



## Education Position Statement

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### RATIONALE

Regional Development Australia–Northern Rivers (RDA-NR) is a non-profit community-based and regionally focused organisation that connects people and businesses in our region to opportunities through partnerships focusing on community, environment and economy.

RDA-NR recognises that education is a fundamental enabler of regional economic development, growth and sustainability. This soft infrastructure is necessary for economic development and access to education also serves to promote and ensure social inclusion. RDA-NR is a facilitator of regional economic development and catalyst for new investment and industry development in the Northern Rivers region through creative partnerships with key educational providers such as:

- NSW Department of Education and Training’s State Training Services;
- Southern Cross University;
- TAFE NSW – North Coast Institute, which has campuses in nine locations throughout the region;
- Adult & Community Education (ACE) campuses in nine locations; and
- a range of industry associations and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) also located throughout the region.

### PRINCIPLES

RDA-NR recognises that access to a wide range of innovative and relevant educational opportunities is critical to the growth of the Northern Rivers’ economy. It also recognises the need to encourage a range of flexible educational and skills development links to industry. The value of education for businesses varies due to differing management skills across small enterprises and staff support or incentives for education, training and development.

RDA-NR:

- encourages the fostering of the region’s human resource base through the provision of on and off site training;
- advocates that educational planning and provision requires information and adequate local data on skill gaps, industry changes and future needs. Local industry information needs to be provided to the Industry Skills Councils and Skills Australia to enable regional needs to be identified and addressed;
- recognises that the need for access to educational opportunities is non-linear in nature;

- understands that learning is now accepted as a life-long process;
- supports addressing educational issues from an end-user perspective that is linked to career pathways and personal achievement. Flexibility, skills and relevance may be more important than accreditation or qualifications to businesses as appropriate qualifications do not necessarily equate to job readiness;
- encourages the enhancement and promotion of programs that provide Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL);
- advocates for regional access and delivery to Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs;
- supports the provision of educational opportunities that help to better prepare the region for a post-carbon economy;
- acknowledges that advances in technology provide greater flexibility in the delivery of educational and skills development programs;
- supports the initiation and development of government programs that provide funding incentives for innovation in educational and skills development programs;
- encourages programs that target specific groups such as mature age workers, parents re-entering the workforce, Indigenous and other marginalised groups; and
- recognises the educational sector is a major employer, and the region's school, University and TAFE facilities are key sites where there is significant local employment by this industry.

## **DATE OF ADOPTION**

Version 1 adopted by Regional Development Australia – Northern Rivers 11 December 2009

## **DATE OF REVIEW**

December 2012