

## Introducing e-Works

e-Works is a leading exponent of educational technology in Australia and works closely with government, training providers and employers to build “world-class” training through e-learning. e-Works staff have expertise in instructional design, needs analysis, organisational planning, technology standards, technical solutions, staff training, knowledge management and customer support.

e-Works is funded by the Australian government to manage a program of inter-related business activities that focus on building the e-learning support infrastructure for the Australian Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. The major areas of this work that may be of interest to JISC funded initiatives are:

- E-standards for Training – management of the technical standards ratification process for the national VET sector and the underpinning R&D activities – expanded on next page. (see <http://e-standards.flexiblelearning.net.au/> )
- Flexible Learning Toolboxes – development and maintenance of the VET sector’s national collection of e-learning materials in accordance with the requirements of the Australian Qualifications Framework and the respective Industry Training Packages. The Toolbox activity provides leadership in learning innovation and in establishing national content standards for VET sector take-up. (see <http://toolboxes.flexiblelearning.net.au/> )
- LORN – national network of learning content repositories through which VET teachers can discover, license, download and use learning materials. (see <http://lorn.flexiblelearning.net.au/> )

e-Works also manages a shared services infrastructure (Training VC) that supports the e-learning delivery requirements of training providers. The Training VC provides a learning management system, training materials, a content management system and a range of various learner engagement and delivery tools all of which can be integrated into the training provider’s existing systems.

## Background information

### The Australian VET sector context

The Australian Vocational Education and Training sector is made up of 8 jurisdictions i.e. Training System in every Australian state and territory. VET delivery consists of nationally accredited training courses aligned to the Australian Qualifications Framework and based on competences articulated in Industry Training Packages covering more than 80 industry sectors. Providers of VET courses include TAFE Institutions (similar to FE colleges), registered private training organisations, Adult and Community Education (ACE) providers and some schools registered as providers of VET. The VET sector has strong links with industry and its learners are from 16+ to mature age, the majority of which are already in the workforce.

### National collaboration imperatives

Meeting the diverse needs of learners in this sector means it is imperative that e-learning content and systems are able to operate across a range of platforms and contexts. A culture of national collaboration is fostered through the sector’s national e-learning strategy, the Australian Flexible Learning Framework (Framework) to improve returns on investment for e-learning. The Framework receives an annual funding allocation from the Australian government’s Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) to support the building of essential e-learning



support infrastructure and to stimulate learning innovation. The Flexible Learning Advisory Group (FLAG) is the jurisdictional representative body that oversees Framework implementation and provides national VET sector policy advice in the application of ICT. For further information about the Framework and its funded activities see: <http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/>

## Introducing the E-Standards Team

### What is E-standards for Training?

The E-standards for Training activity is funded through the Framework and it is managed by e-Works on behalf of FLAG. It has the following objectives:

- To support the training system's essential e-learning infrastructure by gaining agreement on technical standards by all jurisdictions (states and territories). This includes convening the E-Standards Expert Group, the jurisdictional representative committee for national standards endorsement.
- To promote the use of technical standards for e-learning content, including support with implementation tools and guidance materials.
- To research and develop standards in emerging technology areas including ICT standards to support management of learner information, RPL processes, personalised learning and knowledge management.
- To provide a basis for collaboration on standards and interoperability with other sectors and international standards activities.

### Current projects and activities

Through the E-standards activity, e-Works manages the national technical standards agreement and ratification process on behalf of the VET sector. This role includes research, maintenance and advocacy. A key part of this responsibility is to support and advise the work of the VET sector's national Learning Object Repository Network (LORN). Relevant activities include:

- Research and investigation into appropriate technologies and approaches for managing access and authentication across and between organisations
- Development and maintenance of a national metadata application profile (Vetadata) including supporting documentation and software tools
- Investigation and trial of persistent identifier infrastructure, policy and workflows for e-learning resources including consideration for a relationship service to map relationships between e-learning content
- Research into the potential impact of the W3C's recently released Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0).
- E-portfolio roadmap to establish a technical framework and guidelines for developers of e-portfolio applications and for managers of learner information across the VET sector. (see [http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/files/VETePortfolioRoadmap\\_web.pdf](http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/files/VETePortfolioRoadmap_web.pdf) )

The E-standards team at e-Works is also involved in a range of other activities including the guidelines for network management to support e-learning applications, development and advocacy of a teacher e-learning toolkit (for SOEs), and funding trials of emerging technologies.

## Contacts

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