Adult Community Education

Upfront Assessment of Need Guiding Principles

Commitment to UAN processes

The Upfront Assessment of Need (UAN) process was implemented to the South Australian VET sector to improve rates of retention and completion in publicly subsidised training.

Undertaking the UAN in an Adult Community Education setting will help students become familiar with literacy and numeracy assessments that are required for all publicly funded training as they progress from ACE to enrolment in VET to achieve their training and employment goals.

The ACE UAN is about understanding student needs and supports

The UAN is a holistic procedure for ACE providers and tutors to understand:
- a student's suitability for the project or training activity
- the language, literacy and numeracy (LLN) levels mapped to the Australian Core Skills Framework (ACSF)
- the support needs that the student may need to overcome barriers to attend and successfully complete training.

When individual learning and support needs are identified early, strategies can be put in place to improve retention and completion outcomes.

Have a positive approach

Evidence has demonstrated that the attitude of training provider staff towards the UAN process considerably impacts on the attitudes of individuals and learners. A positive approach that explains the benefits of the ACE UAN process will reduce unnecessary fear, stigmatisation or embarrassment that can occur when the purpose of the UAN is not properly explained or understood.

The ACE UAN has multiple elements

The ACE UAN process is not just a literacy and numeracy assessment. There are three main elements of the UAN to ensure a successful training outcome and transition to further learning or employment:

1. **Suitability and support checklist** – to be completed through conversation/interview with student at any suitable time, such as when student enquires about the course or at time of enrolment.
2. **Basic skills indicator (BSI)** – an online tool with questions to understand a student's basic reading and numeracy skill level. A student must be supervised when completing the online questions. Both reading and numeracy components need to be completed, however they do not need to be done at

the same time if the student is not comfortable continuing. The BSI is to be completed at commencement and completion of training.

3. **Observation record of skill development –** A record to document observed improvements in foundation skills development throughout training to report that as a pathway outcome for a student. It is recognised that the BSI will not identify an improvement from one ASCF level to the next in the short period of time training occurs for an ACE project, however students will make improvements through training that should be recognised.

The BSI is not a test

The online reading and numeracy component is not a pass or fail test and a result below a certain ACSF level does not warrant a decision by the ACE provider to deny access to training. The aim is to promote inclusion by addressing identified needs so that wherever possible an individual can undertake and successfully complete training.

Support students through the process

The tutor or administrator can support the learner to understand the purpose of the BSI and how the online tool operates to ensure they are comfortable and in a safe place to answer the questions.

Learners should be encouraged to attempt every question, however if the tutor or administrator can see that the student is experiencing difficulty or increased anxiety as the questions progress then they can suggest that the learner takes a break or that the assessment does not continue.

The tutor or administrator can support the learner on how to navigate pages, how to respond and answer questions, etc, but they should not give any advice that helps the learner understand the stimulus text provided or to answer the question.

Learners can use a pen or pencil and paper to make notes and calculations if necessary. For the numeracy assessment, learners may use a calculator to help them answer the questions.