to August 2025 investigated industry-specific VET workforce challenges and prioritised future research areas. The final area of work (September 2025 to June 2026) partnered with organisations to develop and test industry-led responses.



Key findings and outcomes for the care and support VET workforce were identified and detailed in this report. While data was collected on a broad range of roles within the VET workforce, the following report will focus specifically on teacher, trainer and assessor roles.

Who we surveyed

Three separate surveys were distributed, with each capturing responses from professionals across all care and support sectors, locations and RTO types.

Survey 1

VET Organisations Workforce

Key information captured:

- number of staff employed
- roles, contract types
- qualifications held
- attraction methods

191 responses

Survey 2

VET Professionals Demographic

Key information captured:

- gender
- birth country, residential location
- role, contract type
- qualifications
- salary

334 responses

Survey 3

VET Professionals Pathways & Challenges

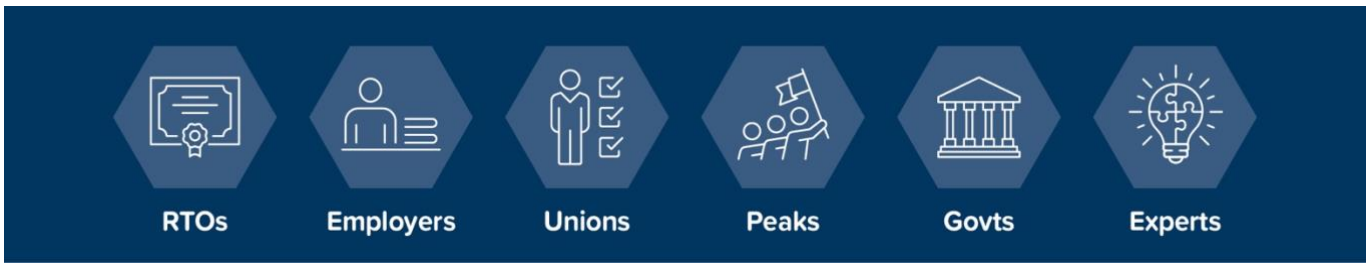
Key information captured:

- age, gender, state,
- previous role
- motivation to join
- key challenges
- intention to remain

517 responses

Who we spoke to

This research captured insights from a range of stakeholders across all states and territories. A detailed approach is available in Appendix A.



Recommendations are informed by the experiences of more than 1,000 VET professionals and stakeholders.

Key findings

HumanAbility's research found that the care and support VET workforce is predominantly female, skews older, and is not as diverse as the broader industry workforce or student population. The VET workforce is deeply committed to its purpose; supporting students, building the sector workforce and making a difference. Individuals navigate challenging systems, and many intend to stay in their roles, but there are risks in relying on this motivation to support future workforce needs.

Survey data collected provides a contemporary understanding of the workforce demographics, pathways, and some of these key challenges in growing, retaining and developing the workforce. This data, when combined with workshop and interview outputs and additional reports, highlighted 2 key areas to further research and to prioritise when designing solutions. Mentoring support was identified as a structural intervention that could address attraction, retention and knowledge transfer simultaneously, while building RTO-industry relationships was noted as a method to alleviate challenges and pressures when maintaining industry currency.

As part of this research, HumanAbility developed a model and toolkit to support the teachers, trainers and assessors in maintaining industry currency and partnered with the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) to create a mentoring framework to support VET trainers and assessors.

The following findings are drawn from consultations and through developing and testing the industry currency model, toolkit and mentoring framework. The findings complement and build on insights reported in HumanAbility's initial report.[ix]



The VET workforce is deeply committed to its purpose.

1. People are willing and motivated to join the VET workforce

The care and support workforce are motivated to join the VET workforce and are passionate to share their knowledge

Professionals enter the workforce because they want to make a difference and to share industry knowledge to train and shape the workforce of the future. Pay and benefits and career advancement also play a key attraction role. Common previous roles were identified, along with the typical methods used by RTOs to drive recruitment efforts.

Individual motivation and a sense of purpose

Most teachers, trainers and assessors who took part in our surveys agreed or strongly agreed that contributing industry knowledge, expertise and making a difference were primary motivators to joining the workforce (95%). For some, this motivation was a result of having a strong passion for empowering students and a future generation. While for others, motivation was a result of concern about the quality of the current workforce, and the changing needs of the sector that are not currently met by the course content.

This finding is consistent with previous research which suggests that motivations to become a VET teacher arise from under 3 key conditions: social altruistic drivers (the desire to shape the future of young people), being aware of an opportunity and holding intrinsic values of one's teaching ability and vocation.[x]

What influenced your decision to join the VET workforce?

"Supervising students in the workplace that had poor skills from VET qualifications, I thought I would enter the VET sector to have an impact."

Survey respondent

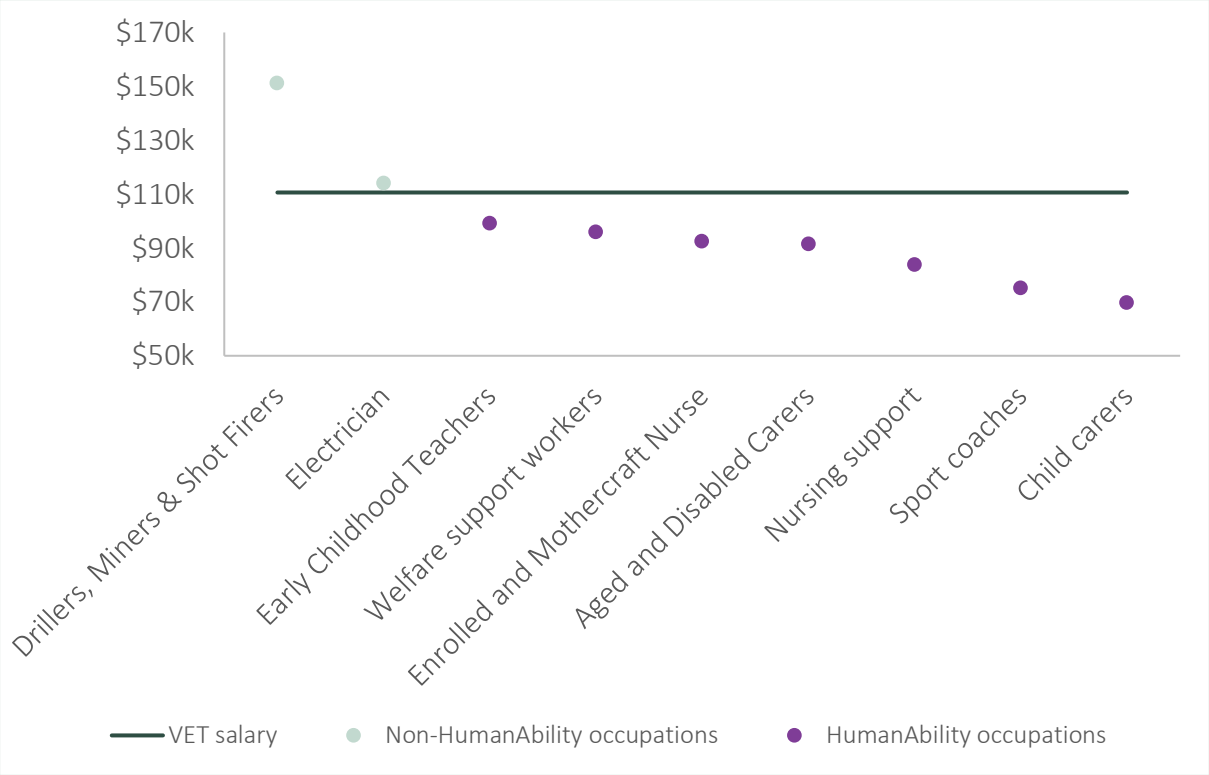
VET salaries and conditions play an important role

Better pay and conditions more broadly were mentioned as key pull factors into the sector (over 70% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed), where the salary offered can often be higher than the industry average and conditions (for example, more regular work hours) more suitable to individuals' lifestyles.

The average salary reported in the survey of $83,592 was seen to be above both the national VET workforce average and the broader Australian workforce average.[xi] When looking at survey responses, 63% of professionals currently work at TAFE, and 64% work at an organisation with over 1000 students. In this context, professionals are likely to be working under enterprise bargaining agreements (EBAs). This is in line with JSA findings which suggest that 61% of the VET workforce are covered by EBAs. [xii] When comparing TAFE EBA wages with ABS data for key occupations under HumanAbility's remit, the upper-end values of the TAFE EBA salaries are above industry salaries, for example industry, sports coaches $74,984 vs TAFE NSW Assessor $91,590 (**Figure 1**).[xiiixiv]

It should be noted that while salary is often a motivating factor to join the VET workforce, some professionals reported the inverse. Industry pay can also fluctuate and so drawing on individual reflective motivations, such as attitudes, intentions, and goals will be key for future recruitment processes and long-term retention.

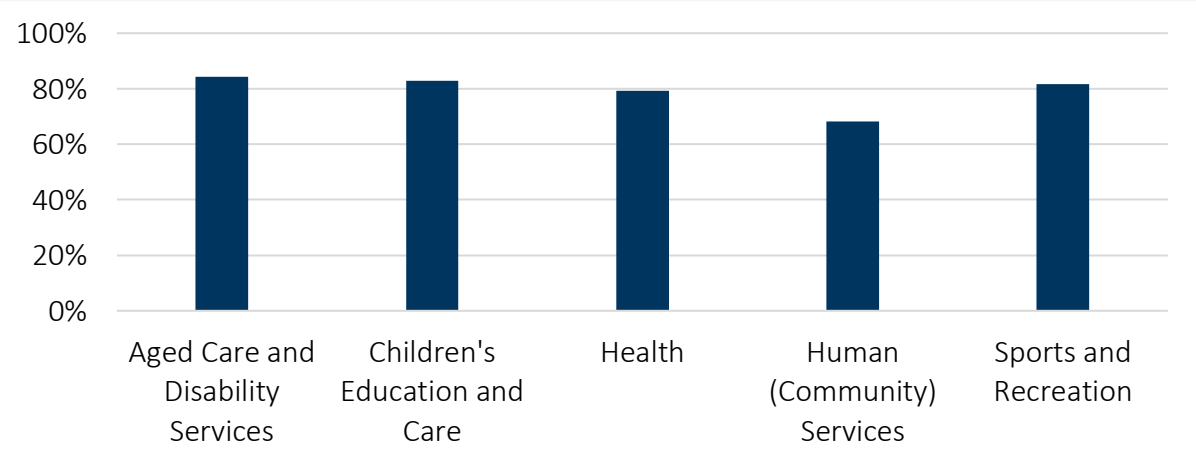
Figure 1: Salary is a motivating factor for those in Care and Support sectors[2] [xv][xvi][xvii][xviii][xix]



Career advancement

A large proportion of respondents (77.4%) agreed or strongly agreed that they were attracted to enter VET by career advancement (**Figure 2**). This is in line with consultation discussions which highlighted VET as a 'second career'. Sectors with lower agreement could enhance their promotion of the benefits of VET teaching, training and assessing roles particularly in the early stages of an industry career to increase its visibility and potential consideration in the future.

Figure 2: VET is perceived as career advancing



[2] 2022 ANSCO codes

A large portion of survey respondents moved into VET from nursing (registered nurses, clinical nurses, associate nurse unit managers). Consultations highlighted that the physically draining nature of shift work often no longer suits individual's lifestyles, and that VET was able to provide hours and days of work that better aligned with their needs.

When exploring why professionals move out of nursing, research has shown that for metropolitan areas in particular, nursing experiences greater accessibility to alternative careers, higher employment competition and fragmented workplace environments. When combined with excessive workloads and a lack of organisational support, nurses transition to roles that can offer career progression or greater pay and conditions. Findings suggest a critical threshold of 7 years before nurses are more likely to consider leaving their role.[xx] RTOs may consider building relationships with industry to bring greater visibility to a career path in VET for nurses, particularly for those who are nearing 7 years in their profession. Stakeholders noted that it is critical to not only attract those who have been burnt out in industry. Continued effort is needed to attract those who have had positive experiences in the sector along without over-recruiting the industry workforce.

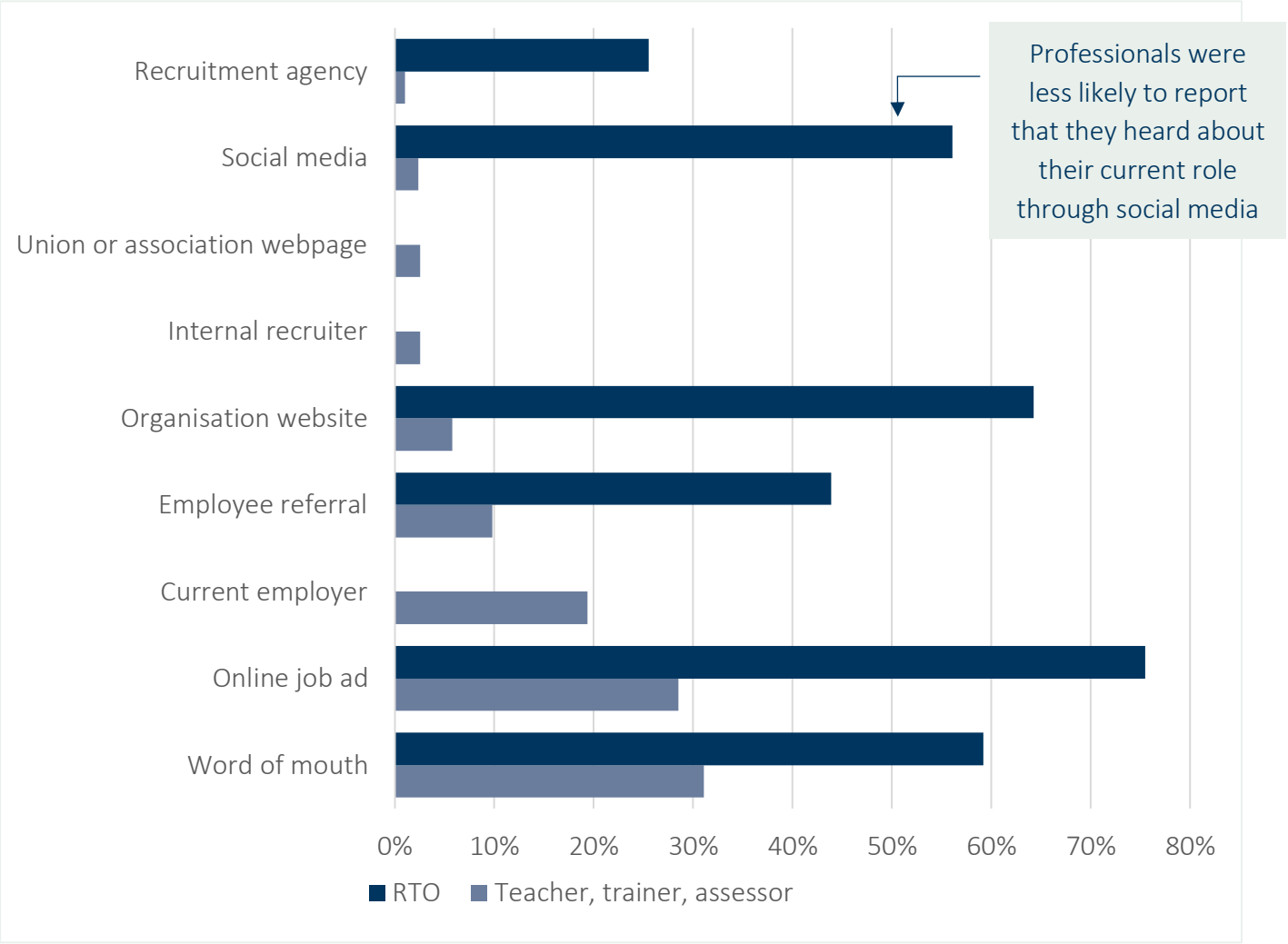
Amendments to the Standards for RTO in March 2024 which gave effect to early changes allowed further motivated individuals to join via a secondary school teachers route.[3][xxi] Early stakeholder response to these pathways has been positive. Pathway data collected highlighted that a small but not insignificant proportion of respondents have moved from teaching and education/assistant roles into VET teach, train and assess roles. Promotion and possible financial support of this pathway into VET by state and territory government is suggested, particularly for industries which are currently, or expecting, severe workforce shortages of their own.

RTO recruitment efforts can be strengthened

When looking at recruitment efforts compared to how people first hear about their role, a difference can be seen with implications for RTOs (Figure 3). Informal networks play a crucial role in reaching potential candidates for a role in VET, where most teachers, trainers and assessors surveyed heard about their role through word of mouth (34%). Online advertisements were the second most common pathway (32%). Previously research noted that online job advertisements grew 200% from 2014 to 2024, compared to 80% growth seen across all occupations.[xxii]

[3] 2025 Standards for RTOs took effect on 1 July 2025. (2025 Standards for Registered Training Organisations - Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, Australian Government)

Figure 3: RTO advertisement investment vs. how professionals heard about their role



A large portion of RTOs surveyed cited using advertisements on their website, social media and recruitment agencies to attract the workforce. Yet fewer teachers, trainers and assessors reported hearing about their role from these channels. RTOs may benefit from exploring how to optimise their advertisements using these methods or invest more heavily in online job advertisements and in building informal networks. It should be noted that there are challenges with online advertisements, where complex VET language and terminology was noted as a barrier to suitable candidates finding and applying for roles. RTOs or recruitment agencies must carefully consider the language used in these advertisements, to optimise their effectiveness.

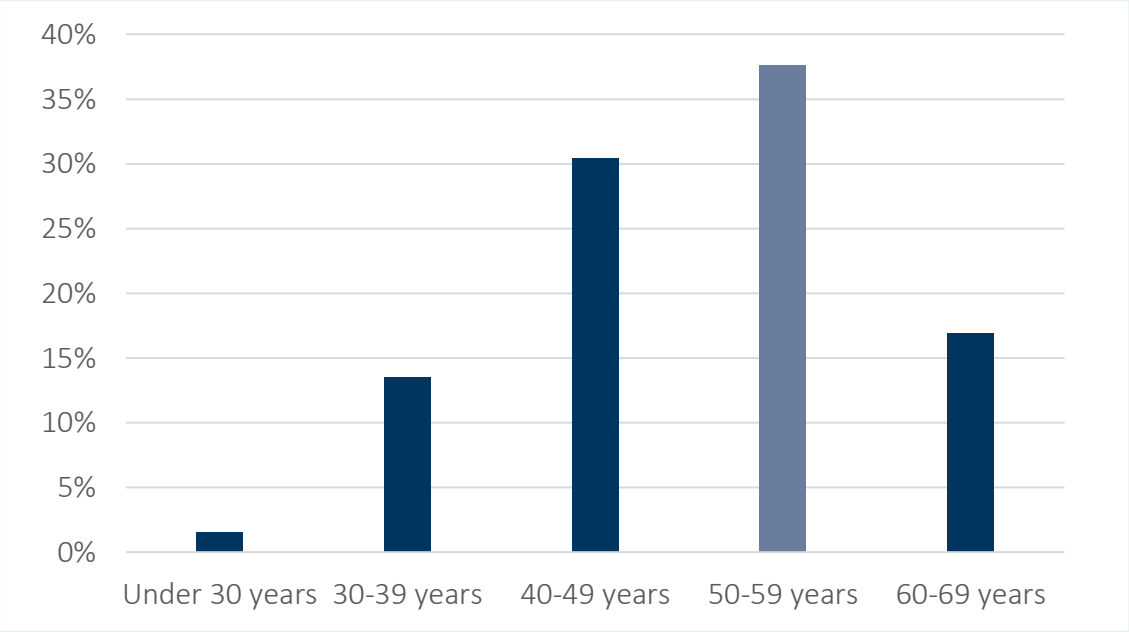
2. An ageing care and support VET workforce that is not being replaced quickly enough

VET teaching attracts the right people, just not enough to replace an ageing workforce.

Care and Support workers who move into teaching are well suited to the role. They are motivated and experienced; some increase their pay by making the switch and most stay for several years. The problem is numbers. As an ageing workforce of teachers, trainers, and assessors retires, too few are coming through to replace them.

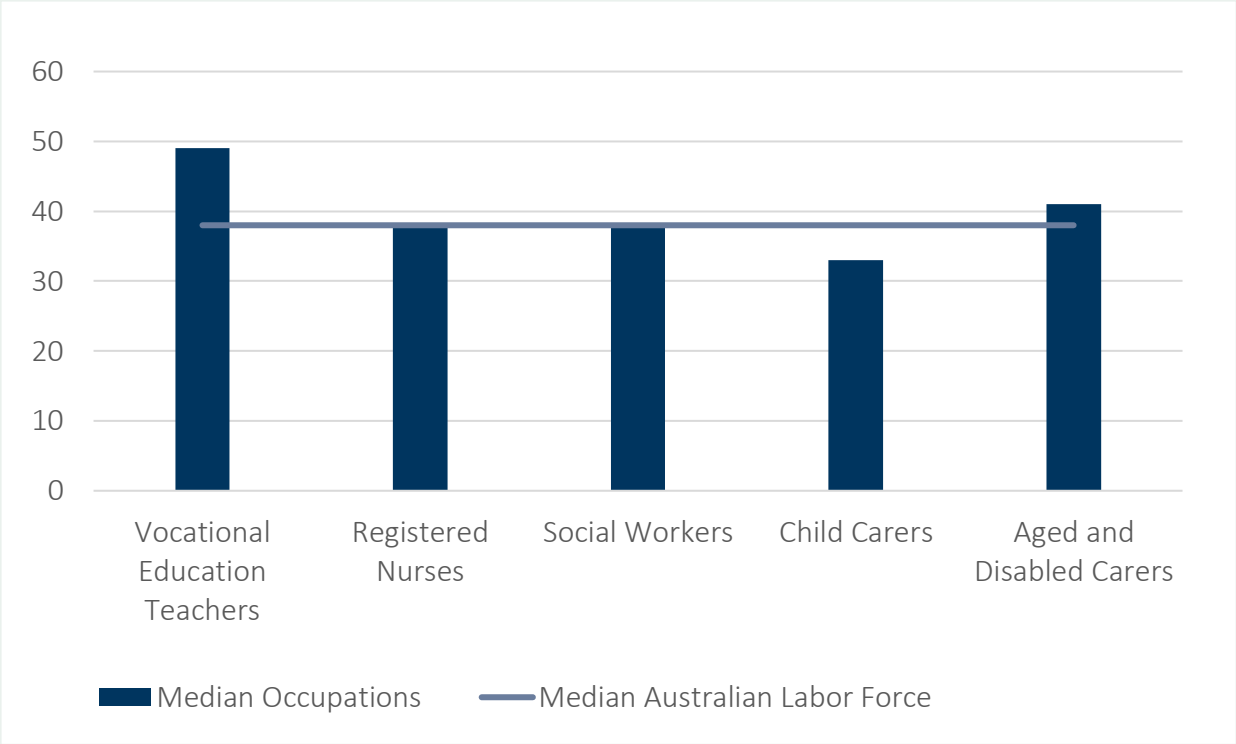
Over half of VET teachers, trainers and assessors who responded to a survey were over 50 years old, while less than 1.5% were under 30 years old. The largest cohort were 50-59 years old, making up 37.5% of respondents (**Figure 4**).

Figure 4: Most teachers, trainers and assessors are over 50 years old



The median age for Vocational Education Teachers, trainers and assessors (47 years, reported by JSA) is higher than industry areas where the workforce is moving from.[xxiii] The largest median age difference is seen between VET and those in childcare roles (**Figure 5**). Although an older workforce is not surprising, as industry experience is key for the role, the low proportion of those under 40 years old currently in the VET workforce signals that the pipeline may not be replacing and adding to itself fast enough to offset the proportion of professionals aged over 50 years old.

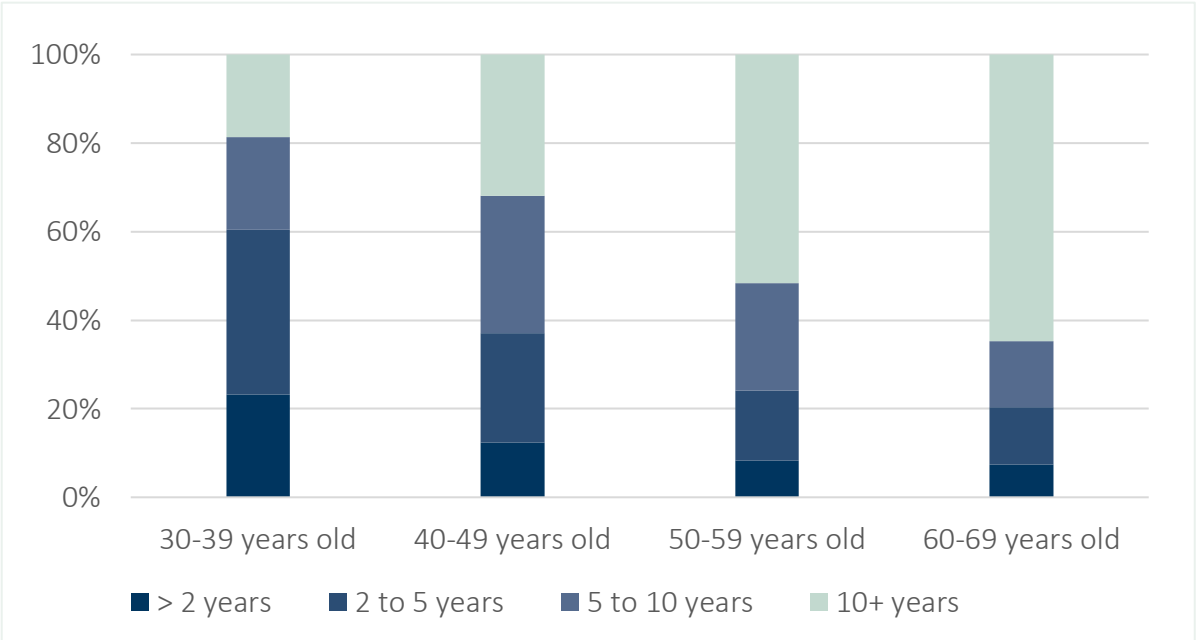
Figure 5: Median age is higher than most care and support sectors



A long serving VET workforce

The ageing VET workforce has significant experience within VET that has been built over many years (**Figure 6**). Most professionals are long serving, 42.5% of respondents having worked in VET for more than 10 years. While this is positive, stakeholders noted challenges of a long serving workforce, which include scheduling issues when staff use large amounts of leave accumulated over many years.

Figure 6: Professionals have years of experience in the VET workforce

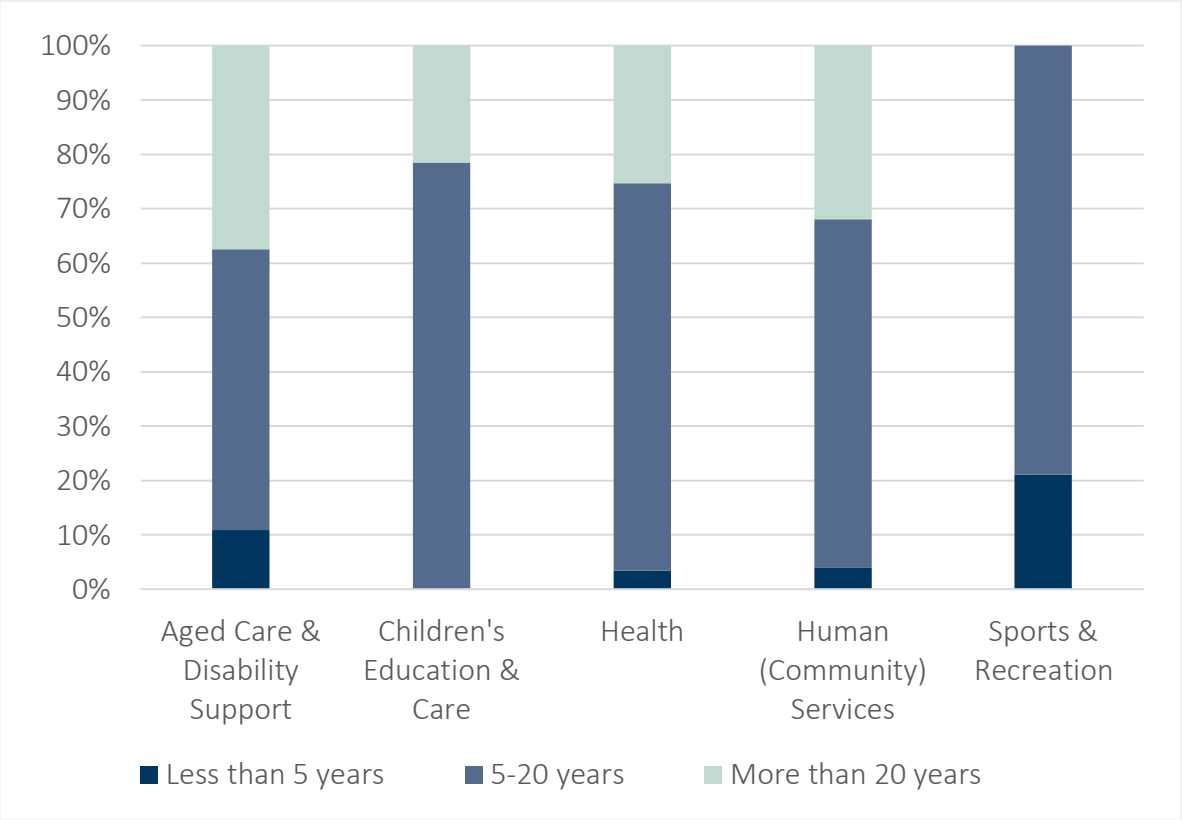


There is an opportunity to strengthen the pipeline of those looking to retire from industry, where currently only a small proportion (8%) of those aged over 50 have moved into a role in VET within the last 2 years.

Decades of industry knowledge

Significant industry experience is brought into the VET workforce (**Figure 7**). A large portion of respondents (67%) have between 5-20 years' experience, 28% have over 20 years' experience, and only 5% of respondents have under 5 years of industry experience. Even professionals that have entered VET in the last two years have significant industry experience (12.5% have 5 to 20 years industry experience, and 15.7% have over 20 years industry experience). This suggests that VET continues to attract those who hold significant and valuable experience within the industries that they teach.

Figure 7: Professionals bring considerable industry experience



The pipeline risk is less about attracting those with quality industry experience and more about finding the quantity of individuals with this knowledge. This was shown in responses by RTOs in the organisational survey, where over 90% of RTOs cited ***'finding the right candidate'*** as a key challenge experienced in the recruitment process.



"Attracting people is a zero-sum game. The macro issue is there is not enough people for all of us to choose from"
RTO

Professionals with more than 10-years' experience in VET, who hold significant industry experience, represent a large proportion of the care and support VET workforce. The solution is finding a way or model to source professionals with sufficient industry experience and to avoid being reliant on those who are new to industry.



"The real risk, and that's certainly something I've seen in universities, is the temptation to address this issue, which is absolutely a structural issue, is to bring people in who aren't experienced enough yet in this sector"
TAFE

Dual professionals and casualisation of the workforce

While 63% of teachers, trainers and assessors are employed full-time, 27% are part-time and 12% are casual. Alongside this, over a third of respondents told us they hold another role outside of VET (37.2%). Together, these findings suggest that a significant proportion of the workforce spread their time, capacity and professional identity across multiple roles, employers and potentially industries.

Stakeholder consultations highlighted that hourly paid instructor (HPI) contracts are a deliberate strategy used to manage fluctuations in workforce needs, with the intention to move professionals into a full-time role over time. For RTOs, particularly smaller providers who are navigating changes in funding and enrolment cycles and numbers, casual or part-time work can be valuable. For teachers, trainers and assessors, there can also be benefits, such as increased flexibility, however for many it also brings uncertainty, where a permanent role is not a guarantee.

To date, there is a limited amount of appropriate data on casualisation within the VET workforce. JSA has discussed a need for, and is undertaking, further research into the drivers of casualisation and its impacts on attraction and retention.

Attraction challenges

While HumanAbility only spoke with those currently in the VET workforce, we identified some key challenges that may deter professionals from thinking about applying:

VET is not perceived as prestigious



VET careers were often seen as less prestigious than other industries, such as Higher Education. When the current workforce was asked if they were attracted by the prestige of the VET sector, more than half of all respondents somewhat disagreed or strongly disagreed (54.6%).

Lived experience, prior learning and industry experience are not always valued and often underappreciated



Despite holding significant experience to bring to the role, capturing this knowledge can be challenging in an application, which may lead professionals to feel their previous experiences are not adequately recognised and discourage them from applying.

The training and assessment qualification (TAE) has a reputation of being challenging, lengthy and costly



A key requirement to move into a VET teacher, trainer and assessor roles is to be actively working towards or to hold a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAE). Finding professionals with sufficient industry experiences alongside holding the TAE is a significant challenge for many RTOs. Professionals reported the TAE as overly demanding, technical and lacking a reliable employment pathway upon completion. The format was noted as inaccessible for some.

Relocation to regional or remote areas lacks benefits



Staff attraction from outside of regional or remote areas are hindered by housing shortages and high costs, roles which often requires travel, technology and IT issues and challenges in accessing develop opportunities.

What's working well and promising practices

- TAFE NSW has initiated a 'Paid to Learn' program, which supports prospective new teacher, trainers and assessors to undertake the TAE. Early indicators suggest the scheme has had a positive impact. However, stakeholders noted that the format is not always suitable, particularly for those who are lacking time to take the required number of weeks leave to complete the qualification. Further data is needed to evaluate this model and understand it's impact on effective teaching.
- Some RTOs allow industry professionals to join the VET workforce in assistant roles who support trainers in a supervision role, before being supported by the organisation financially to complete the TAE.
- Providers in regional, remote, and rural locations have begun offering incentives and perks, including flexible working arrangements, access to company cars and fuel allowances, along with opportunities to take up roles in communities and on related industry committees.
- Tasters or secondments (e.g., partnership with health organisations for clinicians or industry experts to do residential workshops without a TAE), provide opportunities for professionals to experience the sector prior to applying and joining.

When building the pipeline of the vocational education and training workforce, current and future industry challenges and changes must also be considered. These changes impact student enrolments, funding, workforce planning and employer capacity to provide the pipeline required (**Table 2**).

Table 2: Sector challenges and changes will impact the VET workforce

Sector	Current or recent industry challenges and changes
All sectors	• Fee Free TAFE investments will total $1.6 billion by 2034-35 to support at least 100,000 places annually from 2027.[xxiv] Places will increase demand for VET workforce in some areas but may reduce student enrolment and workforce needs in others. • RTOs lack visibility on future funding, student enrolments and number of teachers needed at a given time. • HumanAbility is currently reviewing 'Earn While You Learn' models, which in turn may impact teachers, trainers and assessors' responsibilities.
Aged care and disability services sectors	**Aged care and disability services sectors:** • The number of people using home care increased by from 71,900 to 275,000 between 2017 and 2024.[xxv] **Aged care:** • Fair Work Commission Aged Care Wage Increase: Increases in award wages in aged care on work value grounds sit at up to 28.5% for direct care workers.[xxvi] • Workforce estimated shortfall of 110,000 direct care workers projected in aged care alone in 2030.[xxvii] • The Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety has recommended a minimum qualification for the personal care workforce. Implementation of qualification requirements will likely increase demand for qualifications, and placing direct pressure on the VET teachers, trainers and assessors.[xxviii] **Disability services:** • Workforce estimated shortfall of 100,000 workers in disability in 2030.[xxix] • NDIS reform continues to shape the disability services workforce, which creates uncertainty and places pressure for RTOs and teachers, trainers and assessors who are delivering training. • Number of active NDIS participants has increased by 42% from 2021 to 2024.[xxx]
Children's education and care sector	• 22 of the 27 children's education and care (CEC) occupations had shortages in one or more jurisdictions, and 11 have national shortages, impacting the pipeline of professionals who can move into VET.[xxxi] • 15% wage increase for early childhood education and care (ECEC) workforce over 2 years from December 2024 (The Worker Retention Payment). [xxxii]

Sector	Current or recent industry challenges and changes
	• $1.4 billion over 5 years from 2026–27 to states and territories to deliver *Thriving Kids*. This package includes $139.7 million to facilitate *Thriving Kids* services for children in ECEC settings.[xxxiii] • $60.8 million over 5 years from 2026–27 has been provided to support workforce development and training, including dedicated funding for the First Nations workforce, for ECEC and to support the workforce to deliver *Thriving Kids.*[xxxiv.] • Introduction of a new National Early Childhood Worker Register strengthens regulatory oversight and creates national record for who is working in services and where.[xxxv]
Health	• Between 2023 and 2035, baseline supply and demand, for example in nursing, are projected to increase. However, supply is not expected to keep pace with demand.[xxxvi] • As of November 2024, registered nurses projected employment is set to increase by 24%, with nursing support and personal care workers up 30.9% by 2034.[xxxvii] • Dental technicians remain on the national shortage list across most jurisdictions.[xxxviii]
Human (community) services	• Welfare Support Workers employment projected to increase 18.7% by May 2034, Social workers by 31.8% and Welfare, Recreation and Community Arts Workers by 29.4%.[xxxix] • Increased family violence rates place pressure on workers and services amidst calls for a federal Royal Commission.[xl] • Proportion of people who reported having accessed support from a mental health professional more than doubled from 2009 to 2021.[xli]
Sports and recreation	• Enrolments in *SIS Sport, Fitness and Recreation Training Package* qualifications have declined in recent years, with the sharpest decline in 2022 of 6.8%.[xlii] • Jurisdictional shortages for fitness centre managers, outdoor adventure instructors, swimming coaches/instructors and gymnastic coach/instructors.[xliii] • *Major Sporting Events Legacy Framework* creates employment opportunities within the next decade as Australia will host more than 16 major sporting events from 2022-2032.[xliv] • Weekly sport and recreation participation has increased by 9.3% from 2010 to 2023.[xlv] • National and state governments' policy has prioritised women's sport participation by mandating gender equity targets and dedicating funding for facilities and equipment. This may result in greater female participation, and more women entering the VET workforce.[xlvi]

3. Demographic mismatch between teachers, trainers, assessors and students

The demographic and diversity of VET teachers, trainers and assessors do not match their students or the country.

This has direct implications for student outcomes and workforce quality. Key barriers stand in the way in building workforce diversity. Consultations highlighted promising practices and strategies used by RTOs to address this issue.

Gender

A large majority of survey respondents in teach, train and assess roles identified as female (84.7%). The only sector with a majority proportion of males was the sports and recreation sector (68.9%). Outside of teach, train and assess roles, the curriculum development and learning design segment had the highest proportion of males (26.1%).



Expanding the gender diversity of the VET workforce across care and support sectors could alleviate pipeline challenges that RTO face, increase a sense of belonging for existing male teachers, trainers and assessors and build a workforce that better represents students. Attracting males into the workforce, such as younger professionals who are looking to make a difference, or older males who have recently retired from the industry sector, could be avenues to explore. It is important to note that for some sectors, such as children's education and care, there will be challenges in doing this. HumanAbility should consider gender responsiveness for key care and support sectors VET workforces and provide recommendations for industry and RTOs to reduce barriers and support building gender diversity in these workforces.

First Nations

Research collected by HumanAbility found that 4.5% of survey respondents identified as First Nations, with the smallest proportion of respondents in children's education and care (1.1%). Some sectors were higher than reported by JSA (2% in 2021), [xlix] however, this may be attributed to the smaller sample size of HumanAbility surveys.



[4] Student population is the total number of students enrolled in CHC, HLT and SIS training packages 2024

Building First Nations representation in the VET workforce is important. First Nations students are known to achieve better outcomes when taught by First Nations teachers, trainers and assessors, where teaching in Indigenous language can improve student success, particularly in remote areas.[lii] Having a strong First Nations workforce is necessary not only for growing student enrolments but also achieving improved student completions and outcomes.

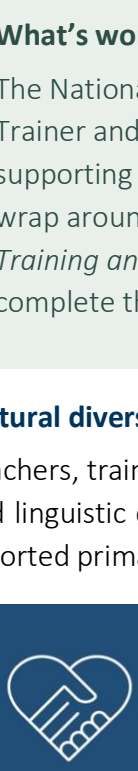
Positively, the First Nations VET workforce has seen recent growth, at a higher rate that the mainstream VET workforce (18% between 2016 and 2021 vs. 1% growth).[liii]

What's working

The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) First Nations Trainer and Assessor Demonstration project has received positive feedback in successfully supporting First Nations professionals into teach, train and assess roles. The program provides wrap around support for professionals while they undertake the *TAE40116 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment*, and at the end of 2025 had supported over 40 First Nations workers to complete the qualification. The program has recently received funding to expand this training.[liv]

Cultural diversity

Teachers, trainers and assessors in care and support sectors also do not appear to fully reflect the cultural and linguistic diversity of modern Australia. A small proportion (5.2%) of teachers, trainers and assessors reported primarily speak a language other than English (LOTE) in their home.



This proportion is:

- lower than in the care and support student population (**22.8%**)[xlviii]
- lower than in the whole Australian workforce (**23.4%**)[xlix]

Survey data also indicated that migration pathways are almost entirely unused as a pipeline, where these findings are consistent with JSA's conclusion that migration pathways are used infrequently for VET roles. Overseas qualified professionals noted that they face significant barriers to entry, where their qualifications must be assessed, visas approved and teaching credentials approved and issued by a higher education provider as defined in the *Higher Education Support Act.*[lvii] Often this means that overseas qualifications cannot be used to deliver training and assessment.

One survey respondent noted that despite holding several qualifications and significant previous experience, they were required to retrain entirely upon emigrating to Australia. Consultations suggested that even when RTOs are motivated to assist professionals to join via this pathway, the process for is ambiguous and unclear for both the organisation and individual applicant.



"When I first emigrated to Australia, getting into the VET sector had huge barriers. My qualifications and experience were not accepted in Australia despite having a teaching qual, a training qual, a degree, a master's, and lots of experience. I had to re-train to get into the VET sector here."

Teacher

Long term health condition or disability

A notable proportion of the VET workforce for the care and support sectors appears to have a disability or long-term health condition (13.5% of teach, train and assess professionals). The proportion of the VET workforce with a disability cannot be compared to the student population as the data is presented as a combination of long-term health conditions and disabilities.

Impact of the workforce on student outcomes and attraction into the VET workforce

A diverse teaching workforce is significant for positive outcomes for students from minority groups. Previous research has found that teachers from minority groups hold higher expectations of minority group students, understand cultural issues and are able to act as role models to support student achievement, retention and engagement.[lviii] A less diverse workforce therefore negatively impacts student outcomes and reinforces disadvantage, as students may be less likely to identify with the teaching staff.[lix]

The lower gender and cultural diversity, as well as the proportion of First Nations professionals (in some sectors) when compared to students presents distinct challenges. For example, it could make it more difficult for VET workers and their employing RTOs to notice and know how to respond to learners and staff in these cohorts. This means learners and staff may not ask for, or receive, reasonable adjustments, or suggestions and linkages to support services, or may experience a lower sense of belonging. Each of these can negatively impact staff and student wellbeing and retention. Impacts may also be seen on attraction, where professionals may never consider applying for a career in VET as they do not see others like them already working in the sector.

4. Structural pressures and workforce challenges are driving the loss of teachers, trainers and assessors

A high proportion of the workforce intend to remain in their role in the next 2 years, but daily pressures and system challenges may reduce this intention over time.

Professionals who enter the VET sector are motivated to make a difference and share their expertise. Once in the role, feeling connected to colleagues, to industry and having a strong support system facilitate retention. Seeing the impact of meaningful work, clearly understanding responsibilities and having access to development opportunities further support intention to stay.

However, there are also significant challenges that individuals face, which when combined with wider structural pressures, may push the workforce back into industry or retirement.

Many professionals intend to remain in the sector

Over 80% of teach, train and assess respondents in the care and support VET workforce intend to remain in their role in the next 2 years, with minimal differences seen between sectors. This research found key factors that help retain the workforce and contribute to over 84% to say they would recommend working in VET to a friend.

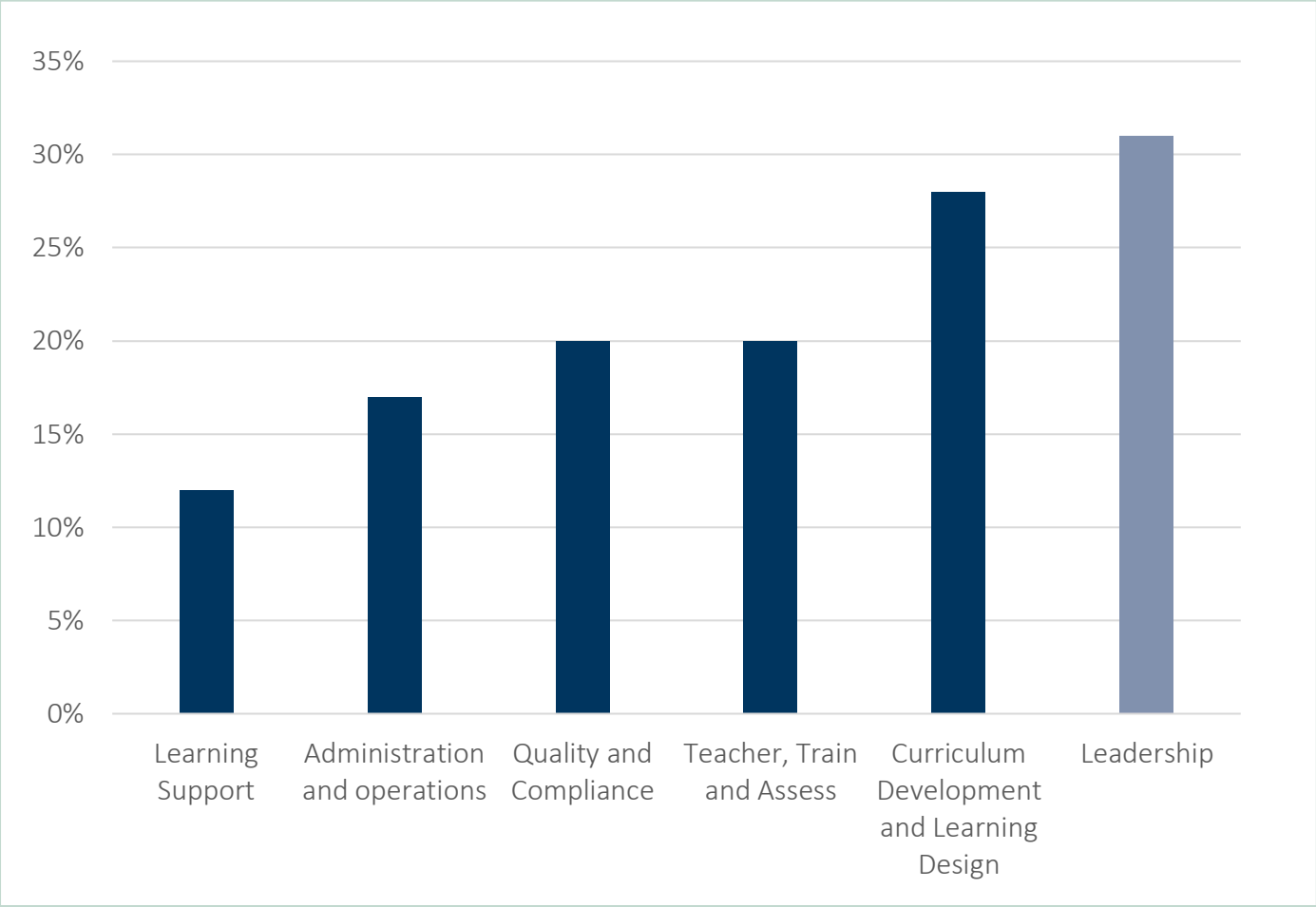
RTO managers and decision makers in our workshops also described using increased remuneration, flexible work time, paid training, compliance assistance, communities of practice and investment in 1:1 coaching/mentors as key strategies to retain the VET workforce.

However, it was seen that certain cohorts within teach, train and assess roles are more likely to leave their role in the next 2 years, particularly those who are:

- employed at a private RTO
- have worked in VET for more than 10 years
- live and work in rural or remote areas
- hold a role outside of VET
- work part-time
- over 60 years old

Outside of teach, train and assess roles, professionals currently in leadership and compliance and learning development roles were more likely to indicate they are likely to leave their position for the next 2 years (31% and 28% respectively, **Figure 8**). Discussions with stakeholders raised pipeline challenges for these leadership positions, noting challenges in recruiting professionals to manage and lead in complex VET environments. One suggestion to mitigate this challenge was to improve pathways within VET, both laterally and vertically.

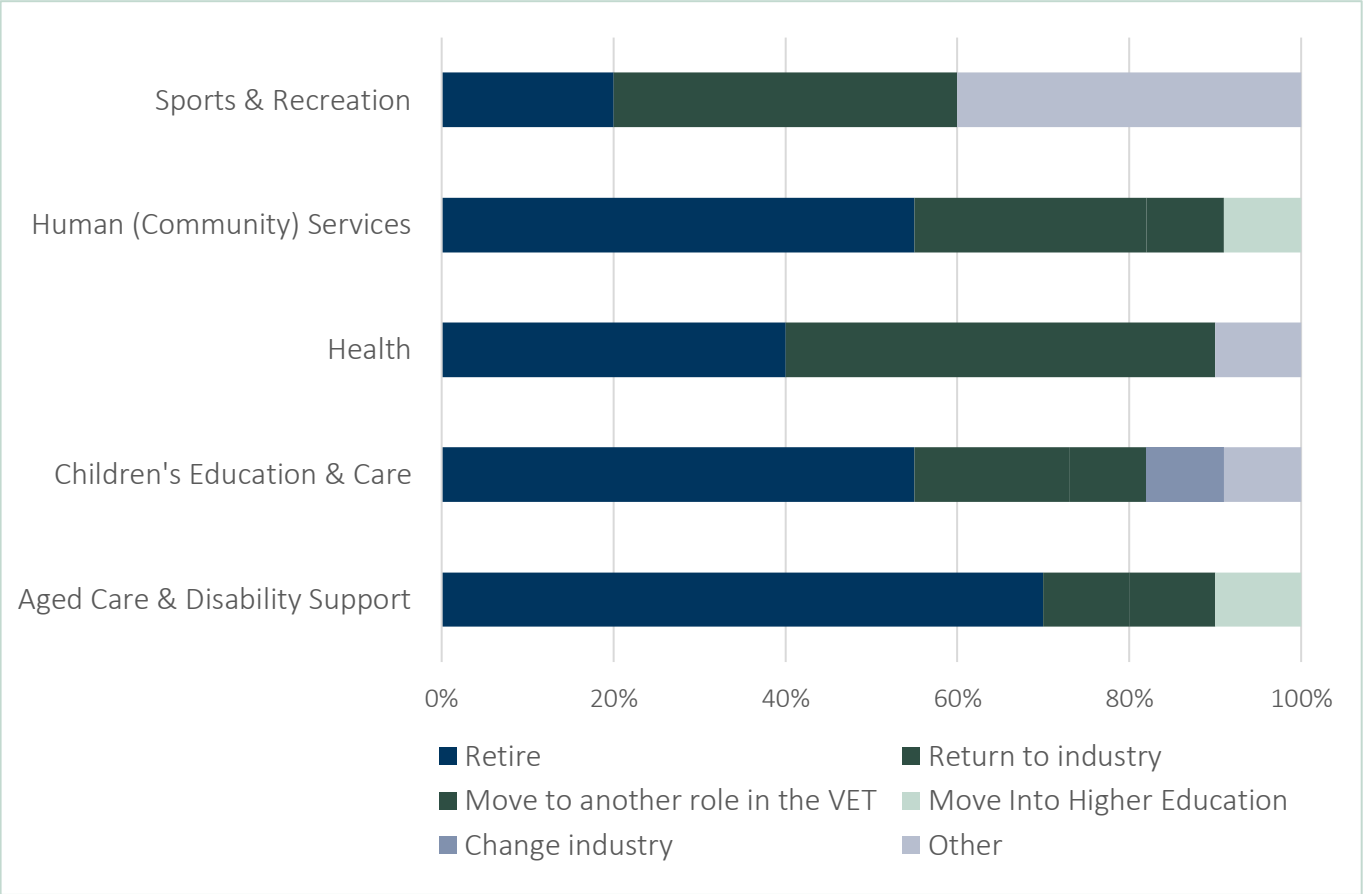
Figure 8: Intention to leave varies across VET workforce roles



Retirement is not the only destination

With an ageing VET workforce, it would be expected that a high proportion plan to leave the workforce to retire, however, it is important to note this is not the sole pathway out (**Figure 9**). A portion of those planning to leave their role will move back into industry or higher education, suggesting that either barriers or challenges are pushing them out, or there are benefits that are pulling them back in. Open-ended survey responses suggested salary did not match development and progression within VET, prompting a search for roles elsewhere. Within the children's education and care sector, 9% who plan to leave report intending to move out of the sector entirely due to negative experiences or concerns for the future of their role.

Figure 9: A cohort of teachers, trainers and assessors intend to move back to industry



Individual and system challenges impact teachers, trainers and assessors regularly

Primary research surfaced there are multiple barriers to retention:

- fragmented or non-existent onboarding
- high levels of administration and compliance
- increasing pastoral responsibilities
- racism in the workplace
- a mismatch between perception of role and reality of responsibilities
- limited or costly development
- a lack of knowledge around the growing use of technology
- navigating changing or outdated training products.

Collectively, these barriers may have contributed to over two-thirds of the teachers, trainers and assessors somewhat or strongly agreeing with the statement ***'at my VET role I experience high levels of work-related frustration and exhaustion'*** (69.9%).

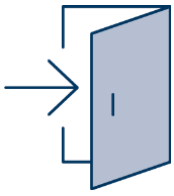


"We are every year burdened with tasks that are not core to our reason for existence. Student needs, compliance, uncertainties with funding, changes to industrial relations which don't reflect our sectors' needs. There is enough to do in the classroom to provide an engaging and effective program to students without the hours of additional compliance work each evening on top of this."

Survey respondent

This was greatest for those who have been in the VET workforce for over 10 years (75.1%), suggesting that over time, these barriers may act as a mechanism which prompts professionals to move out of the workforce. Often the impact of these barriers is exaggerated for the workforce located in remote, regional and rural areas, who are further impacted by housing shortages, increased travel costs and limited development opportunities.

The infographic on the next page provides an example of the significant barriers a teacher who responded to our survey faced at different points in their VET career (**Figure 10**).[5]

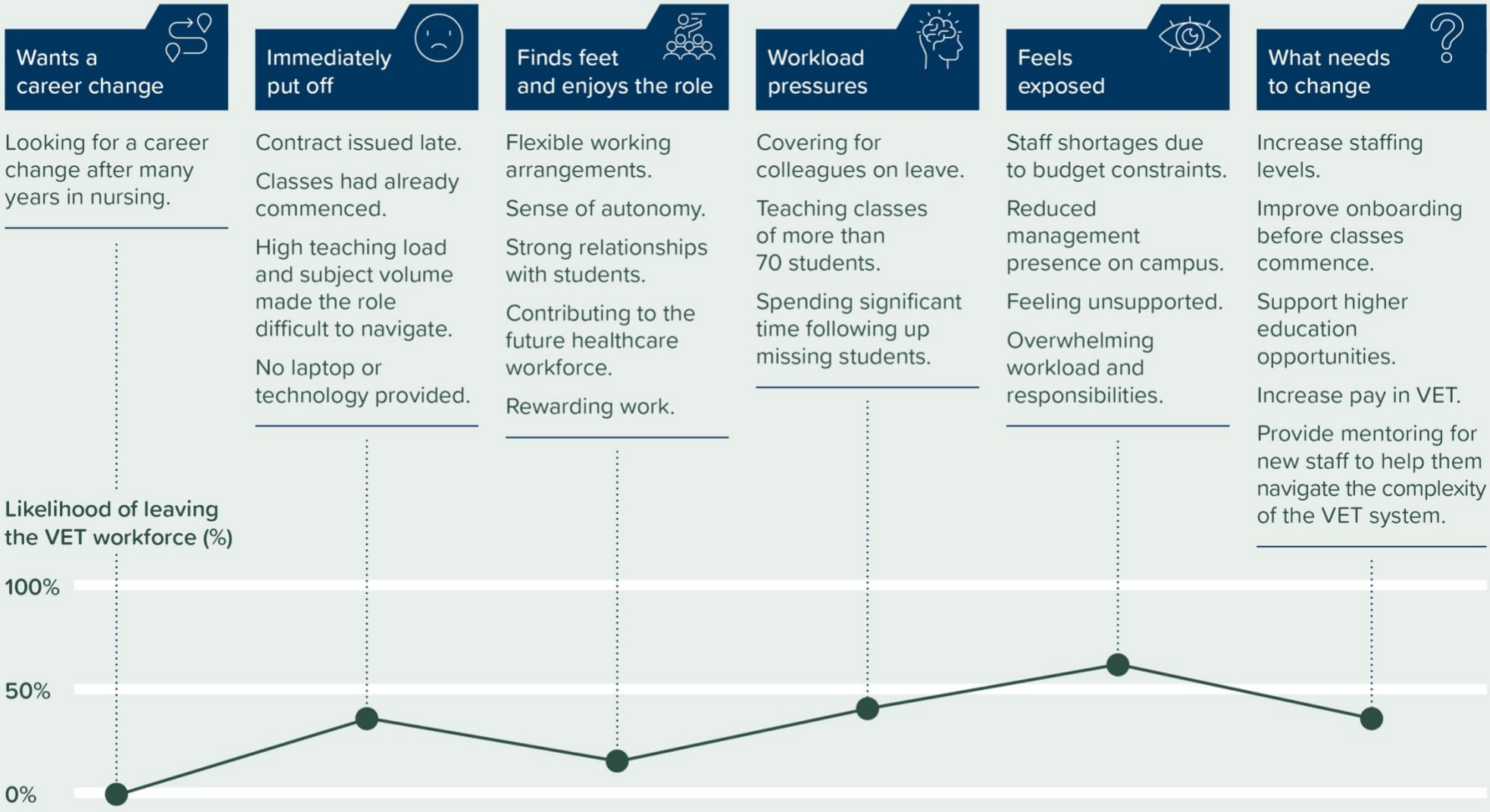


Administrative and compliance demands become mechanisms that prompts experienced VET professionals to leave the workforce.

[5] *Likelihood of departure is estimated on survey responses. The figures are indicative, drawn from qualitative answers rather than a self-reported score. A pseudonym name has been assigned to maintain anonymity.*

Figure 10: Barriers are present at all stages of working in VET

Claire is a registered nurse with 20 years of experience who moved into VET training for a career change. This infographic tracks how her self-reported likelihood of leaving the VET workforce changes over time. It starts low, rises sharply when onboarding goes poorly, settles as she gains confidence in the role, and then increases again as ongoing structural pressures build, leaving her questioning whether to stay.



Administration and compliance

Compliance and administration are taking increasing amounts of time and require new skills and knowledge to be developed. While some administration is to be expected, respondents highlighted that these responsibilities are growing and now negatively affecting their ability to perform their role, with those intending to leave their role more likely to agree (92.0% vs 73.9%). The complexity of the VET sector increases the challenges felt when performing compliance and administrative tasks, where funding models, reporting structures, and changing regulators and contractors all take considerable time to understand.

Pastoral responsibilities

Although pastoral responsibilities are taking up more of professionals' time (84.7% agreed), this does not always negatively impact their ability to perform core functions (65.4% agreed). Despite not always affecting core functions, it was noted that finding time for 'pastoral care, incident reports, debriefing after highly emotional interactions and student disclosures' is extremely challenging, particularly for part-time or casual staff.

Consultations highlighted existing strategies such as creating social and emotional wellbeing officer roles to reduce the pastoral burden felt by teachers, trainers and assessors and providing staff with specific additional training in mental health care and suicide prevention. To support this, increased resourcing around student pastoral care, particularly in sectors where students are more likely to have unhealed trauma and lived experience, is required. Stakeholders suggested:

- limiting class sizes
- offering second facilitators when delivering sensitive topics (child abuse, domestic and family violence, suicide)
- providing in hours or external support for students

Recent research by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) into effective teaching and learning has provided some support for these professionals. The findings offer strategies and resources for skill development to manage changing student needs.[lx] The recently released *Trainer and Assessor Guide* in supporting VET student mental health and wellbeing aims to provide support by offering guidance on recognising mental ill-health early warning signs and how to respond.[lxi] As this is a newly available resource, the impact is unknown, however it can be suggested that wider system support and resourcing is needed in addition to individual guides.

Technological advancements

Teachers, trainers and assessors reported feeling confident using the technological systems and tools required for their role, with no difference for older demographics. However, RTO managers raised concerns in consultations around low levels of digital literacy in the context of the assessment process, increasing student use of AI tools and the rapid digitalisation and use of technology across the industry sectors. There are 2 key challenges concerning AI; teachers, trainers and assessors will be required to manage and assess student use of it but also prepare students for work where job roles and tasks are changing with the introduction of AI. HumanAbility will be researching into AI developments across the care and support sector and should consider the impact that AI developments will have on students and

teachers within the VET sector. Upskilling will be important for teachers, trainers and assessors; however, consideration must be given from RTOs as to when, where are how professionals can structure time and funding to do this.

Funding

Many RTOs, especially smaller private providers or non-profit organisations, face persistent structural barriers between required resources and available funding, with impacts attraction, retention and development. Professional development and industry currency activities, onboarding and mentorship programs and technological changes (online delivery) all require funding investments, but this may often not be allocated. Larger RTOs and TAFEs have greater capacity to absorb some of these costs, while others operate with fewer resources.

Consequences of underfunding are also seen in the limited ability to offer permanent positions. Survey responses highlighted this most clearly in the Sports and Recreation sector, where 73.4% of teachers, trainers and assessors strongly agreed that changing funding impacts job security, and 75% strongly agreed that changing funding impacts their performance. The impact of funding is worsened for smaller, private or non-profit organisations, where teachers, trainers and assessors leave to move to TAFEs or larger RTOs, who can often offer greater salary and benefits. Fee-Free TAFE can further impact these organisations. While the courses provide many benefits for learners, workers, and the community, Fee-Free TAFE can have unintended impacts on private RTOs. Stakeholders highlighted that when students exploit or misappropriate Fee-Free TAFE, impacts are visible to private or non-profit organisations, with smaller proportions of enrolments or course funding cuts.

Greater transparency and prolonged certainty of funding for RTOs would enable them to provide year-round work opportunities for trainers, which ensures job security and fosters commitment to the organisation.

Racism in the workplace

HumanAbility's research, supported by findings presented in the recently released First Nations VET Workforce Research Paper (2026) presents evidence of racism as a significant challenge within the VET workforce, which disproportionately affects First Nations professionals.[lxii] A portion of teach, train and assess respondents (13.3%) across the care and support VET workforce agreed they have experienced racism in their role. For First Nations VET teachers, trainers and assessors this rises to 43.7% who agree or strongly agree. This is in line with findings presented by JSA, where across the VET sector 51% of First Nations VET professionals experience racism annually in their role. Experiencing high levels of racism will likely lead to attrition of the workforce. It is critical that workforce solutions, government, RTOs, peak bodies and employers address racism through investment in responses that are specifically designed to be community led through partnerships with First Nation communities.

First Nations VET workforce and rural and remote challenges

Findings from JSA's research presents additional barriers which impact the First Nations VET workforce, including challenging components within the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and uncompetitive employment conditions. Professionals are often constrained by cultural views that work life is separate from non-work life and see increased cultural responsibilities to organise events and training. Suggestions in the report highlight building relationships with communities that are place-based, ensuring workplaces are physically and culturally safe, and focusing on recruitment, retention and career progression.[lxiii]

HumanAbility research further identified specific rural and remote challenges which impact the workforce, where housing challenges and limited access to technology can push teachers, trainers and assessors out of the organisation. One organisation in Broome, WA, highlighted that extreme weather and cyclone seasons, combined with limited accommodation options impacts firstly attracting, but then retaining professionals, where a range of financial and other incentives are required to create a sustainable workforce.

RTOs consulted have taken a multi-faceted approach to attract and retain First Nations VET professionals, prioritising cultural safety, inclusion, and long-term workforce development. Reconciliation action plans (RAPs) are a key component, using targeted recruitment strategies and cultural awareness training to build staff capability in fostering respectful and inclusive work environments and organisational cultural learning plans to embed long-term cultural awareness across all staff levels.

Absent career pathways and professional development challenges

Despite career progression being cited as a main factor to pull individuals into the VET workforce, development once in a teach, train and assess role was frequently cited as challenging. Unlike other professions, VET teachers, trainers and assessors do not have a clearly defined career pathway and often do not have access to adequate support in defining their progression. Potential job applicants cannot easily see where a VET career may take them, and the existing workforce cannot identify how to progress within VET. Interchangeable role titles, an unclear remit of responsibilities and a focus on role functions versus a professional identity contribute to professionals feeling unsure on how and where to develop. Lack of role clarity is particularly apparent for professionals in smaller RTOs, and for those who hold additional VET roles (for example curriculum design).

Career pathways and development should be highlighted and driven by RTOs, through regular performance appraisals, opportunities to move vertically and laterally within the organisation and by highlighting meaningful development opportunities. However, nearly a third (30%) of survey respondents do not have regular performance appraisals or performance reviews and over 70% are currently not pursing any qualifications. This is particularly significant for those looking to move into leadership positions, where some RTOs mandate a diploma to be held for the role.

In some industries, teachers, trainers and assessors who work part-time are required to maintain professional regulation (e.g., Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency, AHPRA). These professionals noted fewer challenges, where regulators can provide external guidance and validation of appropriate focus areas for development, along with a specific period within which evidence of activities must be gathered. Additionally, some RTOs, such as the Chisholm Institute, have used strategies to streamline career progression pathways, for example, using a self-assessment tool to support tailored professional development.

Wider system support is required through clear definitions of teach, train and assess responsibilities, promotion of existing tools and support, development of career frameworks and funding to support engagement in activities.

Incentivise professionals to stay

Lack of career progression structures makes it difficult to show what salary progressions can or should be expected. As teachers, trainers and assessors assume greater responsibilities and increased workloads, the absence of a corresponding increase in salary can lead to feeling undervalued and risk staff turnover. Recommendations from workshops included a review of the wage structure within VET, to ensure that it reflects qualifications held and workload, along with aligning pay with industry standards.

Sustaining industry relationships is challenging

Teachers, trainers and assessors sometimes feel distant from industry and disconnected from the changes that directly impact their work. This feeling of disconnect creates multiple challenges, as professionals struggle to identify how and where to maintain industry currency, find it difficult to source placement opportunities for students and face challenges when implementing updated training packages. For many, holding relationships with those in industry sits at an individual rather than organisational level, making it difficult for teachers, trainers and assessors, particularly those new to the workforce, to know who to reach out to in industry. Experiences of high turnover in industry increases this challenge, as key contacts often frequently change and are lost. Challenges finding student placements and reduced opportunities for trainers to be sent to site adds to the challenge for the individual to create and sustain meaningful relationships.

Building strong ties with industry could enable workers to move from industry into VET part-time, as subject matter experts or under supervision to complete the TAE. These ties could also illuminate professional development and industry currency activities that might be available within industry and suitable for teacher's, trainers and assessors. Stronger relationships could increase awareness of industry needs, explain how these needs have been translated into updated training packages, enable more student placement opportunities, and highlight the skills and qualifications required by the industry workforce. Industry could, and should, hold responsibility for providing support and guidance when implementing the updated curriculum that they have informed. Jobs and Skills Councils can play a role in promoting companion volume implementation guides (CVIGs) and facilitating new industry – RTO relationships and strengthening existing ones.

Industry-led responses

In-depth discussions with stakeholders highlighted key challenges to focus on when considering possible industry-led actions and solutions. The following section of the report will first reintroduce and build on challenges already mentioned, before highlighting co-design and partnerships which developed practical tools and resources to support VET teachers, trainers and assessors.

The first highlights a mentor framework to support VET Trainers and Assessors, while the second co-designed, tested and evaluated a model and toolkit to support RTO – industry relationships when teachers, trainers and assessors maintain industry currency.



In depth discussions with stakeholders highlighted key challenges to focus on when considering possible industry-led actions and solutions.

1. Mentoring as a solution to support the VET workforce

Mentoring is critical and often missing.

Stakeholders highlighted that mentoring plays an important role at different points during a career in VET, but especially for teachers, trainers and assessors who are new to the VET workforce. Yet there are challenges in providing mentoring, where RTOs are often constrained from offering a program due to conflicting pressures and financial challenges. A mentor framework was identified as a resource that could reduce the burden and barriers in offering mentoring, by providing the foundations for consistent, high-quality mentoring, and being a valuable tool for RTOs to deliver mentoring programs.

Mentors can play multiple key roles

Onboarding sets the tone for the future experience of a new teacher, trainer or assessor with an RTO. Open ended survey responses highlighted that strong mentorship while transitioning into the workplace can reduce feelings of overwhelm and support successful onboarding. This included having a mentor a new teacher, trainer or assessor could shadow on the job and learn the systems and processes from. Yet there are currently inconsistencies in the offering of mentoring, with many feeling 'thrown into the role and VET sector'.

HumanAbility research highlighted that just under half (44.4%) of teachers, trainers and assessors disagree to receiving formal support (including a mentor) during application and onboarding. This was higher for First Nations teachers, trainers and assessors, where 57.1% strongly disagreed. For new teachers, trainers and assessors, this risks high churn as they navigate the complexity of the VET sector, a new employer and role, along with responsibilities to maintain compliance, industry currency and new digital skills, all of which are often navigated with minimal support.

The ageing VET workforce also presents a need for relationship building and knowledge transfer, to prevent industry and VET knowledge being lost. Mentoring can also be a mechanism to share guidance and insights with less experienced or transitioning colleagues.

A mentorship framework for VET trainers and assessors

Jobs and Skills Australia's *First Nations VET Workforce Research Paper*, identified that mentoring is one of the most promising practices to allow the VET workforce to grow, where the retention of a First Nations VET workforce can be assisted through mentoring schemes.[lxiv] Key findings of the TAE demonstration program (TAEDP) evaluation for NACCHO identified access to and satisfaction with mentoring as key process indicators to implement the TAEDP objectives (program details page 25). HumanAbility research also noted the importance of access to mentor programs for all VET professionals.[lxv]

In response to these findings, HumanAbility partnered with NACCHO to develop a mentor framework to support VET teachers and assessors. This area of work also supports opportunity 5 identified under DEWR's VET blueprint: Providing more support for early career teachers, trainers and assessors.[lxvi]

Scope and reach of framework

The framework has been designed to position mentoring as a developmental, strengths-based practice that supports capability building, professional identity, cultural safety, and workforce sustainability. The intention is to present a guide rather than a prescriptive model, to support consistent, high-quality mentoring while encouraging contextualisation and innovation. It is intended to be used by RTOs, managers and mentors to inform mentoring programs, agreements, and everyday practice.

Framework principles

The framework is designed as a guide, and should be adapted to suit local workforce needs, organisational size and delivery model, trainer and assessor experience levels, and regional, industry and learner contexts.

Contextualisation is a key component of the framework, as the VET workforce is diverse. Teachers, trainers and assessors may be new to training, working cross culturally, be casual/remote or work across different learner cohorts and delivery environments. This framework has identified key points where contextualisation should occur: Mentor and mentee selection criteria, duration and frequency of mentoring, delivery modes, cultural and community considerations, links to organisational policies and professional development plans.

Key principles to support effective mentoring in the VET sector:

- **respect and trust:** mentoring relationships are safe, confidential and non-judgemental
- **individual focus:** mentoring is tailored to mentee's goals, experience and context
- **collaboration:** learning is two-way and values shared experience
- **strength-based approach:** builds on existing skills and professional identity
- **reflective practice:** encourages critical thinking and continuous improvement
- **cultural responsiveness:** recognises and respects cultural identities and perspectives
- **flexibility:** adapts to changing needs over time.

Anticipated outcomes and impact

When effectively designed and implemented using the framework, mentoring may contribute to:

- high retention of teachers, trainers and assessors
- a confident, skilled and supported workforce
- work-ready practitioners who meet regulatory and learner needs
- improved quality of training and assessment delivery
- positive attraction and onboarding of new staff
- stronger organisational culture and professional identity

Additionally, the framework could help to:

- Build a sustainable, culturally safe VET workforce by providing training, mentoring and pathways for local educators, to strengthen the Aboriginal community-controlled health sector.
- Highlight effective mentoring programs that can be expanded and identifies culturally safe training components, wrap around supports, non-accredited training, and pathways in and within VET.
- Provide lessons to be shared in other sectors and guidance for contextualisation, including to other Jobs and Skills Councils (JSCs).
- Align approach for mentees, mentors and the organisation and enables access for individuals and organisations.

Testing and launch

The framework has been tested and finalised and will be publicly available later in the year.



Effective mentoring can strengthen retention, workforce capability and training quality.

2. Maintaining industry currency through strengthened RTO – industry partnerships

Research purpose

Industry currency is key in supporting the Care and Support workforce of the future

Industry currency is critical for teachers, trainers and assessors in the VET system. Keeping currency ensures that they can deliver and assess vocational training accordingly and is a requirement under the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) standards. This includes that training and assessment is delivered by persons with current industry skills and knowledge relevant to the training product (Standard 3.3).[lxvii] The standard means teachers, trainers and assessors must stay up to date with industry practices, technologies, and standards relevant to the training they deliver.

Industry currency holds many benefits (Appendix B); it enables student job preparedness, and it allows teachers, trainers and assessors to translate current industry practices into relevant, up-to-date learning. In the care and support economy, this includes developing judgement, intuition and decision-making alongside technical skills. This enables workers to effectively respond to complex and diverse client needs. Finally, while simulations help build confidence in applying core skills, they cannot fully replicate real-world complexity; industry currency therefore plays a vital role in helping students bridge this gap by providing realistic insights into working conditions, role expectations and how skills are applied in practice.

Maintaining currency is challenging

Consultations and surveys found that over half of respondents agree that it is very difficult to maintain industry currency (56.2%) and identified several challenges that stand in the way of professionals identifying, funding, completing and evidencing industry currency activities (Appendix C, Appendix D).

Challenges are exaggerated for those who are not connected back with industry through part-time or casual roles. Survey results showed that teachers, trainers and assessors with roles outside of VET (likely within their teaching sector) are more likely to strongly agree that they keep up with industry currency (81.9% vs 65.9% among those without such roles). Those who agreed it to be difficult were less likely to agree that they are connected to their industry sector (38% vs 45.6%).

There are barriers to completing currency activities

A compliance-focused interpretation narrows the perceived purpose of industry currency. It shifts attention away from teaching quality and towards audit compliance. This, combined with the flexible definition provided in ASQA Standard 3.3, has led to fragmented understanding across the sector and uncertainty about what constitutes valid industry currency activity.

Opportunities to maintain currency are directly influenced by relationships between industry and training organisations. These relationships are often informal and built at an individual level, making them difficult to sustain and vulnerable to staff turnover. Organisationally embedded partnerships offer more consistent and reliable access to industry insights and currency opportunities.

The perception that 'in industry' activities are the gold standard limits more creative and context-appropriate approaches to maintaining industry currency. Particularly in sectors such as aged care and disability services, where practical constraints and risk considerations restrict access to workplaces.

A narrow focus on the volume of activities shifts attention away from the quality and impact of engagement. In practice, the value of industry currency is shaped less by the number of activities undertaken and more by factors such as the depth of engagement, exposure to diverse perspectives, relevance to identified knowledge gaps, and the ability to translate learning into teaching practice.

A program of work to support teachers, trainers and assessors in maintaining industry currency

Stakeholders involved in initial research expressed the need to develop stronger relationships with industry to mitigate some of these barriers. Yet, there are challenges in doing this. RTOs and employers are limited on time, funding and sometimes an understanding of the value in assisting teachers, trainers and assessors to engage in activities.

HumanAbility partnered with Nous Group, an external contractor, to focus on what an RTO-industry model to maintain teacher, trainer and assessor industry currency might look like, and what tools and templates may best support this process. This research, which supports Action 5, Action 10 and Opportunity 4 of the *VET Workforce Blueprint,*[lxviii] invested in co-design and implementation of a pilot model and toolkits to support teachers, trainers and assessors to maintain and apply industry currency through strengthened industry-RTO partnerships. The project was highlighted by 2 high-level objectives as shown in **Figure 11**.

Figure 11: Overarching research objectives



Australian and international learnings

In Australia, Queensland's Industry Placement for VET Teachers program[lxix] provides opportunities for VET teachers to spend time in industry, refresh their skills, and keep their teaching aligned with current workplace practice. Internationally, Swedish and Finnish VET systems draw on teachers with industry experience and are strengthening work-based learning and apprenticeship models, creating new expectations for VET teachers.[lxx,lxxi] Other approaches involve bringing industry more directly into training, such as through employer input into curriculum development, program design, teaching and assessment. The Teach Too model, informed by the Commission on Adult Vocational Teaching and Learning, describes this as a collaborative relationship between providers and employers, where both contribute to making training more closely aligned with workplace practice.[lxxii,lxxiii]

Lessons from these initiatives highlight the importance of clear guidance, practical support and shared value in enabling teacher industry engagement.[lxxiv,lxxv] Research on VET practitioners suggests that approaches to maintaining industry and teaching currency can be inconsistent, reinforcing the need for clearer expectations and more consistent approaches to professional development.[lxxvi] Practical supports are also important. This includes managerial approval, funding, and backfill arrangements, so teachers can participate in industry placements without creating additional pressure on teaching, marking or other administrative responsibilities.[lxxvii] The benefits of industry engagement are also more likely to be realised when collaboration is useful for both providers and employers, and when teachers' industry insights are shared and applied in teaching practice rather than remaining with individual participants.[lxxviii,lxxix]



Industry engagement is most effective when providers and employers collaborate, and teachers' insights are applied in practice.

Pilot design

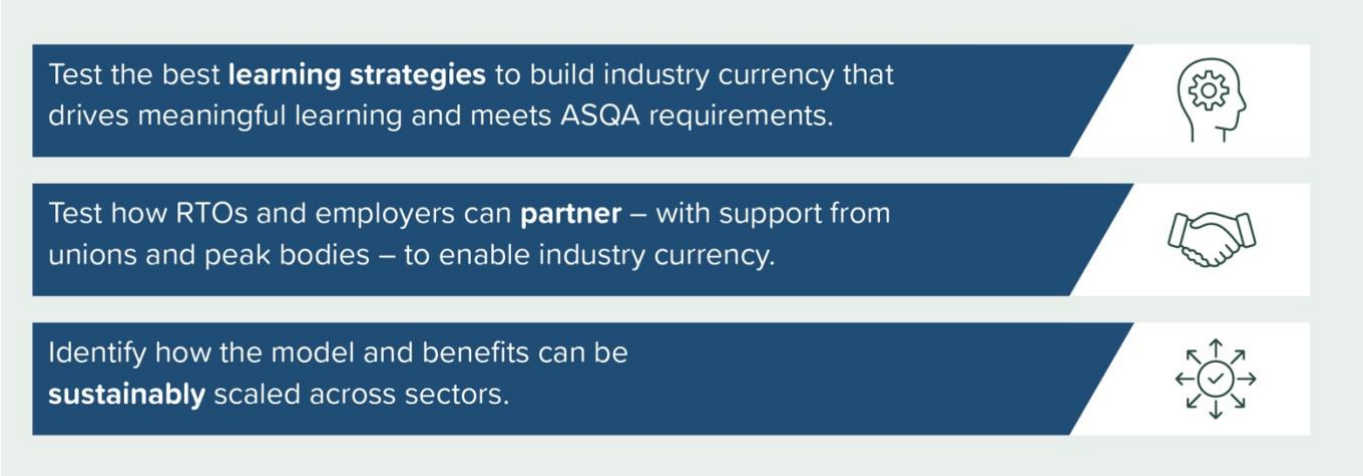
Targeted scope and scale drove rapid implementation

The pilot focused on addressing individual and organisational barriers to maintaining and applying industry currency, while strengthening collaboration between registered training organisations (RTOs) and industry partners. A deliberately narrow scope enabled rapid design and implementation, supporting timely and tangible outcomes for education providers, teachers, trainers and assessors and employers. Systemic challenges – such as consistent remuneration approaches for industry currency activities – sat outside the scope of the pilot.

Design objectives and principles

In line with the project's overarching research objectives (**Figure 11**) the pilot sought to test 3 design objectives to inform future refinement and potential scale-up of the model (**Figure 12**). Further information is available in Appendix E.

Figure 12: Model design objectives guided pilot implementation



Co-design participants identified a set of requirements critical to pilot success. These requirements informed the model design principles (**Figure 13**, Appendix F), which ensured the pilot model was designed to meet objectives and user needs. Refer to Appendix F for the pilot model design.

Figure 13: Model design principles



Diverse operating environments

Co-design engagement highlighted substantial variation in RTO and employer operating contexts. This included regional and remote environments where large geographic coverage creates challenges such as travel time, limited proximity between partners and a narrower range of services.

Shared understanding and flexibility underpinned model design

Rapidly evolving industry skill requirements, alongside differences in individual experience and training packages, introduced additional design complexity. This complexity was compounded by variation in operating environments. To address this, co-design participants agreed a working definition of industry currency (**Figure 14**) and a best-practice set of strategies and activities (**Table 3**).

Table 3: Best practice strategies and activities

Strategies	Activities
Role in industry	Completing temporary, casual or volunteering shifts
	Supervised shift in the workplace
	Scheduled community engagements with clients, families, carers and guardians
Peer-to-peer	Attending industry advisory groups
	Scheduled discussion with leaders, managers and/or SMEs in the workplace

Strategies	Activities
	Collaborating with an employer to deliver training in the industry employers' workplace
Training	Completing an internal training program in the industry employers' workplace
	Completing a professional development course relevant to required industry skills and knowledge
	Attending a conference relevant to required industry skills and knowledge
Community of practice	Attending a new or existing community of practice relevant to role and/or required industry skills and knowledge
	Scheduled internal discussion of industry changes and impact to training

Working definition

The working definition supported shared understanding across co-design and pilot participants. This was particularly important given differences in how the ASQA standard was interpreted across organisations.

Figure 14: Pilot working definition of industry currency

RTO Standard 3.3: Training and assessment is delivered by persons with current industry skills and knowledge relevant to the training product.	Industry currency is: • current working knowledge of practices, models of care, sector reforms, and legal and regulatory standards • an understanding of how industry changes impact operating environments, service delivery, and outcomes • an understanding of changing client expectations, service and care needs



Industry currency requires more than technical expertise. It includes understanding changing practice, service delivery and client needs.

Pilot delivery

Aged care and disability services sectors provided a rich testing ground

Insights were initially collected across all sectors within HumanAbility's remit. HumanAbility then piloted the model in the aged care and disability services sectors to build a robust evidence base. Together, demographic, industry and training dynamics across the aged care and disability sectors place increasing importance on maintaining a skilled, adaptable workforce and ensuring that training systems are equipped to meet both current and future care demands.

Demographic considerations

The aged care and disability services workforce is ageing and highly diverse. Two-thirds of care and support teachers, trainers and assessors are over 50, creating significant challenges around succession planning, skills transfer and long-term workforce sustainability. This is further compounded by projected workforce shortages—including an estimated shortfall of 110,000 aged care workers by 2030—and the need to continuously respond to digital and technological change.[lxxx]

Industry considerations

Rising demand from an ageing population and increasing awareness of disability supports and services is driving significant growth pressures, contributing to a workforce that is expanding at a rate 3 times faster than overall employment. [lxxxi] [lxxxii] Minimum qualifications for disability support or personal care work are being considered, where teachers of these qualifications will need to keep pace with industry change.

Increasing service demand, evolving regulations, new models of care, changing client demographics, and rapid technological change require workers to continually update their skills to maintain quality care, with flow-on implications for VET teachers, trainers and assessors, who must also refresh their industry expertise to deliver relevant, practice-aligned training.

Training considerations

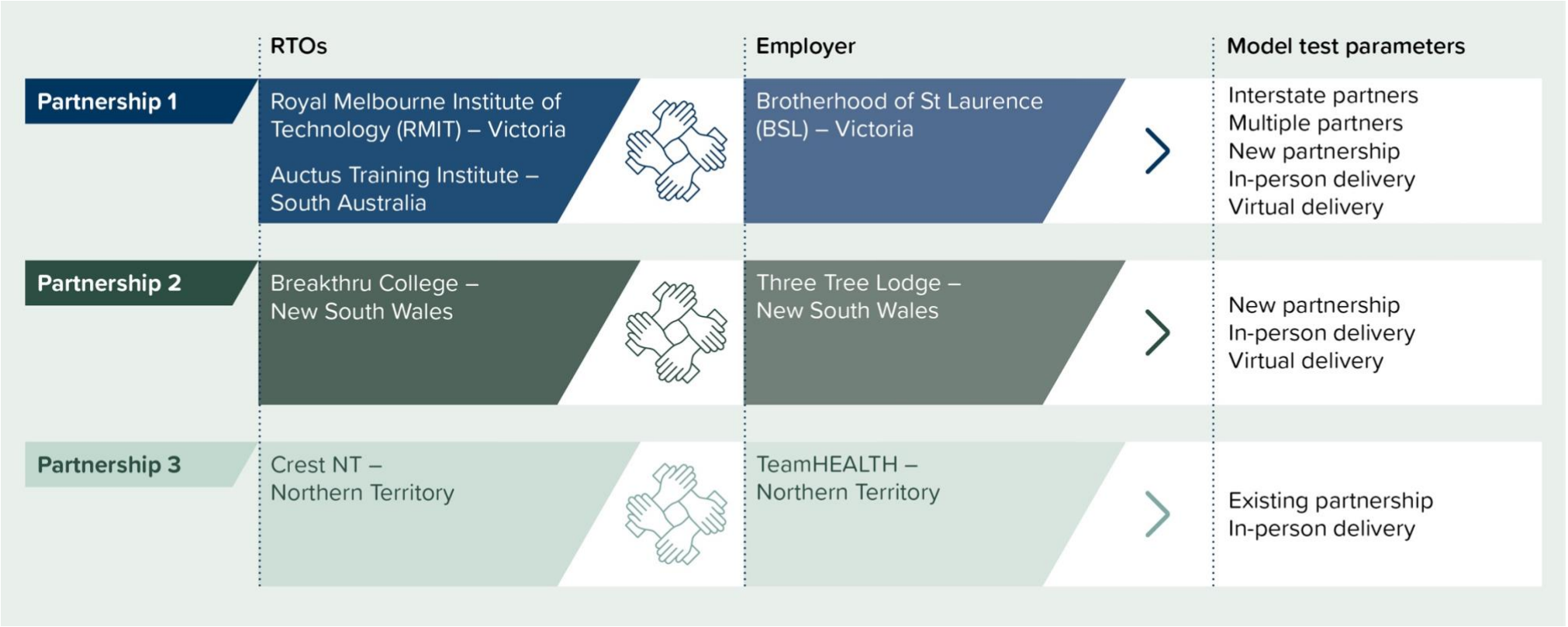
Certificate III qualifications dominate enrolments. The Certificate III in Individual Support, a core pathway qualification for aged care and disability services workers, is among the highest-enrolled qualifications, with enrolments in the tens of thousands annually (approximately 70, 000 in 2024).[lxxxiii]

Pilot implementation and partners

The pilot ran for 12 weeks, from mid-February to mid-May 2026. Four RTOs and 3 employers participated. RTOs invited 20 teachers, trainers and assessors to complete selected industry currency activities as part of the pilot. Partners were provided with a 'toolkit' which included the pilot model, and associated templates for each stage of the model to help them complete the activities.

Partnerships were purposefully formed across a range of testing parameters to assess sustainability and scalability of the pilot model (**Figure 15**). HumanAbility maintained close engagement with partners and worked with Verian, an independent evaluator, to maximise participation and appropriately contextualise findings.

Figure 15: Pilot partnerships and industry currency delivery test parameters



Pilot partners selected one or more industry currency strategies from a predefined set (**Table 3**).

This approach:

- prioritised activities identified by co-design participants as most meaningful and aligned with ASQA requirements
- reflected best practice in active learning, reflection and application
- provided clarity on expectations and confidence in compliance alignment

Together, these provided clarity while maintaining flexibility and gave participants confidence that selected activities met compliance requirements.

VET Industry Currency Pilot findings

The VET Industry Currency Pilot was designed to test an approach to strengthening industry currency among VET teachers, trainers and assessors that was centred on the establishment of structured partnerships between RTOs and industry. The evaluation assessed the implementation, effectiveness and early outcomes of the pilot, with a focus on short-term impacts and considerations for scalability. A mixed-methods approach was used which included surveys and interviews with teachers, trainers and assessors, RTOs, employers and sector stakeholders. At the outset of the evaluation, Verian worked collaboratively with HumanAbility and Nous Group to develop a program logic. The final program logic is available in Appendix D.

Summary of findings

- The pilot was positively received and demonstrated clear value in strengthening collaboration between RTOs and industry.
- The pilot contributed to positive short-term outcomes, particularly for teachers, trainers and assessors.
- There was a mismatch between expected and feasible industry currency activities.
- The model reduced several anticipated barriers but is not yet self-sustaining.
- There is strong appetite to continue industry currency activities beyond the pilot.

Overall, the pilot demonstrated that partnership-based approaches can strengthen industry currency and improve the relevance of teaching delivery. The pilot provides a strong foundation for future development; however, challenges around sustainability and scalability will need to be addressed. With targeted refinements and clearer supporting conditions, the model has the potential to support more consistent and scalable approaches to industry currency across the sector.

Toolkit findings

What was working

- Most survey respondents agreed the toolkit contained the right type and amount of information
- Some participants used it to inform questions and structure early partnership conversations

What wasn't working

- Uptake was highly selective and front-loaded
- Unclear distribution pathways limited access to key toolkit materials
- Usability issues hindered practical application and collaboration

Research limitations that influenced evaluation

Several factors influenced the evaluation:

- The 12-week pilot timeframe limited the breadth of activities tested
- Short sign-up periods favoured organisations with higher readiness and experience, potentially skewing findings
- Internal approval processes constrained participation
- Longer-lead activities were harder to deliver within the pilot timeframe
- Competing commitments limited some teacher, trainer and assessor participation

Outcomes and impact

A diverse range of pilot activities were offered and completed by teachers, trainers and assessors, including opportunities not otherwise accessible

Teachers, trainers and assessors were offered a broad range of activities through the pilot, spanning workplace engagement, professional development, industry exposure and practical learning opportunities. Across all activities, a greater proportion of teachers, trainers and assessors reported intending to undertake these activities as part of the pilot than outside of it, suggesting the pilot expanded access to opportunities that may not otherwise have been available.

The activities most completed by teachers, trainers and assessors included:

- attending industry advisory group/s (82%)
- attending scheduled discussions with leaders, managers and/or subject matter experts in the aged care and/or disability support services sector (73%)
- attending a scheduled internal discussion of industry changes and impact to training (64%)
- completing a relevant professional development course (45%)
- attending an existing community of practice (45%)

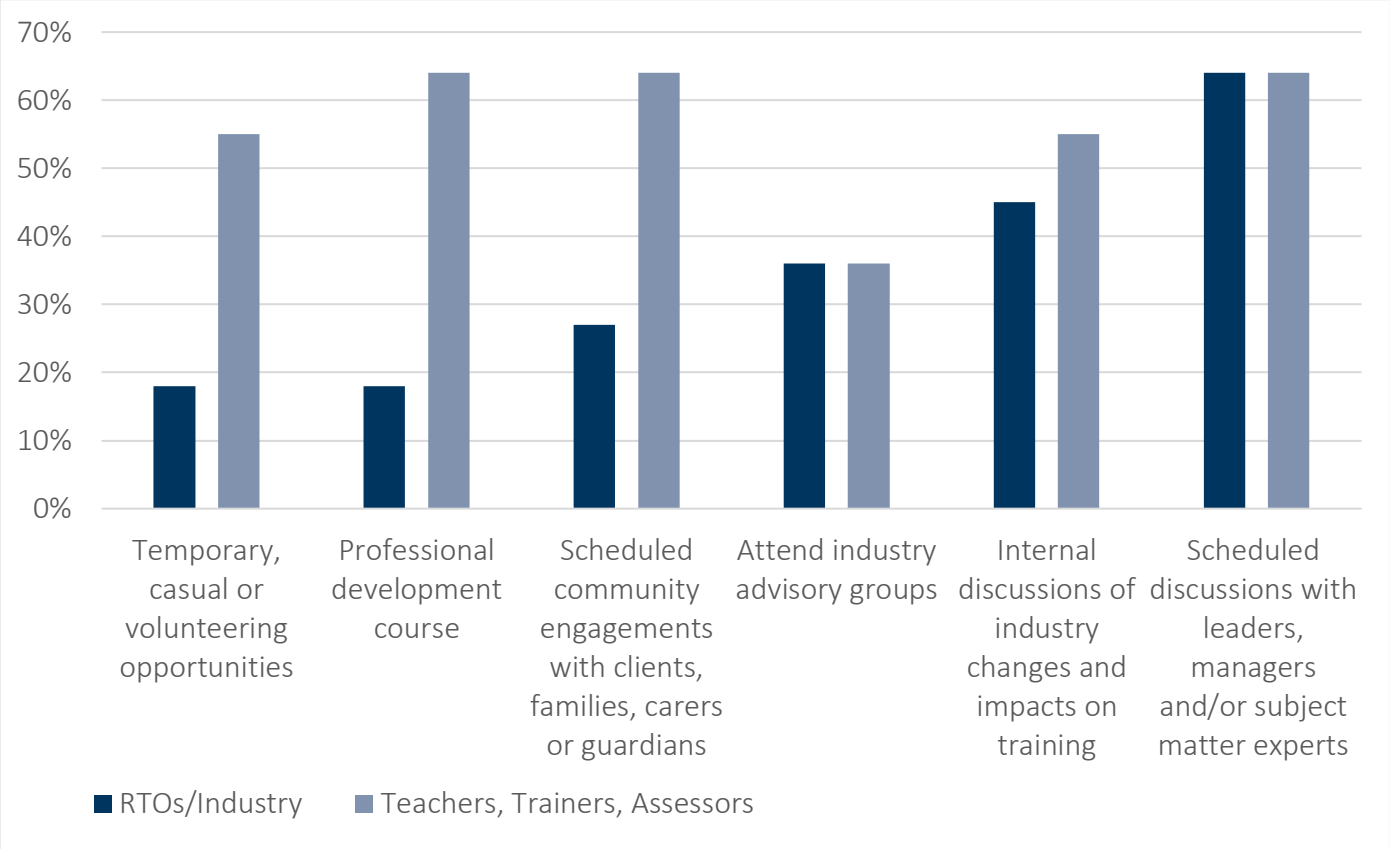
Key takeaways for future engagements:

- acknowledge practical constraints: Hands-on activities require significant coordination, employer matching, and lead time, making them difficult to execute within a short pilot timeframe.
- align expectations upfront: Future programs must ensure transparent communication about realistically available activities to close the gap between teacher, trainer and assessor aspirations and provider capacity.

RTOs and industry partners showed a strong preference for facilitating discussion-based activities over practical, hands-on engagements

Findings suggest that teachers, trainers and assessors may have had stronger expectations of undertaking direct, hands-on activities than what RTOs and industry partners were able, or intending, to offer within the pilot timeframe (**Figure 16**).

Figure 16: RTO and Industry showed preference for discussion-based activities



These differences may reflect both the practical challenges of facilitating workplace-based activities and potential lack of clarity about which activities were realistically available through the pilot. Hands-on activities are likely to require more coordination, employer matching, consideration of location and course relevance, and sufficient lead time.

There was broad alignment between planned and delivered activity

Comparing activities that RTOs and industry partners intended to offer with those they reported delivering suggests alignment between planning and execution. Completion rates did vary by activity type, with practical constraints notably affecting direct workplace-based experiences.

Overall, this suggests that RTOs and industry partners generally had a clear understanding of the activities they intended to offer and, in many cases, delivered these activities within the pilot timeframe. However, when considered alongside the earlier comparison with teacher, trainer and assessor expectations, the findings suggest there may have been some lack of shared understanding between teacher, trainer and assessor and RTOs/industry partners about which activities were available, feasible or likely to be delivered as part of the pilot.

Teachers, trainers and assessors reported using pilot learnings to strengthen the industry relevance of their teaching

Within the pilot toolkits provided to teachers, trainers and assessors, a gap analysis template was included which intended to support participants to reflect on their existing industry currency and identify areas where further development may be required.

Post pilot, teachers, trainers and assessors who had completed a gap analysis were then asked to identify the specific skills or knowledge they had updated under each unit of competency, these findings are summarised in (**Table 4**).[6] They suggest that the pilot helped some teachers, trainers and assessors refresh teaching content in areas closely aligned with contemporary individual support, ageing and disability support practice.

Table 4: Strengthened relevance of teaching

Among those who completed a gap analysis:	
Unit of competency	**Skills or knowledge updated**
CHC33021 Certificate Ill in Individual Support	Person-centred care, documentation, NDIS goal alignment, digital care systems, equipment use (hoists, slings)
CHC43015 Certificate IV in Ageing Support	Supporting clients with dementia, health-informed care, escalating concerns
CHC43121 Certificate IV in Disability Support	Advanced person-centred practice, behaviour support, NDIS compliance & reporting

Open-ended responses suggest that the pilot supported teachers, trainers and assessors to strengthen the industry relevance of their teaching in several ways. Participants intended to apply their pilot learnings by making teaching more current, practical and aligned with contemporary support work, particularly in relation to documentation, compliance, person-centred care, inclusion and applied workplace practice (Appendix H).

Outcome measures suggest positive shifts across each cohort, while highlighting areas for further refinement

Teachers, trainers and assessors reported improved access, participation, manageability and practical support industry currency activities.

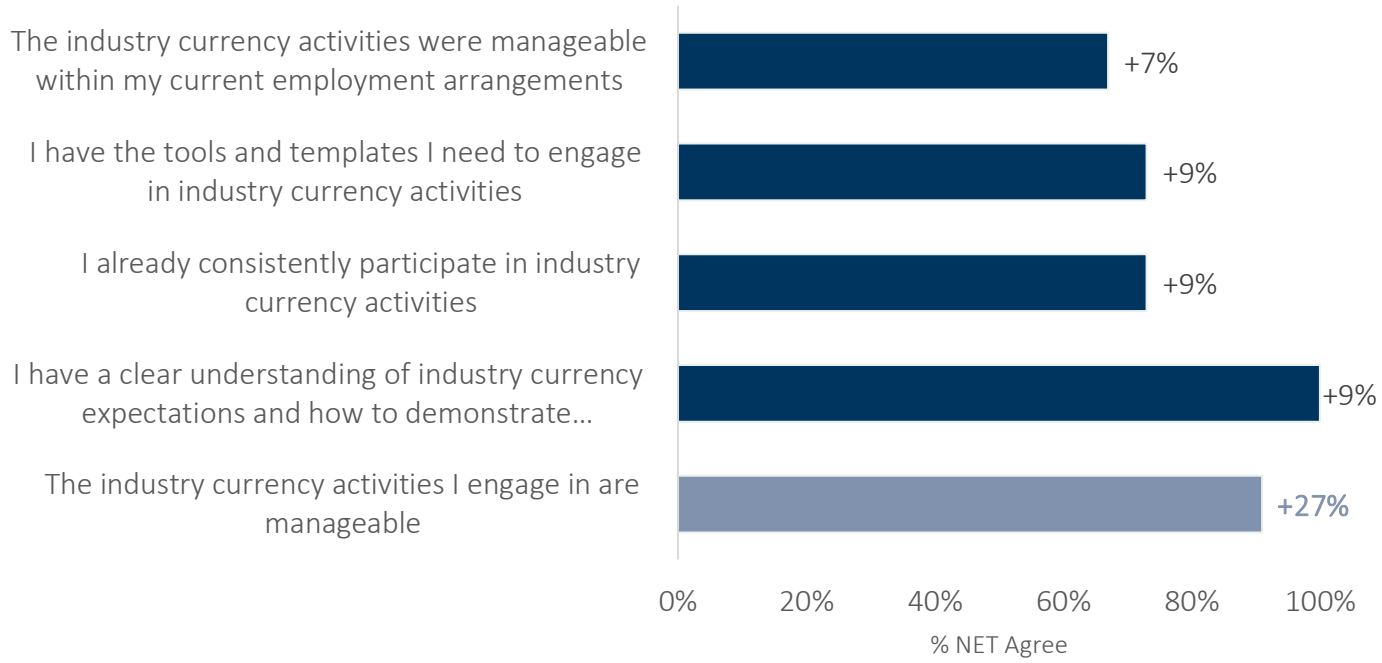
[6] 45% of teachers, trainers and assessor did not complete the gap analysis. Given the small number of responses, these findings should be interpreted as illustrative examples rather than representative themes.

Qualitative context

- Teachers, trainers and assessors generally entered the pilot with an existing strong understanding of industry currency.
- The pilot helped some teachers, trainers and assessors broaden their view of industry currency beyond direct workplace exposure, including peer learning and knowledge sharing.
- However, some teachers, trainers and assessors expected more hands-on or workplace-based opportunities, which may explain lower ratings on pilot effectiveness and sector connection.

Outcome measures collected at baseline suggested that teachers, trainers and assessors entered the pilot with relatively strong levels of confidence, understanding and perceived capability in relation to industry currency. Post-pilot, teachers, trainers and assessors continued to report strong levels of confidence and understanding in relation to industry currency, with some improvements across measures relating to access, participation, manageability and practical support (**Figure 17**).

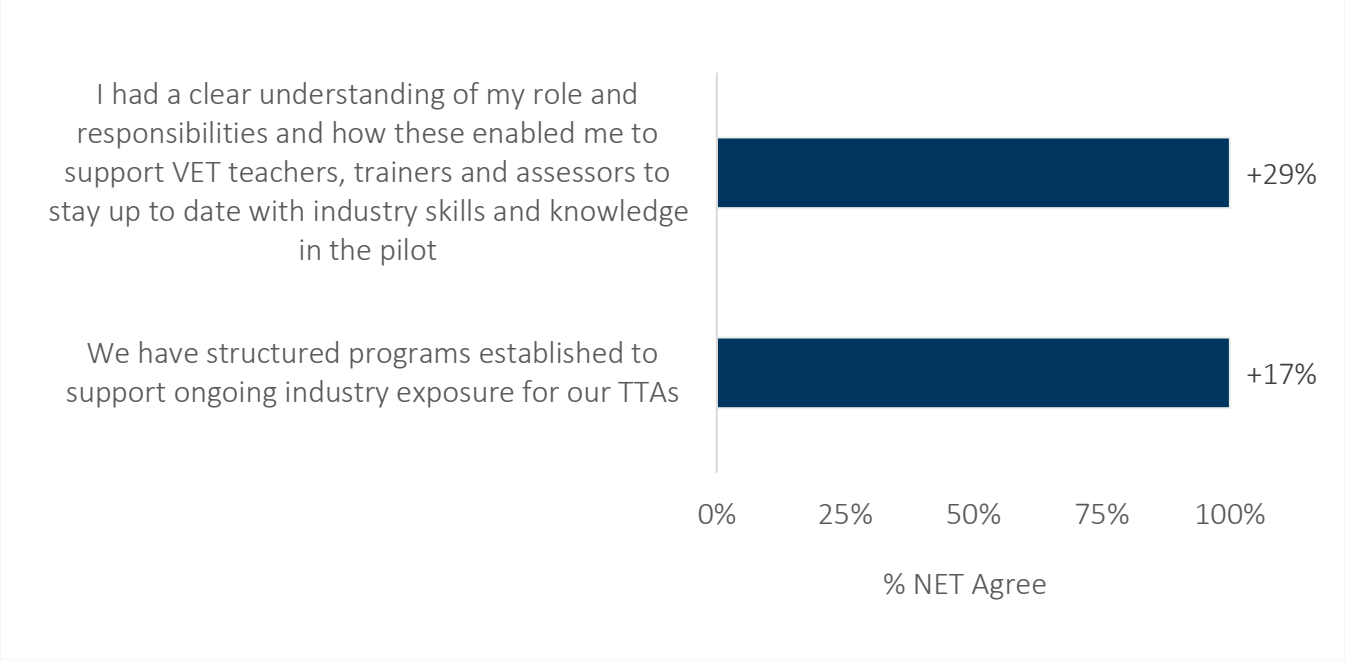
Figure 17: Post-pilot data shows improvement across several measures



RTOs and industry partners strengthened readiness to support industry currency, despite mixed views on existing collaboration

Overall, RTOs reported strong levels of understanding, capability and existing infrastructure to support industry currency among teachers, trainers and assessors. This likely reflects the profile of RTOs that entered the pilot, with participating organisations already valuing industry currency opportunities and having some existing structures, partnerships or day-to-day practices in place to support teachers, trainers and assessors to maintain current industry knowledge. After the pilot, findings were consistently positive, with all reported measures reaching 100% agreement among participating RTOs (**Figure 18**).

Figure 18: The pilot may have helped RTOs better understand how they can support their staff



Industry partners entered the pilot with strong confidence in their ability to build relationships with RTOs and clear role clarity, but with more varied levels of existing involvement in supporting industry currency. Agreement was highest for measures relating to relationship-building and understanding their role in the pilot. Post pilot, results were mixed, with strong agreement across most post-pilot measures, but some variation in the direction and extent of change from baseline. Most notably:

- agreement that industry partners had a range of opportunities to engage and connect with RTOs increased **from 75% to 80%**
- agreement that their organisation already did a lot of work with RTOs to support teacher, trainer and assessor industry currency decreased **from 50% to 20%**
- agreement that industry partners had the tools and templates needed to support teachers, trainers and assessors to engage in industry currency activities increased **from 50% to 100%.**

This suggests the pilot may have strengthened practical supports for industry partners, particularly access to the tools and templates needed to support industry currency activities. However, the decline in existing work with RTOs may reflect a greater understanding of what is required to meaningfully support teachers, trainers and assessors to maintain industry currency and therefore a reduced likelihood to view existing work as sufficient.[7]

[7] Results may also be influenced by the small base size, where minor differences in responses can result in large percentage point changes.

Sustainability and scalability

This section will explore stakeholder perceptions of the pilot's scalability and sustainability, including its potential for broader rollout and the feasibility of maintaining partnerships established through the pilot.

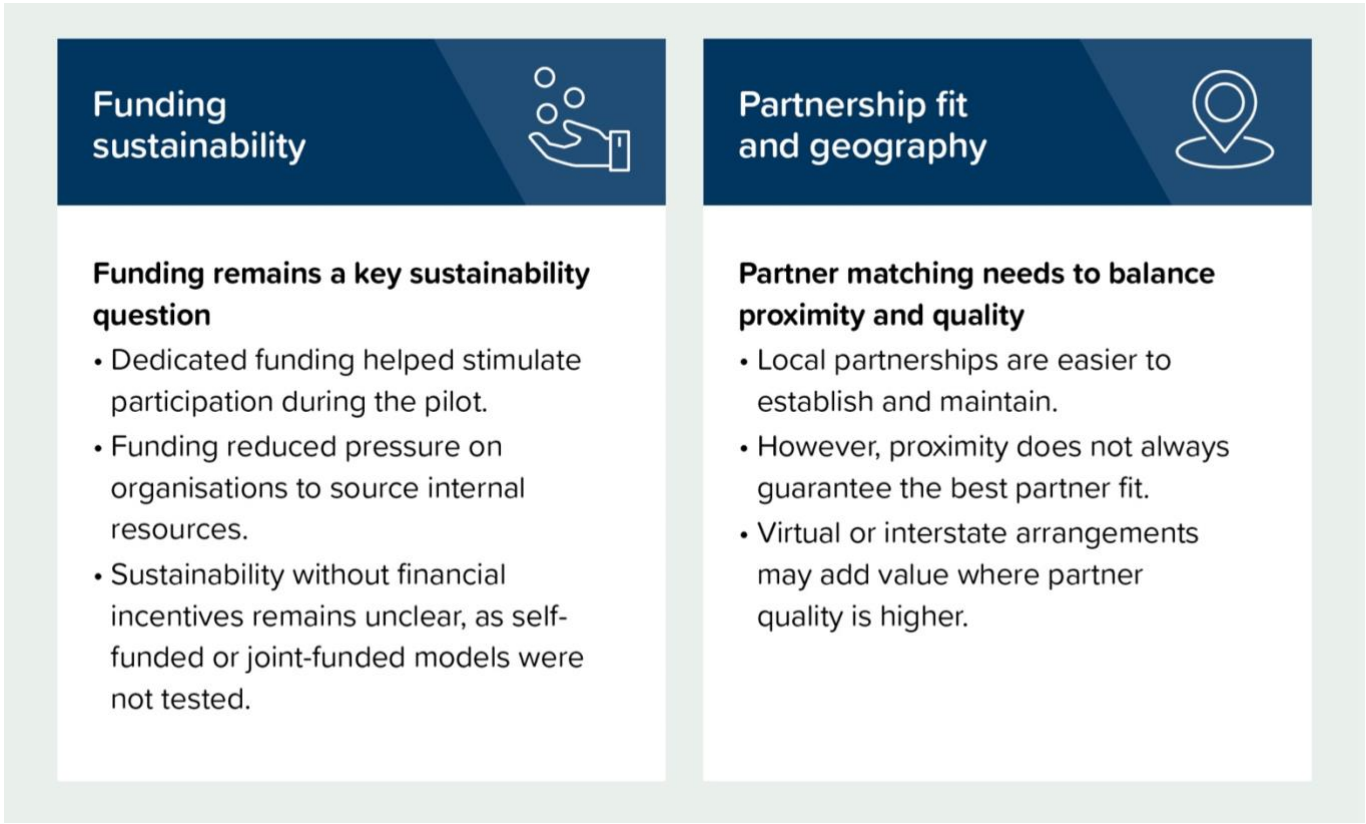
Many anticipated barriers were reduced during the pilot, but some unmet expectations remained

Overall, results suggest that several anticipated barriers did not materialise to the extent expected by the end of the pilot. Yet, while practical barriers such as time, cost and administration were less prominent than anticipated, some participants may have found that available opportunities did not fully meet their expectations or align with the types of industry currency activities they had hoped for, particularly more hands-on, client-facing experiences. Interviews suggest this may reflect the mismatch between activity types, where employers struggled to provide client-facing opportunities within the pilot timeframe.

Sustaining partnership will require continued support, organisational commitments, funding clarity and effective partner matching

Overall, maintaining the partnerships established through the pilot may require continued support, clear organisational buy-in, practical resources, and clear articulation of the value of ongoing involvement. Without these enabling conditions, there is a risk that responsibility for sustaining relationships may fall to organisations with limited time and resources to continue the work independently. While the pilot demonstrated that partnerships can be established, the evaluation was not able to determine whether these relationships could be sustained without continued support, resourcing or incentives. Further consideration may be needed to understand what would motivate organisations' continued involvement, including the perceived value of participation and effort required to sustain partnerships alongside existing workloads.





All groups showed continued appetite to maintain industry currency beyond the pilot

Teachers, trainer and assessors indicated an intention to continue engaging in industry currency activities beyond the pilot. The most planned future activities included:

- attending industry advisory groups (64%)
- attending scheduled discussions with leaders, managers or subject matter experts in the aged care and/or disability services sector (55%)
- completing relevant professional development (55%).

RTOs and industry partners also indicated an intention to continue supporting industry currency activities in the future, with a clear indication of intention to provide more hands-on experience.

- highlighting and supporting opportunities for VET teachers, trainers and assessors to attend industry advisory groups (70%)
- facilitating VET teachers, trainers and assessors attendance at an existing community of practice (70%)
- facilitating discussions between VET teachers, trainers and assessors and sector leaders, managers and/or subject matter experts in the aged care and/or disability services sector workplace (60%)

Taken together, these findings suggest there is continued appetite among both teachers, trainers and assessors and participating organisations to maintain industry currency beyond the pilot.

The pilot was seen as scalable and transferable but broader implementation would require adaptations and system-level support

Survey findings indicate strong support for the value of teach, train and assess industry currency, alongside some positive movement in perceptions of broader sector conditions needed to support it. Post-pilot findings suggest the pilot may have reinforced the perceived value of industry currency and contributed to more positive views about the broader conditions needed to support it. However, the results also indicate that perceptions of system-level support and role mobility remained mixed, reinforcing the need for broader leadership, coordination and enabling conditions if the model were to be scaled.

There was broad agreement among participants that the partnership model had potential to be scaled or adapted beyond the initial participating organisations. However, it was noted that several enabling conditions and practical refinements to support future scale up are required: (Appendix I)

- **Sector-specific adaptation:** Adapt the approach to different sector contexts, including variations in organisational structures, partnership arrangements and industry currency requirements.
- **System-level leadership and endorsement:** Provide direction from 'higher up' so organisations are more likely to take the model on board (including ASQA support), rather than relying on individual RTOs, employers or teachers, trainers and assessors to drive it independently.
- **Clear operational ownership:** Assign a lead organisation or coordinating body to manage delivery, clarify roles and ensure participants receive a consistent model.
- **Simple and practical implementation supports:** Keep the model and supporting materials easy to understand, accessible and simple to incorporate into existing organisational processes.

Case study

A multi-RTO and employer partnership to strengthen industry currency

This case study examines a partnership between 2 RTOs, RMIT and Auctus Training Institute, and the Brotherhood of St Laurence (BSL), a large not-for-profit provider operating across disability, aged care and employment services.

RMIT and BSL were both based in Victoria, while Auctus was located in South Australia. This cross-state partnership shaped both how the pilot was delivered and how participants engaged with different activities. Both RTOs entered the pilot to address a shared challenge in the VET sector: maintaining industry currency among trainers who are no longer embedded in frontline service delivery. BSL participated as an employer partner with an interest in strengthening connections between training and contemporary service delivery.

All partners had previously participated in co-design activities, which informed the pilot model and ensured that both RTO and employer perspectives shaped the final design ahead of implementation.

Partnership approach and delivery

The partnership was established through early discussions in which RTOs identified their priority learning needs, while BSL outlined what it could offer, including access to services, staff expertise and organisational insights.

The pilot ran over approximately 12 weeks and included a combination of community of practice (CoP) sessions, peer-to-peer learning and site-based engagement. These components were designed to support shared learning across organisations while providing exposure to employer practice. Activities included structured discussions on themes such as person-centred care and client empowerment, alongside opportunities to engage directly with BSL staff and share knowledge and experience.

Where feasible, teachers, trainers and assessors attended in-person site visits to BSL facilities, enabling them to observe different service contexts and speak with staff. However, due to geographic constraints, participation in these activities varied, with Auctus participants unable to attend in person.

> "Everyone was very professional, very respectful, very open to listening, very open to address the questions and align it with the training strategies."
> **RTO**

What worked well

Overall, the partnership was experienced as highly positive by all parties, with the relationship itself emerging as a key enabler of success. BSL was described by RTO participants as open, responsive and willing to share information and access.

From BSL's perspective, there was strong engagement from both RTOs, with a clear appetite for learning and a willingness to contribute to discussions and shape activities collaboratively. This created a collaborative environment in which expectations could be negotiated and mutual understanding strengthened.



"So, in the initial discussions with [RTOs] they were very interested in regulatory frameworks and system changes, which is something they said they often had blind spots on...what that actually meant for employers in the system, they wanted to hear about. So that was very much what we built in up front."

Employer

The structured delivery model also supported meaningful engagement. The use of CoP sessions and regular interaction created space for knowledge sharing across organisations and helped build relationships over time. BSL adopted an iterative approach, incorporating feedback from RTO participants into subsequent sessions, which strengthened relevance and responsiveness throughout delivery.

Where participants were able to attend in-person activities, these were particularly valuable. Site visits and direct engagement with BSL staff helped bridge the gap between theory and practice, giving participants insight into how policies and models are applied in real service environments.

Participants also valued the opportunity to share their own challenges, contributing to a more balanced, two-way exchange of knowledge between training and industry.

The partnership also generated benefits beyond the immediate pilot. Partners expressed a clear desire to continue the relationship, with discussions already underway about how to sustain engagement, including opportunities for student exposure to industry settings. This suggests the pilot contributed not only to individual capability building but also to broader system connectivity.



"We actually went to the sites and met the staff...we got to ask questions like, you know, what would you like to see the support workers coming out? What's the main focus? Where's the gaps?"

Trainer

Challenges and limitations

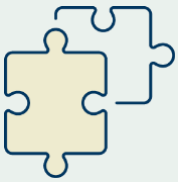
Despite these strengths, there were challenges that emerged. A key limitation was the lack of hands-on, client-facing experience. While the pilot provided useful discussion-based and observational learning, some participants anticipated more direct, practice-based engagement, such as shadowing staff or interacting with clients. Given the short timeframe of the pilot, more intensive activities, often requiring additional approvals, were difficult to implement.

Geographic separation between Auctus and BSL also constrained delivery. For the onsite visit, Auctus was unable to attend in person, resulting in unequal access. While BSL was very accommodating and implemented a live Q&A session to allow Auctus to partake in the day and speak to staff directly, this was still perceived to not be equal to in-person attendance.

Challenges were also noted related to communication and implementation. Materials, such as toolkits, were not consistently shared or utilised, suggesting gaps in how information was disseminated within organisations.

Finally, time pressures were also noted, particularly for teaching staff. Although BSL was flexible in scheduling sessions within working hours, participants still reported difficulty balancing engagement with existing workloads. Some described attending sessions at the end of long working days, which made it challenging to maintain focus and fully engage with the activities.

This case study highlights that cross-sector partnerships between RTOs and employers are both feasible and valued, particularly when underpinned by co-design and structured engagement. The pilot demonstrated clear benefits in strengthening relationships, improving mutual understanding, and supporting the exchange of knowledge between training and industry.



Cross-sector partnerships between RTOs and employers are both feasible and valued when underpinned by co-design and structured engagement.

Conclusion and recommendations: Industry currency model and toolkit

The VET Industry Currency Pilot was generally well received and the piloted partnership approach showed promise as a model for strengthening industry currency among VET teachers, trainers and assessors in the aged care and disability sectors. The pilot supported collaboration between RTOs and industry partners, expanded access to a range of industry currency activities, and reinforced the value of structured partnerships in supporting more current, industry-relevant teaching practices.

This pilot undoubtedly had some limitations. The pilot was modest in size, was implemented within a relatively short timeframe, and predominantly drew in organisations with a pre-existing relationship with HumanAbility who had no major barriers to participation. Nonetheless, despite experiences with the pilot varying, several key conclusions can be drawn from the findings.

1. The piloted approach demonstrated value as a mechanism for sector engagement and collaboration.
2. Implementation was affected by the practical usability of the toolkit and supporting materials.
3. The pilot contributed to positive short-term outcomes, with teachers, trainers and assessors reporting applying pilot learnings to strengthen the relevance of their teaching.
4. The pilot showed promise for continued delivery, but sustaining partnerships would require ongoing coordination and support.
5. The pilot has potential for broader application, but scaling would require adaptation, clear operational ownership and system level leadership.

Refinement instructions

The recommendations below are designed to support refinement of the VET Industry Currency Pilot model, should HumanAbility seek to continue, expand or adapt the approach in future.

1. Refine the toolkit to improve accessibility and support standalone implementation



Future delivery should prioritise refinement of the toolkit so that it can function more effectively as the primary delivery mechanism, beyond a supporting resource within a facilitated pilot.

To address this, future iterations could:

- Seek to reduce the cognitive burden associated with navigating a single large and comprehensive document.
- Provide tools and templates in editable formats.
- Ensure consistent and direct access to the toolkit, rather than relying on internal distribution channels within RTOs.

2. Strengthen communication of the value and purpose of a partnership-based approach



Future delivery should place greater emphasis on clearly communicating the value and purpose of industry currency and the role of a partnership-based approach.

To support broader uptake, future delivery could:

- Use practical examples and case studies to demonstrate how the model works in practice, particularly for organisations unfamiliar with industry currency.
- Adopt more direct and structured communication approaches, such as newsletters, videos, or webinars, to ensure consistent messaging.

3. Provide a clear, repeatable model for establishing and sustaining partnerships



Future delivery should define a simple, low-friction approach to forming and sustaining partnerships, recognising that the pilot relied on facilitation that is unlikely to be replicated at scale.

To support this, future delivery could:

- Clearly define roles and responsibilities across the partnership lifecycle, including who initiates partnerships, how activities are agreed and coordinated, and how relationships are maintained over time.
- Provide practical, step-by-step guidance on partnership formation, including identifying suitable partners and initiating contact.
- Outline key considerations for implementation, including coordination effort, time requirements and resourcing implications.

4. Clarify ownership and enabling conditions for scaling of the partnership approach



Future delivery should consider the ownership and broader enabling conditions required to support scaling of the model.

To support this, future work could:

- Clarify who is responsible for driving and promoting the model at a broader level, particularly in relation to scaling and coordination across organisations.
- Consider opportunities for system level endorsement or alignment, where appropriate.
- Consider a single overarching body to progress the model (regulator, tripartite body or industry peak body).

HumanAbility has since refined the toolkits and models based on stakeholder feedback and testing with stakeholders outside of the aged care and disability services sectors, and is now finalising wireframes to create an accessible, online toolkit.

Sector actions

Widescale change requires collective action across 3 stakeholder levels

The industry currency model and toolkits alone cannot drive sustain change at scale, instead it will require coordinated action across 3 levels: system, organisations and individuals (**Figure 19**). At each level, stakeholders can leverage spheres of direct control and indirect influence to enact change. Collective action across each level will drive long-term change and positive outcomes.

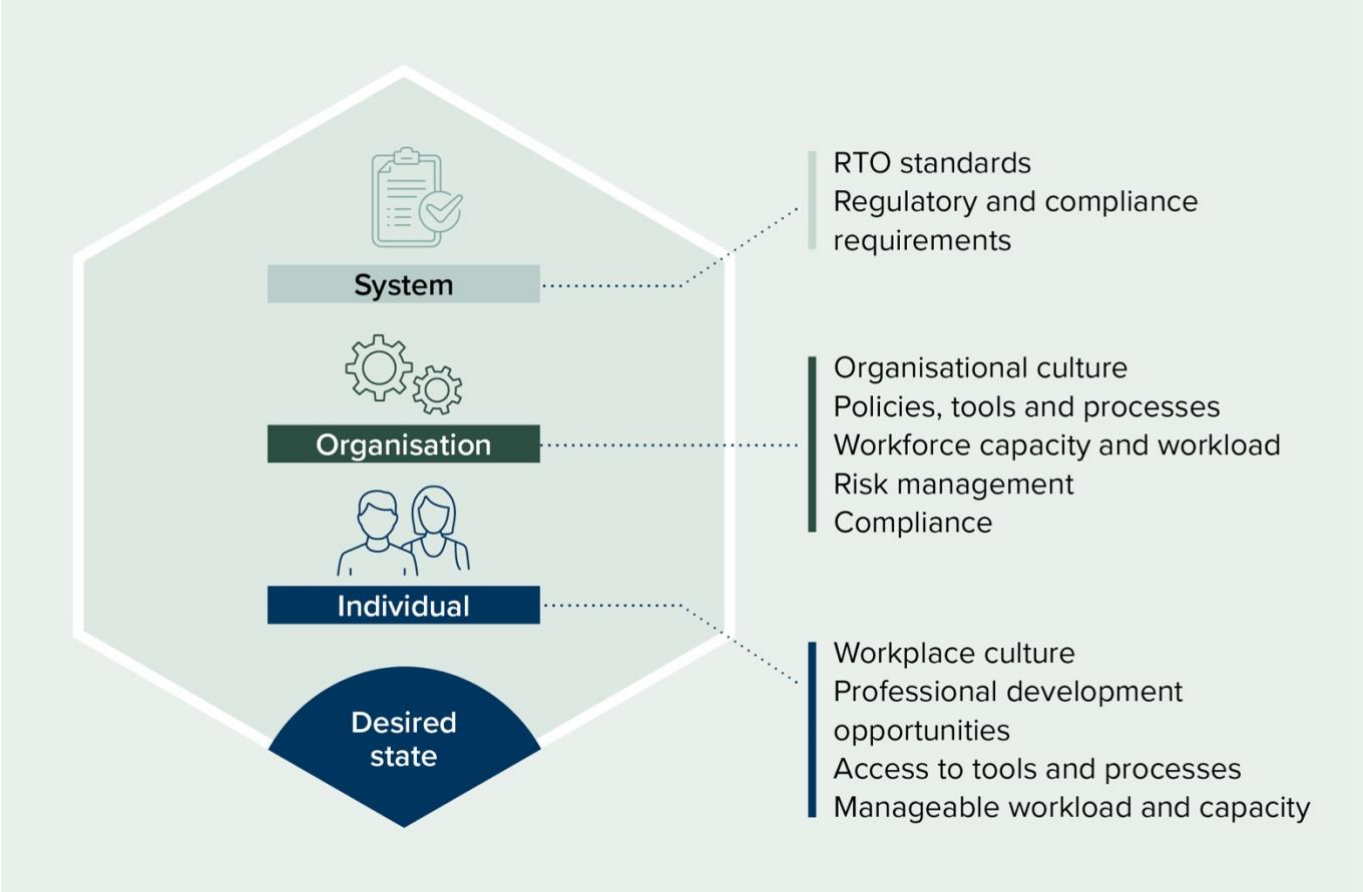
To drive collective action, HumanAbility must work to shift mindsets to build commitment and momentum, particularly as stakeholders identified perceived and real barriers that inhibit industry currency activities. A change readiness model outlines the 5 steps stakeholders must progress through to buy-in and invest time, effort and resourcing to enact change (Appendix J). The breadth and diversity of stakeholders, coupled with individual mental models regarding change, will organically drive a non-uniform adoption of the industry currency model and toolkits. Some stakeholders will quickly adopt innovative change, while others will take a more cautious 'wait and see' approach before adopting.[8] HumanAbility can use the change readiness journey and pace of innovation adoption model (Appendix J) to tailor a high-impact, feasible change strategy that enables sector-wide change momentum, in which each stakeholder group has different and equally important roles to play to enact sustainable change (Appendix K).

It is recommended that HumanAbility, government and industry leverage tactics including thought leadership, relationships, case studies and tangible product solutions, such as the toolkits, to build change

[8] Diffusion Research, *Origins of the Diffusion Paradigm*, available at: Origins of the Diffusion Paradigm.

readiness and drive adoption. Pilot participants could become highly effective change champions, enabling change through word-of-mouth across their networks, as well as in forums such as webinars.

Figure 19: Three levels to enact sustainable change





Sustainable workforce change requires coordinated action across the system, organisation and individual levels.

Overall outcomes and impact

This research project was designed to understand the diversity and demographics of the care and support VET workforce and their key challenges, before designing and testing practical solutions to support these. Across the 3 streams of research, HumanAbility collected key data on the workforce, before moving into designing and testing industry led responses.

Data collected from literature reviews, 13 x one-to-one interviews, in person and online workshops with over 150 stakeholders and 3 online surveys (over 1000 responses), provide insights into the care and support VET workforce, their pathways, challenges, motivations and intention to remain. With over 1000 stakeholders contributing to this work, the data highlights key areas for recommendations to ensure a supported and sustained workforce for the future. This data is valuable for any future VET workforce data strategy projects and can assist in identifying current information gaps and inform the development of targeted questions for future workforce engagement.

Key facilitators and barriers to attracting, retaining and developing the VET workforce across care and support sectors were understood. Uncovering these challenges enables HumanAbility to provide recommendations for future areas of research and support solutions to tackle these. These include:

- growing and supporting teachers, trainers, and assessors living with disability and/or long-term health condition
- growing and support teachers, trainers and assessors using migration pathways into the VET sector
- supporting RPL when entering the VET workforce
- gender responsiveness to increase proportion of male VET professionals in care and support sectors
- supporting the VET workforce with student support and wellbeing activities, following release of the DEWR trainer and assessor guide
- strengthening pathways into VET (for example TAE under supervision, secondary school teachers, grow your own model)
- recruitment best practice framework and optimising onboarding.

Co-design and partnerships with key stakeholders produced key resources that will support the care and support VET workforce. The industry currency model and toolkit, designed with over 40 stakeholders and was tested with 7 organisations over 4 states during a 12-week period, demonstrated clear value, with positive short-term outcomes for teachers, trainers and assessors. Evidence also suggested strengthened collaboration between RTOs and industry partners, with appetite to continue activities and partnerships in the future. Evaluation of the pilot and toolkit highlighted refinements to improve accessibility, usability and conditions for future scaling, which have directly informed key recommendations coming out of this research project.

Partnership with NACCHO to design a mentor framework for VET teachers and assessors enabled a community-led approach which responds to challenges experienced particularly by First Nations VET

professionals. The framework intends to guide, rather than prescribe, mentoring programs, agreements and everyday practice.

Following this project HumanAbility will continue to refine and share these with wider stakeholders:

- An accessible and free online toolkit to support RTO-industry partnerships when teachers, trainers and assessors are maintaining industry currency, contextualised across care and support sectors.
- Mentor framework for VET trainers and assessors (following testing and refinement late 2026).

Throughout the research project, HumanAbility has met with researchers from various JSCs. Weekly meetings allowed for cross-JSC insight sharing, and for discussions around key topics which have arisen during consultations. Following the completion of this project, HumanAbility will seek to continue to connect with other JSCs and promote resources and materials where available.



The project has laid the foundation for practical resources and ongoing collaboration to strengthen the VET workforce.

Conclusion

Findings from this research project provide an in-depth analysis of the care and support VET workforce and highlight opportunities to support the attraction, retention and development of the workforce in the future.

The workforce is motivated to make a difference and has decades of crucial industry experience that can be brought to the role. Teachers, trainers and assessors are attracted by the ability to share this knowledge to teach the industry workforce of the future, but also often by greater pay and benefits than available within industry. Word of mouth is key in driving recruitment efforts, where a role in VET is not typically front of mind. Yet despite the high intention to remain in the VET sector, there is a clear risk that the ageing workforce is not being replaced quickly enough, with opportunities and recommendations to strengthen the pipeline. The diversity of the teach, train and assessor workforce, identified via survey respondents, may also not reflect the diversity of the students they teach, and have implications for student outcomes.

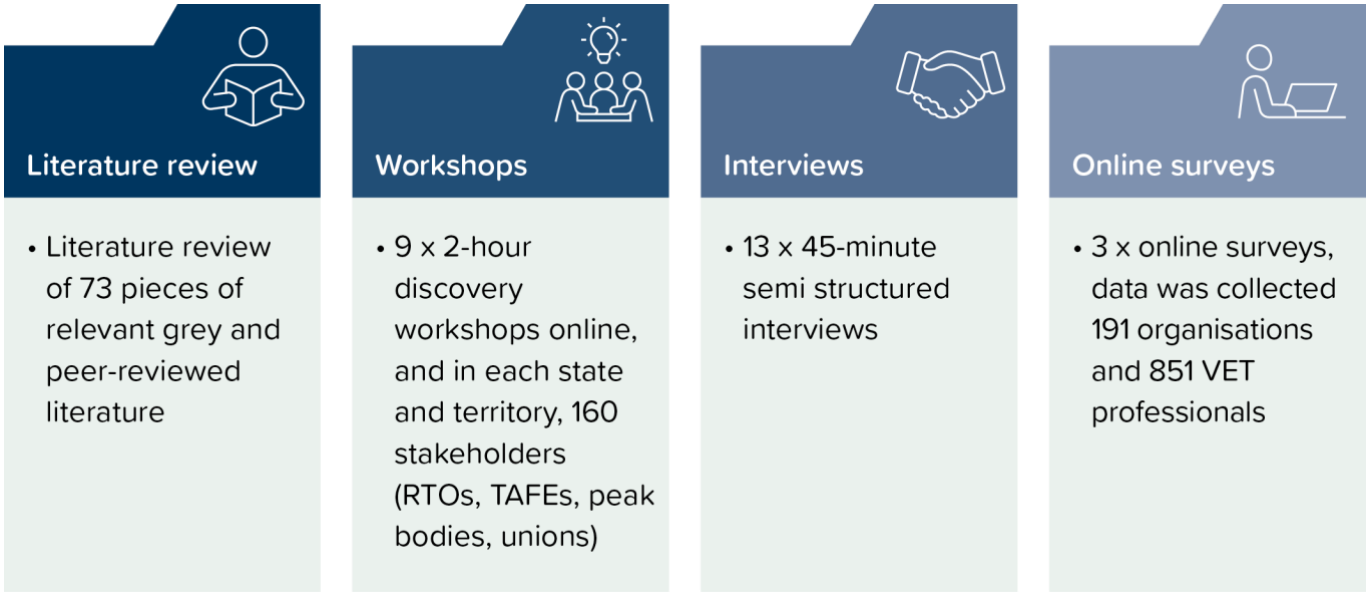
Research highlighted a range of challenges which impact the VET workforce at the individual, RTO, and wider system level, which overtime may reduce professionals' motivation to remain in the workforce. Industry currency obligations were identified as often not being supported at a system wide level, however this project found that an RTO-industry model and toolkit to support teachers, trainers and assessors when maintaining industry currency could be a viable scalable model when the correct structures and support is in place. Mentoring was identified as an effective level to support the VET workforce but is often absent from professionals' experiences. A framework designed with NACCHO can act as a tool to support RTOs, manager and mentors in this process.

Overall, this project has conducted multiple streams of research to understand the workforce and identify the challenges they face, before taking an industry-led approach to design and test solutions. Key recommendations for future work and support were identified, where coordinated effort and action is required across RTOs, industry, JSCs and government.

Appendix A

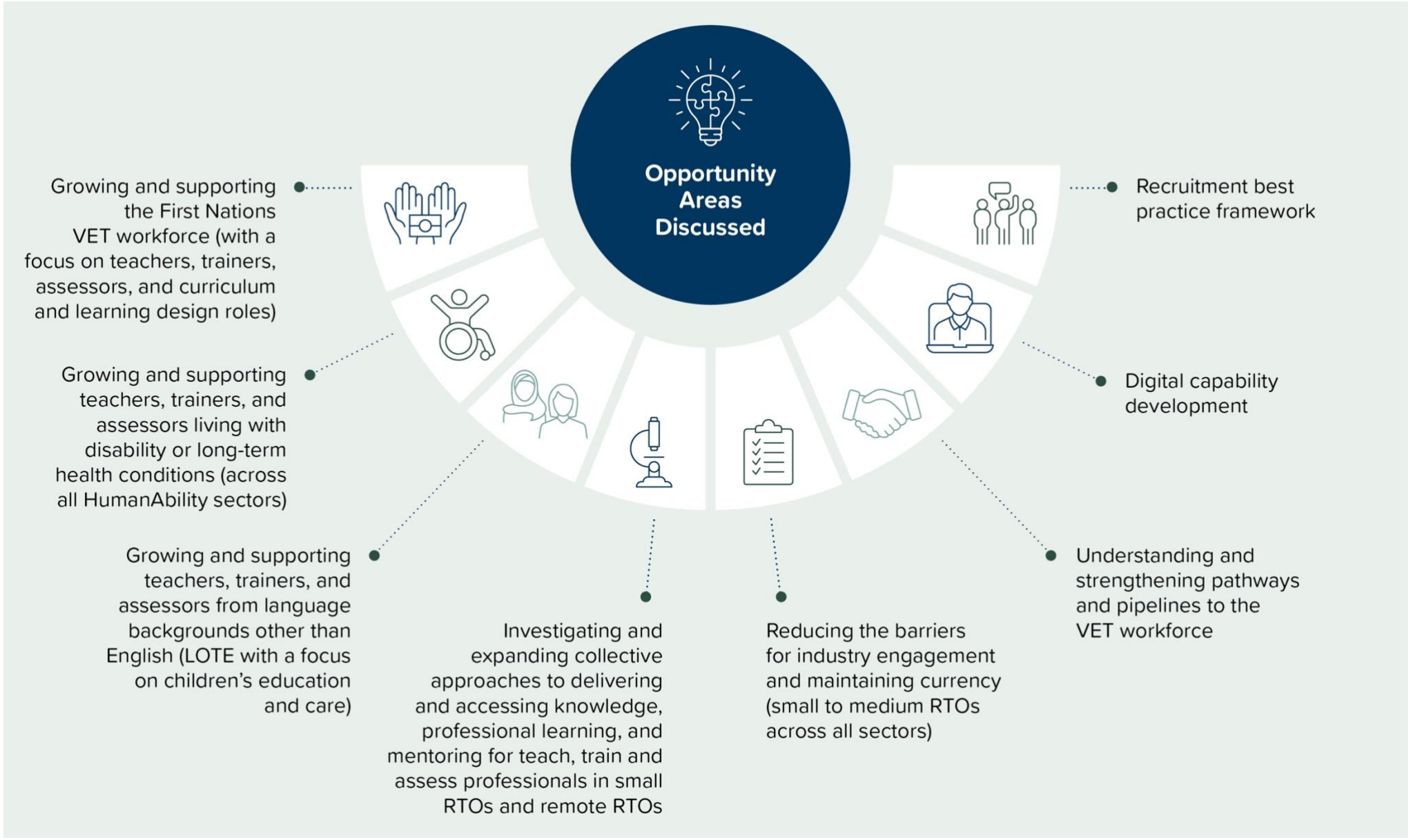
October 2024 – June 2025

The initial stream of HumanAbility's VET workforce project used a mixed-methodology approach encompassing desktop research of existing evidence, supplemented by original qualitative and quantitative research. Data captured key demographic and diversity data, pathway data and insights into the facilitators and barriers to attracting, retaining and developing the VET workforce.



July 2025 – August 2025

HumanAbility conducted 1-1 interviews and focus groups to further investigate VET workforce challenges and discuss opportunity areas. The purpose of this phase of the research was to delve deeper into barriers to attraction, retention and development within the VET workforce, discuss opportunity areas to explore in subsequent phases of the research and begin to identify industry led responses.


Opportunity Areas Discussed
Growing and supporting the First Nations VET workforce (with a focus on teachers, trainers, assessors, and curriculum and learning design roles)
Growing and supporting teachers, trainers, and assessors living with disability or long-term health conditions (across all HumanAbility sectors)
Growing and supporting teachers, trainers, and assessors from language backgrounds other than English (LOTE with a focus on children's education and care)
Investigating and expanding collective approaches to delivering and accessing knowledge, professional learning, and mentoring for teach, train and assess professionals in small RTOs and remote RTOs
Reducing the barriers for industry engagement and maintaining currency (small to medium RTOs across all sectors)
Understanding and strengthening pathways and pipelines to the VET workforce
Digital capability development
Recruitment best practice framework

Internal focus groups with HumanAbility employers across the organisation initially tested and built on existing barriers and discussed opportunity areas. Individual interviews and focus groups were then conducted with 20 stakeholders from organisations including RTOs, peak bodies, government and professional development organisations across the care and support sectors.

This phase of research built on existing insights, identified current responses to challenges, and indicated priority areas for the final streams of research. HumanAbility considered findings from the initial stream and the potential value, time frame, feasibility, ethics, and broader sector implications of further research. Mapping key opportunity areas against these criteria highlighted 2 key focus areas.

Firstly, stakeholders confirmed the need to further explore industry currency. They highlighted the challenges of developing strong conjoints and relationships between RTOs and industry and support individuals, along with barriers to identifying, organising and completing meaningful industry currency activities.

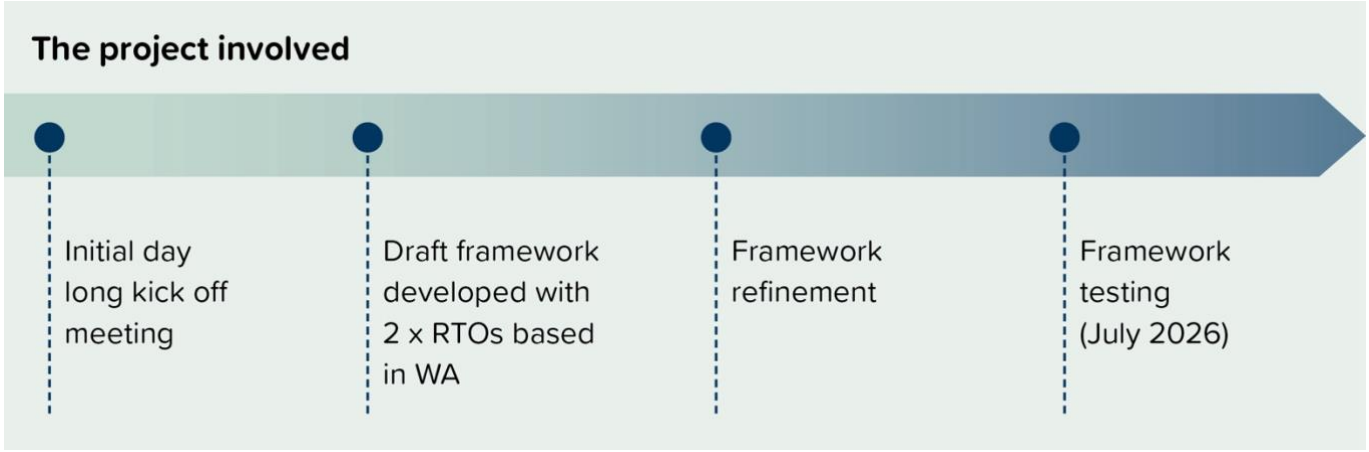
Secondly, stakeholders suggested that future research should focus on the underrepresentation of First Nations VET professionals in the care and support sectors. They highlighted mentoring new teachers, trainers and assessors as an opportunity to support this workforce. Discussions with Kimberly Aboriginals Medical Services (KAMS) and the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) confirmed the success of the NACCHO Training and Assessment Demonstration Project (TAEDP) and emphasised the importance of wrap-around support for the First Nations VET Workforce. An evaluation of the TAEDP recommended the use of a one-year TAE graduate mentoring program to build confidence and experience for TAE graduates.[lxxxiv]

September 2025 – June 2026

The objective of the final stream of work was to investigate and support pathways and pipelines of the care and support VET workforce and identify industry-led actions. This included exploring attraction, promotion and retention strategies, undertaking a pilot to build and develop the VET workforce and sharing information and resources for 2 priority areas; maintaining industry currency, and supporting First Nations VET professionals.

1. Designing a mentorship framework for newly qualified graduates of NACCHOs TAE program

HumanAbility partnered with NACCHO on a 3-month project to develop a mentor framework to support First Nation VET professionals who have recently completed the TAE qualification.



The framework will be further refined with students and graduates of the TAEDP. Following refinement of the framework, the resource will be shared with stakeholders across the care and support sectors.

2. Maintaining industry currency through strengthened industry partnerships

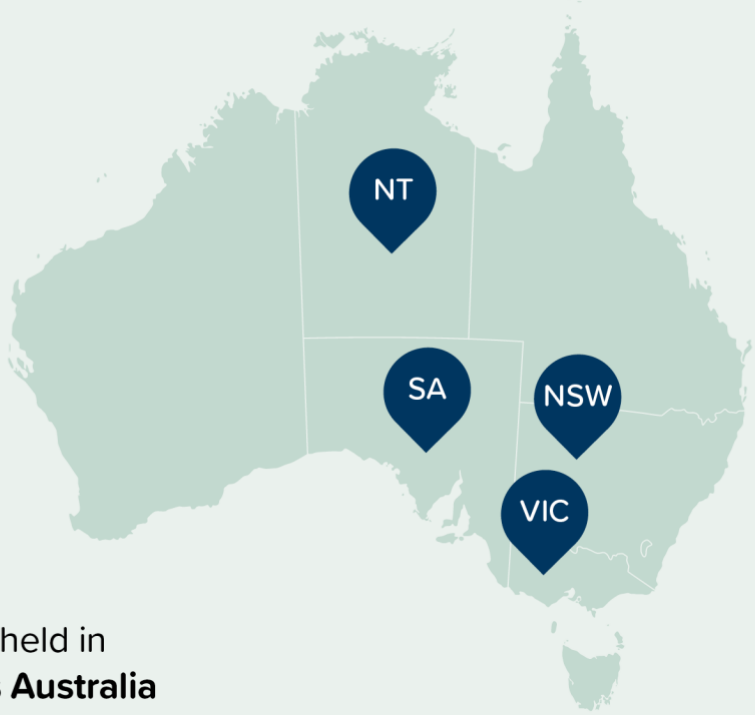
Initial insights were collected across care and support sector to better understand the challenges when maintaining industry currency, and to uncover key promising practices.

Between September and October 2025, over 140 stakeholders participated in the research, with representatives from RTOs during in person and online focus groups and one-to-one interviews. Stakeholders included RTOs, peaks, unions, employers and government.



Following this work, Nous Group conducted further research to co-design and test a model and toolkit to support teachers, trainers and assessors when maintaining industry currency.

Development of the Industry Currency Model and Toolkit



Pilot testing was held in
4 regions across Australia

Engage
- Co-design interviews with over 40 stakeholders, landscape scan and knowledge review.

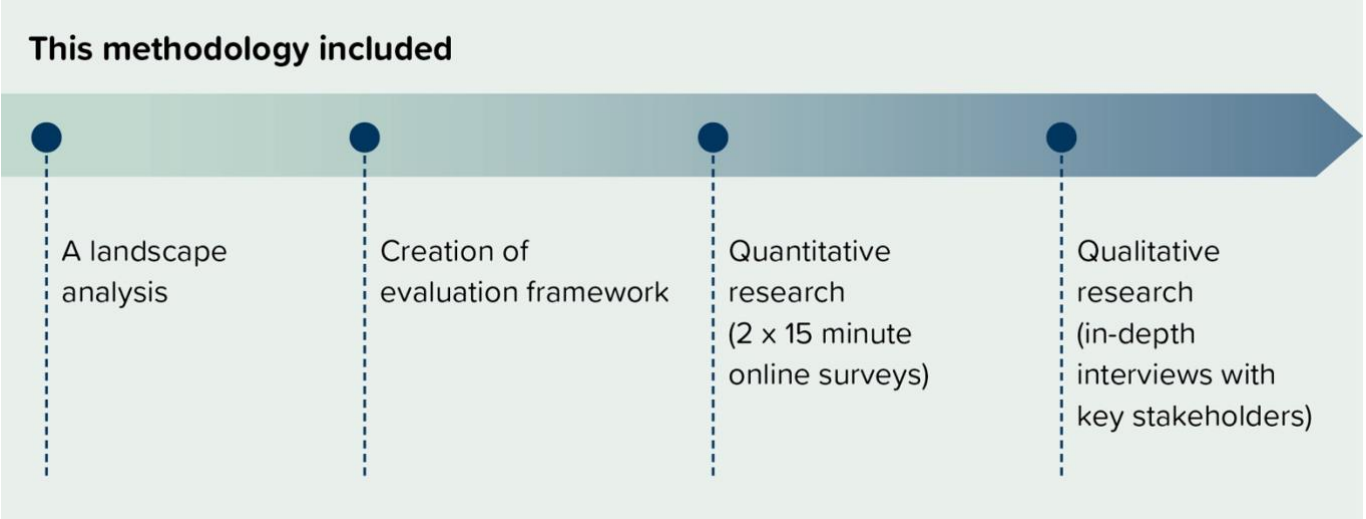
Co-design
- 2 x online co-design workshops with RTOs, employers, peaks and unions, and a designed model, implementation plan and monitoring framework. 30-40 stakeholders.

Implement
- Piloted the model and toolkit with 3 employers and 4 RTOs across NT, NSW, SA and VIC.
- Gathered feedback through stakeholder check-ins and focus groups.

Refine
- Refined model design to support cross sector scale.
- Updated pilot model and toolkits and further testing.

Evaluation

Verian independently evaluated the VET industry currency pilot model and toolkit.





Independent evaluation provided robust evidence to assist the pilot model and toolkit.

Appendix B

The benefits of industry currency

Industry currency builds students' job preparedness, gives visibility to role expectations and helps students develop enabling traits that support effective skills application

Co-design engagements with RTOs, teachers, trainers and assessors, employers, peak bodies and unions highlighted the following benefits to maintaining industry currency.

Industry currency is a key enabler to students' job preparedness

Teachers, trainers and assessors must keep pace with evolving industry practices to translate these shifts into relevant skills and insights for students. Applied effectively, industry currency ensures learners are exposed to current standards, regulations, technologies and expectations—enabling them to achieve job-preparedness by graduation.

Industry insight helps to build intuition, judgement and decision-making skills

In the care economy, complex and diverse client needs require workers to possess both practical skills and traits such as attitude, approach to care, intuition and good judgement. Teachers, trainers and assessors can draw on their industry currency and experience to give insight into the importance of these traits, before they enter the workforce.

Industry currency helps students bridge the gap between simulated skills practice and real-world job experiences

Simulations build students' confidence in applying practical skills but cannot fully reflect how workers navigate complex client needs and challenging situations to successfully apply these skills. Industry currency enables teachers, trainers and assessors to provide a realistic understanding of working conditions, role expectations and factors that shape how skills are applied in practice.

Appendix C

The challenges to maintaining industry currency

Unclear expectations, compliance-first orientation and difficulty accessing relevant industry currency activities form barriers for VET teachers, trainers and assessors

Co-design engagements with RTOs, teachers, trainers and assessors, employers, peak bodies and unions highlighted the following benefits to maintaining industry currency.

A compliance-first perception devalues industry currency

A focus on regulatory requirements, compliance and auditing has created a perception that industry currency's purpose is to ensure teacher quality through compliance, rather than to drive high-quality vocational education and training outcomes.

There is a fragmented understanding and uncertainty around what constitutes industry currency

The ASQA definition (Standard 3.3) allows interpretation of industry currency to suit context—such as training courses delivered, location and delivery modes—creating flexibility in application. However, this flexibility has led to fragmented understanding across the sector and combined with audit timing, contributes to uncertainty and perceived misalignment around which activities meet the standard.

Informal industry-RTO relationships are unsustainable

Relationships between industry and training organisations are often built at an individual rather than organisational level, making them vulnerable to staff turnover and leading to increased effort for individuals to maintain them. In contrast, relationships embedded at an organisational level are more resilient and typically provide clearer, more direct access to industry currency activities, as decision-makers can be readily engaged when needed.

A perception that 'in industry' is a gold standard that inhibits creative problem solving

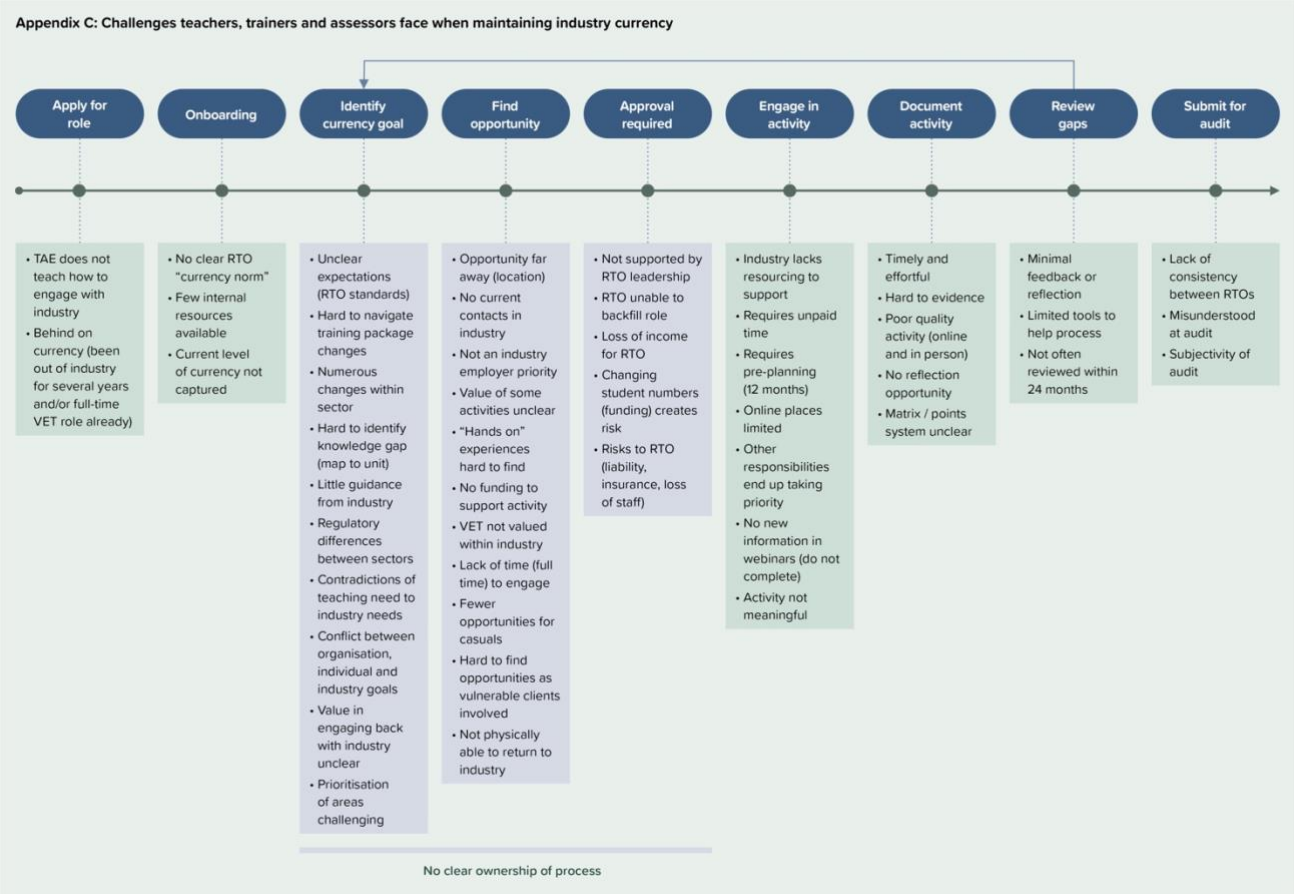
Prioritising 'in industry' activities as most effect can create a 'blinkered' view of other meaningful approaches, limiting more creative ways to maintain industry currency. A broader, more flexible understanding based on individual activity value is especially important in sectors such as aged care and disability services, where service delivery protocols limit activity options and increase employers' risk aversion to enabling industry currency activities.

Volume of activity does not directly equate to active, applicable industry currency

Volume indicators help clarify expectations, but when used alone can shift focus to the number of activities completed rather than their quality or impact. The value of an activity depends on factors such as depth of engagement, exposure to diverse perspectives, relevance to the knowledge gap, and the ability to translate learning into practice.

Appendix D

Challenges teachers, trainers and assessors face when maintaining industry currency

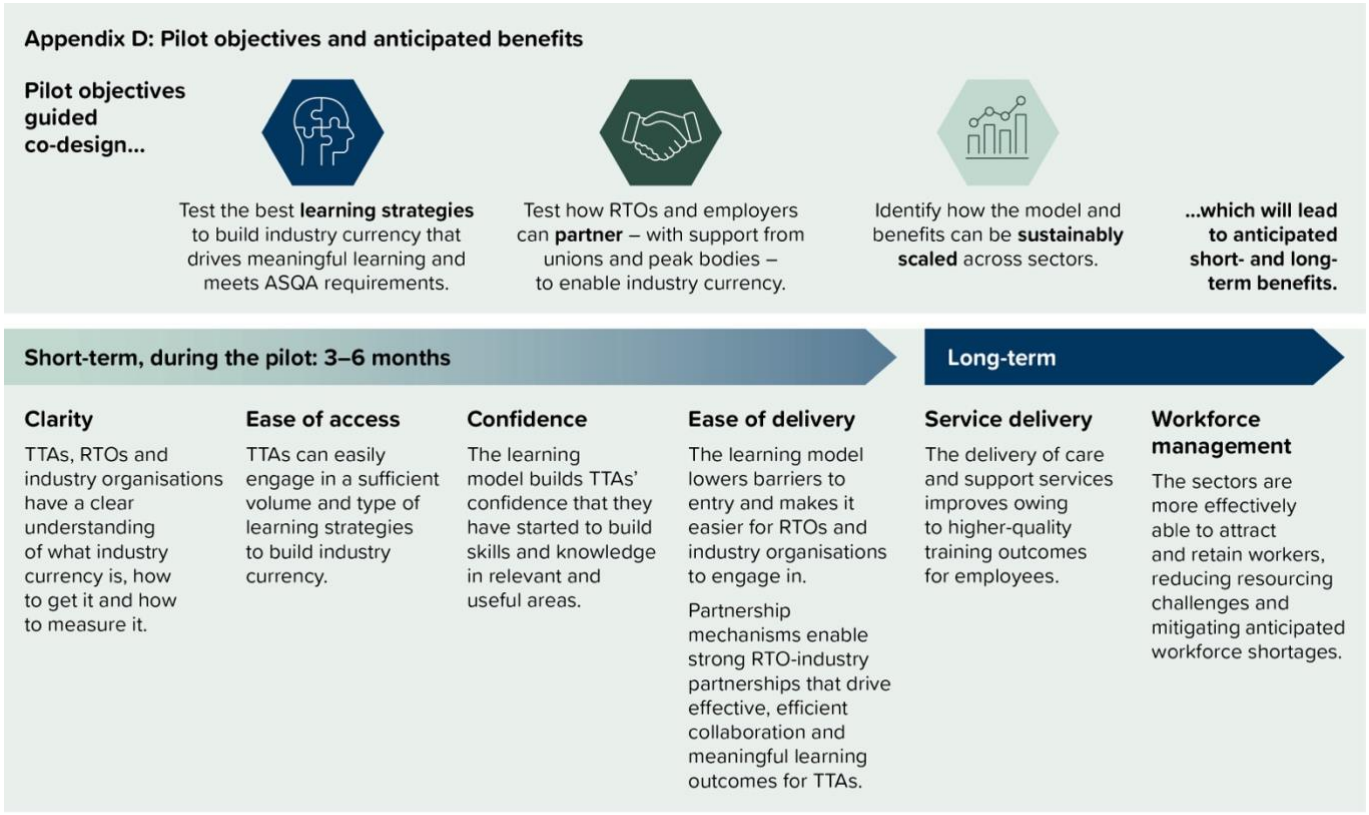


To view larger version, click here.

Appendix E

Pilot objectives and anticipated benefits

Co-design was guided by objectives which will lead to anticipated short- and long-term benefits.



Research limitations: To gain a long-term view of pilot impact on industry currency and sector outcomes will become clearer 1–2 years after the pilot has been completed. Due to the pilot implementation period of 12 weeks and timeline constraints, measurement of benefits resulting from the pilot will focus on indicators of change, such as TTAs' ability to engage in the pilot and the degree of difficulty experienced by RTOs and industry organisations when delivering the model.

To view larger version, click here.

*TTA represents VET Teachers, Trainers and Assessors

Appendix F

Pilot model design

Design principles reflected design rationale and formed the foundations of the pilot model design.

Model design principles



Shared responsibility was an important consideration as a significant barrier faced by teachers, trainers and assessors. It is the individual responsibility they currently shoulder to organise, complete, apply and demonstrate industry currency. The degree of responsibility varies; however, it was a consistently raised challenge by co-design participants. The pilot model was purposefully designed to provide clarity of roles and responsibilities aligned to organisational and individual scope and influence.

Flexible and adaptable responds to the varying requirements, operating environments and contexts that an effective industry currency model must account for. The pilot model set the foundations for flexible implementation.

Sector, service and course agnostic ensured the pilot model could be implemented in any education institute, industry and sector context. A key consideration based on the widespread challenge faced across industries and sectors to meet industry currency requirements.

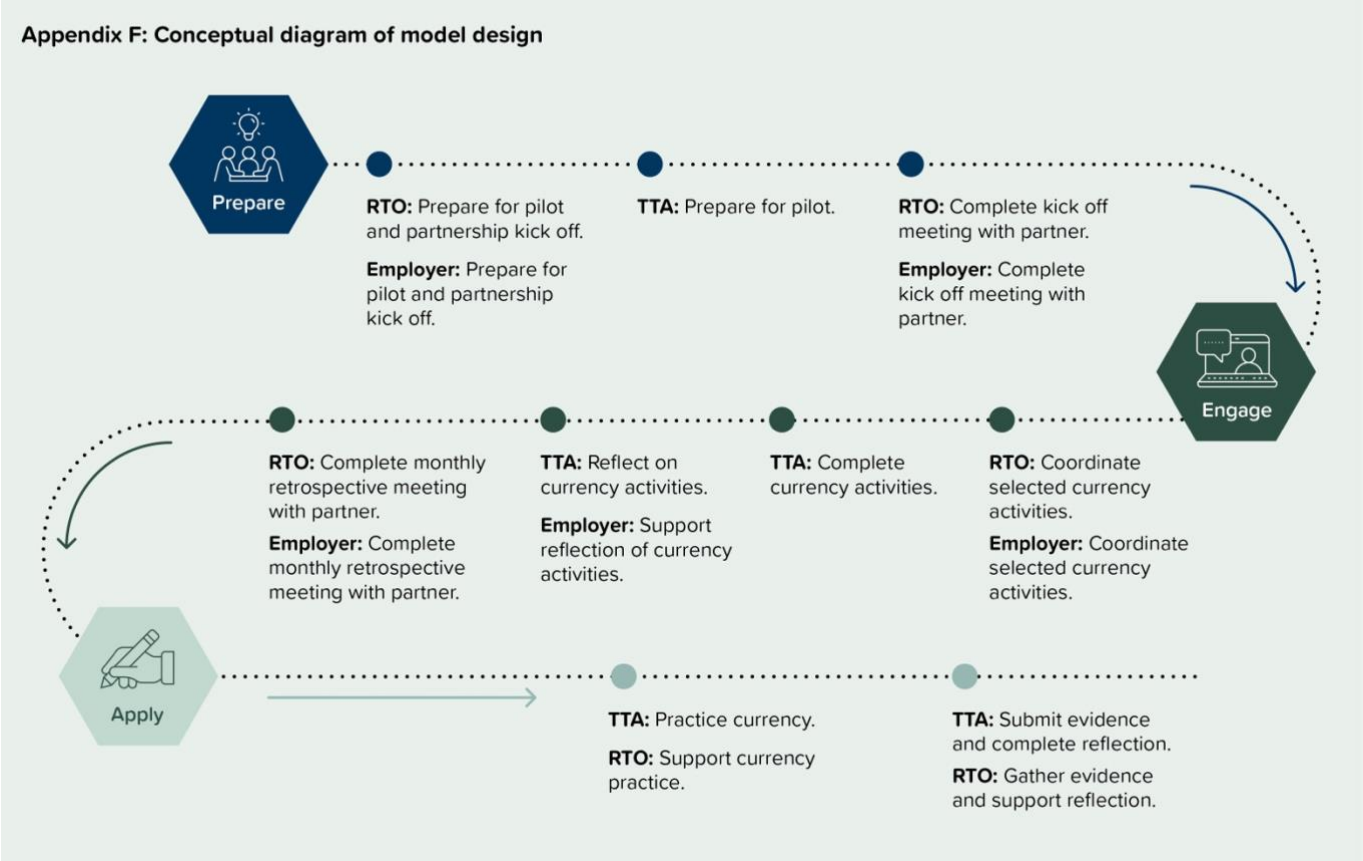
Shared understanding was highlighted by co-design participants as a key challenge that needed to be resolved to encourage effective collaboration and partnerships. Organisation and individual interpretation differences compounded the difficulties faced in order to meet industry currency requirements.

Active learning, reflection and application was a key requirement to challenge and shift perceptions of industry currency from a compliance focus towards a requirement that enables high-quality teaching and student outcomes.

Collectively these design principles informed the design of the pilot model and prototype toolkits. Pilot partners received an audience-appropriate prototype toolkit, as well as a conceptual diagram of the model to support implementation in the pilot.

Appendix G

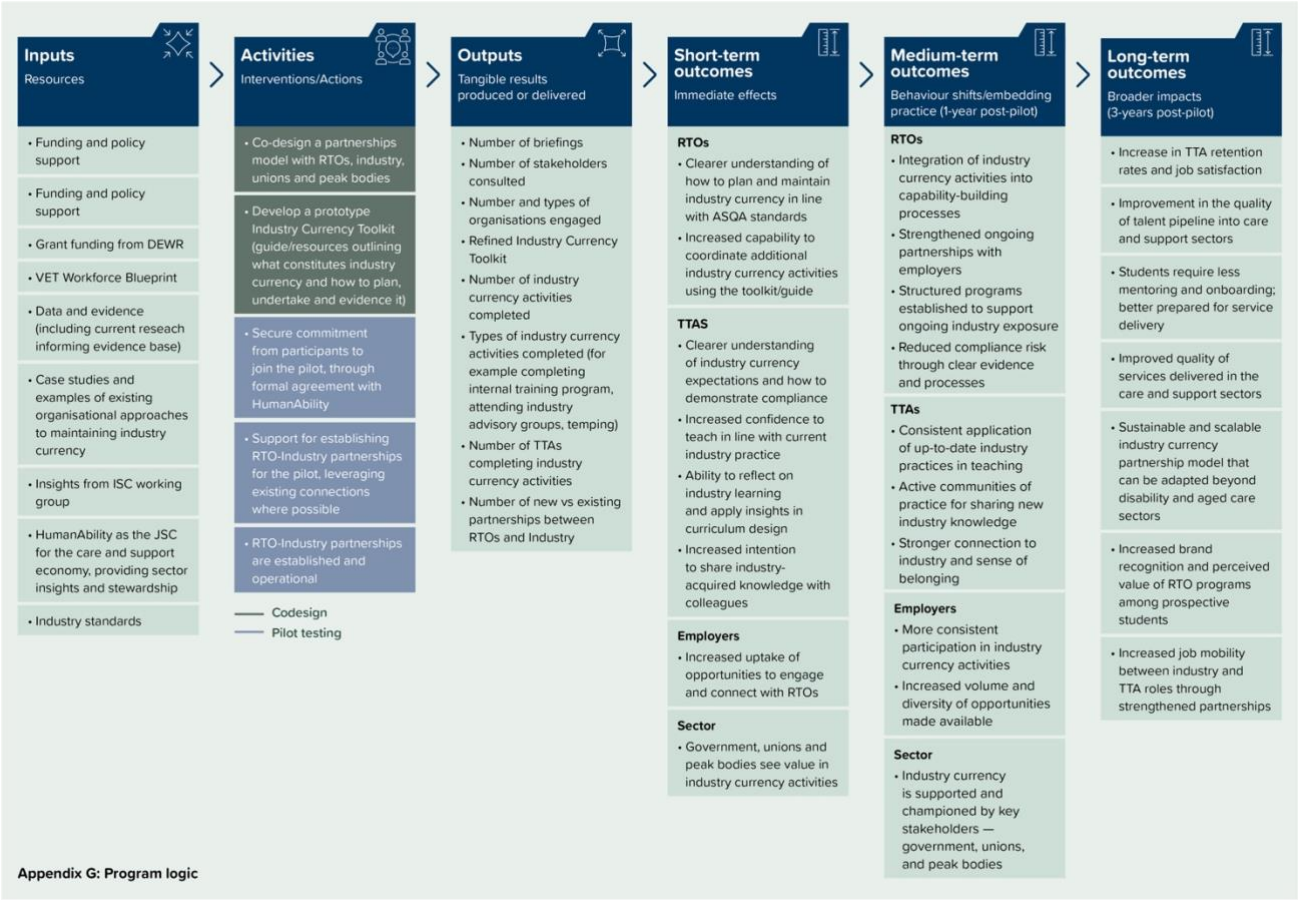
Conceptual diagram of model design



To view larger version, click here.

*TTA represents VET Teachers, Trainers and Assessors

Appendix H



To view larger version, click here.

*TTA represents VET Teachers, Trainers and Assessors

Appendix I

Key areas of learning identified by TTAs	Intended changes to teaching practice	Illustrative quotes
Documentation	Embedding real-time, evidence-based documentation into teaching practice, with one TTA noting the importance of teaching documentation as an integrated part of everyday support work, linked to client goals, risk management and compliance requirements.	*"What I learnt is that in industry, if it's not documented properly, it didn't happen. I'll be pushing that harder in my teaching—every action needs a reason, and every reason needs to align with current practice."*
Person-centred support	Strengthening students' understanding of person-centred, goal-oriented and empowering support, including participant choice, independence, inclusive communication, person-centred standards and aligning care with the goals of the people being supported.	*"The importance of person-centred and family-centred approaches within disability and community services."*
Sector expectations	Reinforcing contemporary sector expectations, particularly in relation to NDIS Practice Standards, the NDIS Code of Conduct, aged care reforms and broader compliance expectations.	*"One of the staff members emphasised the importance of RTOs ensuring that students were more knowledgeable with the NDIS practice standards and NDIS Code of Conduct. This is something I will ensure I reinforce with my students."*
Inclusion & family-centred	Emphasising inclusion, engagement and family-centred practice, including involving clients in planning and service delivery, building trust with families and recognising families as partners in care.	*"The inclusive and respectful approach to include clients in planning and delivery of services was an outstanding thing to learn."*
Refreshing knowledge	Refreshing or validating existing industry knowledge, with some TTAs noting that the pilot reinforced their existing understanding of current practice.	*"Not much has changed in industry so I am more confident to speak about practice issues."* *"Most of what I observed was a refresher of my previous experience in the sector."*

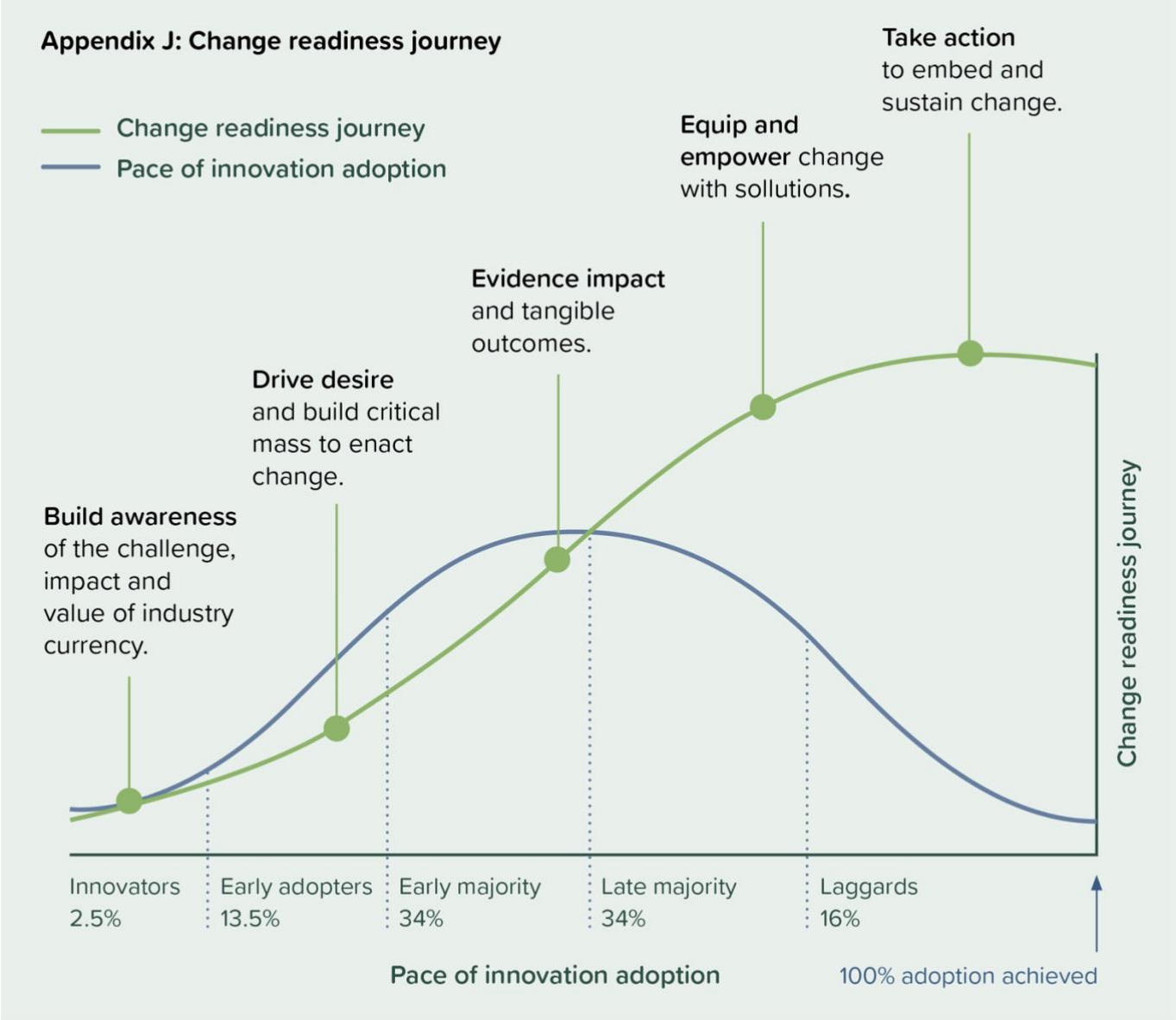
Appendix J

Participants identified practical refinements to support future scale-up

Post-pilot open-text responses suggest participants saw the pilot as scalable, but identified practical refinements needed to support broader implementation.

Practical refinements for scale up	*Illustrative quotes*
Strengthening structure, coordination and relevance, including clearer expectations, more consistent delivery, stronger coordination between RTOs and industry partners, and activities that are more directly relevant to participating teachers, trainers and assessors.	*"There was a lack of consistency in what was delivered in the peer-to-peer online sessions… A training needs analysis from the RTO to give to the industry partner on what would be needed could maybe be of benefit. Also giving the industry some training on how to present their information."*
Expanding access to relevant and local industry partners, with participants identifying the importance of having more employers involved, greater choice of partners, and partnerships that align with course focus and geographic location.	*"Access to more employers — or choice of relevant employers for our courses and geographic location."*
Providing more practical, hands-on and workplace-based opportunities, with participants wanting more site visits, placements, and direct exposure to industry practice.	*"More hands-on and practical experiences—such as workplace visits, real-life case studies, simulations, or direct interaction with trainers and industry workers—would better support applied learning."*
Ensuring realistic resourcing, time and funding, with participants noting that scaled delivery would require dedicated time, funding and consideration of the coordination load for RTOs and employers.	*"Consideration of the coordination and facilitation load for RTOs and employers. Streamlining of the toolkit to be chunked down for different aspects of the currency activities."*
Supporting system-level involvement and shared learning, with participants identifying the value of regulatory involvement, mechanisms to share lessons, and resources that could be integrated into teaching and assessment.	*"Involvement of regulatory bodies and paid opportunities to complete professional development activities."* *"It would also be beneficial to develop a more structured framework for sharing resources, case studies, and best-practice examples that educators can directly integrate into teaching and assessment."*

Appendix K



Adapted from Rogers, E.M., Diffusion of Innovations (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1962)

Appendix L

Sector stakeholder roles

Teachers, trainers and assessors

- Foster and perpetuate a **culture** of high-quality teaching informed by industry currency.
- Develop and maintain an approach to **active learning, reflection and application** of industry insights to teaching practice.
- Maintain **informal relationships** that provide ongoing insight into industry change.

RTOs

- Embed a culture that recognises and rewards industry currency activities.
- Actively communicate tangible impacts to teaching and student outcomes.
- Develop and maintain formal relationships with industry employers.
- Provide clear information, guidance and tools to minimise administrative burden and process friction for teachers, trainers and assessors.
- Implement **policies, structures and processes** that reduce administrative burden and enable participation, such as:
    - allocation of staff and wrap around support to manage industry currency activities supported by regular touch points with teachers, trainers and assessors
    - enable information sharing across different departments and functions
    - embed industry currency activities and outcomes into existing coaching or development frameworks
    - implement work release options
    - implement a measurement framework that considers volume and capability indicators, reflection and application of learning.

Employers

- Build staff capability to support industry currency activities.
- Implement robust risk assessment and mitigation measures.
- Proactively engage clients and embed informed consent processes.
- Develop and maintain formal relationships with RTO partners.
- Share emerging **industry trends** with RTO partners.

Unions and peak bodies

- Promote a sector-wide culture that values industry currency beyond compliance.
- Support shared understanding of effective activities and outcomes.

- Represent teachers, trainers and assessors who are union members.

Government

- Reinforce a culture that prioritises teaching quality and student outcomes alongside compliance.
- Pursue **policy** settings that enable organisational support for industry currency.

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