



2017 ANNUAL REPORT



This Annual report provides information about Northern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network (NMLEN) and the financial and non-financial performance for 2017. It has been prepared in accordance with the Associations Incorporations Reform Act (Vic. 2012). The report records the significant achievements in accordance with the contracts with the Victorian Department of Education and Training. This report has been prepared to meet the needs of stakeholders including Education and Training Providers, Employers, Parents and Families and Community Organisations. If you have any comments regarding this report, please contact NMLEN directly.

Acknowledgements: Sunnyland Press | Darren Seiler Photography



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About NMMLLEN

Background

Northern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network (NMMLLEN) is one of 31 LLENs across Victoria which were established in 2001 arising from recommendations of the Kirby Report- Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria. LLENs were established as not-for-profit, community based incorporated associations to identify gaps in education and training, provide advice on local and State-wide policy issues and broker cross-sector partnerships.

NMMLLEN is a membership based organisation that brokers partnerships to provide better pathways and support for young people in the Northern Mallee Region. NMMLLEN's region covers the Mildura Rural City Council LGA (including the towns of Mildura, Merbein, Irymple, Red Cliffs, Ouyen, Werrimull and Murrayville) and Robinvale (part of Swan Hill Rural City Council LGA).

In 2017, Northern Mallee LLEN was funded by the Victorian Government for the LLEN contract, Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) contract, On Track Connect contract and Navigator Pilot-Mallee contract.

Mission Statement

Brokering strategic partnerships with stakeholder groups resulting in better outcomes in education, training and employment for young people.

Role

NMMLLEN brokers strategic and sustainable community partnerships aimed at improving education and transition outcomes for young people including increasing Year 12 or equivalent attainment rates.

Vision

To be a key contributor towards increasing the number of young people successfully completing Year 12 or equivalent in the Northern Mallee region.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Fiona Harley, OAM

2017 was another challenging and rewarding year for Northern Mallee LLEN. The organisation continued to focus on brokering partnerships to ensure our community's most vulnerable young people are actively engaged in education, training or employment.

The commitment of educators, employers and the community sector to join with Northern Mallee LLEN in the pursuit of innovative and creative ventures is reaping success. Many more of our most vulnerable young people are staying engaged in education and training, thus increasing their capacity to gain meaningful employment or follow vocational education pathways.

The data outlined in this report clearly demonstrates that the young people involved in these programs continue to be engaged or to re-engage with education.

In a nutshell, our interventions are working!

Much remains to be done however, if we are to realise our aspiration for every young person in our community to be involved in education, training or employment. This can only be achieved by strong partnerships between, government, community-based organisations, industry and community.

It gives me great pride to outline in the 2017 Northern Mallee LLEN Annual Report, the work undertaken and the partnerships formed to realise the vision of the organisation.



Strengthen Education, Vocational and Training Pathways leading to employment for young people

Our major partnership in 2017 has been with the Office of the Victorian Skills Commissioner.

Neil Coulson has undertaken a major consultation with industry and employers across the Mallee to identify future skills needs and employment opportunities. He did this through the Mallee Regional Skills Taskforce, which comprised many key industry leaders and employers from the Mildura and Robinvale regions. To support our future growth and to replace the anticipated retirements, the Taskforce projected a future workforce demand of between 2,900 and 4,400 new workers from 2017 to 2020.

The key themes were:

1. Students can benefit from greater awareness, interest and exposure to careers in industry
2. Changes and opportunities in the labour market take time to filter down to trainers, schools, students and their parents
3. There is unmet demand for various skilled trades, including boilermakers, diesel mechanics and machine operators
4. Strong language, literacy and numeracy skill levels and transferable skills are important to employers
5. Licences and certificates can better signal the accumulated experience and competence of workers to employers
6. There is variability in the level of proficiency achieved by students against key competencies required by industry
7. Government and industry data can support medium term planning

The Taskforce projected a future demand of 2900- 4400 new workers



If our region is to grasp these opportunities, it is vital that young people and their parents are made aware of these opportunities. Awareness will help them identify and navigate the pathways through school and training to gain the skills and knowledge that will prepare them for these jobs.

It is also important that a strong partnership is developed between industry, employers and schools to strengthen VET in Schools (VET delivered to Secondary School Students). Working together will ensure local students have the opportunity to obtain basic skills as well as a clear pathway to further training, ensuring they are well prepared for the future employment opportunities identified by the Taskforce.

Northern Mallee LLEN has played a key role in providing data, advice and support to the Office of the Victorian Skills Commissioner and the Taskforce throughout 2017 and will continue to do so in the future.

The Board of Northern Mallee LLEN is totally committed to supporting partnerships between industries, employers and schools. Cohesion and cooperation will ensure young people of our region are able to acquire the skills to secure employment in the region and contribute to the future of our community.

Northern Mallee LLEN would also like to acknowledge and thank Sunraysia Institute of TAFE and Aust-Link for their co-operation and support for our work with Victorian Skills Commissioner.

Northern Mallee LLEN has continued its role on the Mildura Region Trade Training Centre Committee (MRTTC) of Management which provides input and guidance on the future directions of the MRTTC. I would especially like to acknowledge the valuable work of our Treasurer Peter Devilee in his role as Chair of the MRTTC Committee of Management. In 2017 there were 404 students enrolled at the Deakin and Riverside Trade Training Centres (Deakin TTC: 320 Riverside: TTC 84) and we look forward to increased opportunities for young people who want to follow a vocational pathway in their schooling, especially in light of the VSC Report.

Northern Mallee LLEN, with the co-operation of local secondary schools, undertook a survey of 1069 Year 9, 10, 11 and 12 students to better understand their motivations and plans for undertaking VET studies. This will help inform our partnership with the VSC and schools and help identify ways to strengthen VET opportunities and pathways for students. I wish to acknowledge the excellent work of Paula Robinson who managed this project and to thank the School Principals for agreeing to be part of this project.

An important and valuable contribution to strengthening VET for Secondary School students is the Structured Work Place Learning (SWL) Program. Northern Mallee LLEN is one of the 31 LLENs across the State funded by DET to support the creation of Structured Work Placements for students. There are significant benefits for students in undertaking an SWL where they have an opportunity to apply their classroom learning in a real industry setting as well as gaining valuable insights into the field of employment they are pursuing. Employers like the program as it gives them an opportunity to identify potential future employees.



*During 2017,
117 positions
were placed
on the SWL
Portal*

The Board thanks Ian Westhead and Brad Brooks in their role as Northern Mallee LLEN SWL Coordinators during 2017. During 2017 there were 117 positions placed on the SWL Portal for students to view and select. The SWL Portal is comparatively new and there is still considerable work to do in engaging students in the use of the portal. There is also a need to encourage more VET students to undertake an SWL placement as it is not compulsory for the vast majority of VET courses.

A further Northern Mallee LLEN action to support pathways to education, training and employment is the Local Learning and Employment Opportunities (LLEO) website. The LLEO website was created by NMLEN in 2014 in response to a need identified by the Sunraysia Careers Network for a resource that enabled students, parents, careers advisors and

youth workers to search all the training and post-secondary courses available in the district on one website. I wish to thank Alison Greenway for her work in liaising with education and training providers to keep the LLEO website up to date throughout 2017.

Strengthen support for disengaging and disengaged youth.

Throughout 2017 Northern Mallee LLEN has partnerships that contributed to this goal.

Firstly, our Flexible Learning Options in Schools (FLOiS) and FLO Connect projects. These are vital complementary projects that aim to keep young people engaged at school (FLOiS) or reconnect them back into school, training or employment (FLO Connect).

The Board wishes to thank the schools concerned (Mildura Senior College, Red Cliffs S.C., Irymple S.C., Chaffey SC and Merbein P-10) for their innovation, passion and collaborative efforts for the 118 students involved in the FLOiS program in 2017. The outcomes speak for themselves. Since commencing in 2012 there have been 586 students involved in a FLOiS program with an average of 84% of those students still engaged in education or training in the following year.

The Board also wishes to acknowledge and thank Red Cliffs SC and Mildura Rural City Council as the key drivers of the FLO Connect program. This innovative program has filled a significant gap in our community in providing opportunities for disengaged youth aged 12-19 to re-engage. FLO Connect is an alternative education setting that assists and supports these young people to transition back into school, training or onto employment. Since commencing in 2014, 225 young people have joined FLO Connect with an average of 77% in education, training or employment in the following year.

In the bigger picture, the 2006 and 2011 census showed there were 823 (13.1%) (2006) and 950 (14.5%) (2011) young people aged 15-24 not in education, training or employment. With the introduction of FLOiS (to keep young people engaged with education or training) and FLO Connect (to re-engage young people back into education or training) the 2016 census showed that there were 872 (13.1%) young people aged 15-24 not in education, training or employment. Whilst seeming a small reduction over the 2011 census data, it is encouraging to see that these programs are starting to have an impact on a significant youth issue in our region.

Another Northern Mallee LLEN project is the Navigator Pilot (Mallee). In partnership with Murray Mallee LLEN, Mildura Rural City Council and FLO Connect, the Navigator program involves intensive case management support for young people in schools aged 12-17 whose attendance is less than 30%. Schools refer students to the DET Mallee Area Office Navigator Coordinator who checks and refers eligible students to NMLLEN/MRCC and MMLLEN for intensive case management support by their respective case workers.

The aim of the program is to re-engage Navigator clients back into school when ready to do so. Since the program commenced in 2016 the outcomes have been:

- Number of referrals referred in the program so far: 141
- Number of clients received case management support: 114
- Number of clients returned to education: 61

There are many challenges in re-engaging young people back into education and we are working closely with schools, DET Area Office and agencies to achieve the objective of getting young people re-engaged back into education with sustained attendance.

The Board wishes to thank our partners, schools, DET Mallee Area Office and agencies that assist in this valuable program.

Further key partnerships undertaken in 2017 include:

Robinvale College Year 9 Mentoring Program

Northern Mallee LLEN has been assisting Robinvale College grow and develop their Mentoring Program with local employers, for nearly five years. The program connects each student for ninety minutes a week with a workplace and a person within that workplace. It is now embedded into the Community Services class at Year Nine, for a round of approximately five weeks for each student.

One way the program has been refined over the five years, is in the means of tapping the availability of mentors - three to five for each round. A 'round robin' approach, developed in 2016, was timely for the forty-seven Year nine students of 2017: a larger cohort than usual.

Another way the program has grown is in its bank of mentors, which now enables potential student exposure to Hospitality, Engineering, Car Sales and Service, Journalism, Education, Nursing and Community Services. This in turn has enabled a diversity of workplace choices for students, although it is worth noting that mentors and mentees alike observe consistently that the student exposure to generic competencies is as significant as exposure to specific vocational skills.







The success of the program has attracted the attention of groups, and in the latter part of 2017 Hilary Thiele, the NMLLEN Project Officer working with the program, was asked to provide information regarding its structure and success, to a number of Mildura personnel and organisations examining mentoring models with a view to initiating them.

STEM in Schools Project

Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) is a key priority of the Victorian and Australian Governments. STEM covers a wide range of disciplines and skills, which are increasingly in demand in our rapidly-changing world. STEM skills and knowledge are important for all stages of our learning, jobs and everyday lives.

In partnership with our local secondary schools, NMLLEN visited schools to map and discuss the key issues surrounding STEM. The project also aimed to identify the partnership opportunities between local industry and schools in supporting STEM in Schools.

The Board wishes to thank our STEM in Schools Project Officer Jan Pietsch for her enthusiasm and commitment to undertaking this project. The Board looks forward to the STEM in Schools Report early in 2018 and the partnership opportunities it identifies to strengthen STEM in our local schools.

On Track Connect

In 2017 Northern Mallee LLEN again secured the contract with the Department of Education and Training to conduct On Track Connect.

Under this program, Year 12 completers and early school leavers from 2016 who have been unsuccessful in securing a place in higher education, training or employment, are referred to their local LLEN.

Northern Mallee LLEN provides advice and support, as well as linking the young people to agencies and providers who are able to assist them in pursuing their education, training or employment pathway.

During June and July, 19 young people were referred to Northern Mallee LLEN for assistance. Across the state, over 1,500 young people were referred to LLENs for assistance.

Northern Mallee LLEN has continued its involvement and support for a wide range of community networks. These include:

- Northern Mallee Community Partnership and its major collective impact project 'Hands Up Mallee'
- headspace Mildura
- Zoe Support Australia
- Sunraysia Careers Network
- Mallee Children and Youth Area Partnership
- Mildura School Focus Youth Service Local Advisory Committee
- NWV School Focus Youth Service Regional Advisory Group
- FLOiS Advisory Committee
- JVEN Mildura
- Chances for Children - District Selection Committee
- Mallee Regional Partnership 2017 Regional Assembly (June)

Conclusion

The Board continues to monitor the progress of the organisation against the Strategic Plan and once again reviewed its role and adjusted processes in response to member feedback.

I wish to thank the Board for their support throughout the past year and in particular, acknowledge outgoing Committee members, Ruth Fox (Deputy Chair), Don Palazzo and Ali Cupper for their contributions over the past years.

My sincere thanks to members of the Executive who meet monthly to provide support to the Executive Officer and oversee the operations of Northern Mallee LLEN. They, along with the Executive Officer, are the engine room to the organisation.

My sincere thanks and appreciation to Ron for his leadership and dedication to the work of Northern Mallee LLEN. My thanks also to the staff for their commitment and efforts throughout 2017.

You should all be very proud of what has been achieved.

Fiona Harley OAM
Chair



Miss Mae
BEAUTY SALON



NMLLEN STAFF



RON BROADHEAD Executive Officer

Ron joined NMLLEN in August 2008 as the Executive Officer.

Ron has had over 30 years experience in education and training which has included teaching and lecturing; senior management roles at Sunraysia Institute of TAFE and Box Hill TAFE; and as Campus Director of the Mildura Campus of La Trobe University. His tertiary qualifications include economics, education and management.

Ron's role as Executive Officer includes stakeholder management and community engagement; strategic planning and implementation; board management; financial management; operational management; governance, reporting and accountability; project and contract management.



IAN WESTHEAD (JAN-JUNE) & BRAD BROOKS (JULY-DEC)

Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator

Brad commenced with NMLLEN in July 2017, replacing Ian Westhead as the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator.

The SWL Coordinator's role is to source Structured Workplace Learning opportunities with local businesses and upload these opportunities onto the online Portal. The SWL Coordinator also works closely with schools and local industries to develop programs that will increase awareness for workplace learning.



PAULA ROBINSON (PART TIME) Project Officer

Paula has a background in education, project management and communications having worked in schools across the Mallee, at Sunraysia Institute of TAFE and Mallee Catchment Management Authority.

Paula works with the Flexible learning Options in schools, FLO Connect and Student Mapping Tool - Supporting Transition Projects as well as keeping the community and stakeholders informed about the latest happenings at the NMLLEN through newsletters, events, campaigns and media releases.



JAN PIETSCH (PART TIME) STEM in Schools Project Officer

Jan started her career as a science teacher and spent a number of years as Principal of Irymple Secondary College. After a rewarding career in secondary education, she retired in 2011.

Having retained a strong interest in ensuring access to quality education for country students, particularly girls, she was invited back to lead the STEM project for NMLLEN.



TANIA PEARCE (PART TIME) Communications & Project Officer

Tania commenced with NMLLEN in August 2016 with past experience in managing Student Services at SuniTAFE; Apprenticeship Support Officer and Youth Work.

Tania's communication role includes producing the NMLLEN Newsletter, maintaining the NMLLEN website, Facebook and Twitter social media and organisation of the NMLLEN Annual General Meeting. Her project work includes support for the Navigator Project.



SAMANTHA JETSON (PART TIME) Administration Officer

Samantha joined NMLLEN in August 2017 as an Administration Officer. Samantha comes to us with a background in Social Sciences, experience in community development and a strong interest in research and analysis.

Samantha's role is to maintain the day to day operations of NMLLEN and provide support to the Executive Officer and Board.



HILARY THIELE (PART TIME) Project Officer

Hilary joined NMLLEN in June 2013 as a Project Officer. Hilary comes to us with a diverse experience as an educator in the Mallee region. This includes six years as Principal of Murrayville Community College and a leading teacher at Mildura Senior College.

Hilary's role is to investigate options to facilitate vocational pathways for students in Robinvale. She is assisting Robinvale P-12 College to build community links in this field.



ALISON GREENWAY (PART TIME) Project Officer

Alison began at NMLLEN in 2013 with experience in careers counselling and welfare roles.

Alison maintains the Local Learning & Employment (LLEO) Website to ensure the latest information is available for young people making the transition from school to further education, training or employment.

2017 COMMITTEE

of management



Category 10

Fiona Harley
(Chair)

*Senior Program Advisor Health
Integration and Partnerships,
Department of Health and
Human Services*



Category 6

Ruth Fox
(Deputy Chair)

*Executive Manager, Sunraysia
Community Health Services*



Category 6

Peter Devilee
(Treasurer)

*Managing Director, Devilee's Air
Conditioning & Refrigeration*



Category 5

Chris Hobart
(Secretary)

Australian Services Union



Category 1

Graeme Cupper

Principal, Merbein P-10



Category 1

Greg Kluske

*Deputy Principal,
St Joseph's College Mildura*



Category 1

Belinda Hudak

*Principal,
Mildura Senior College*



Category 2

Geoff Dea

*CEO,
Sunraysia Institute of TAFE*



Category 3

Marion Wilson

*Manager,
MADEC Community College*



Category 4
Dr. Deb Neal
*Head of Campus,
La Trobe University, Mildura*



Category 6
Don Palazzo
*Manager Resources
and Facilities,
Mildura Base Hospital*



Category 6
Peter O'Donnell
*Executive Director,
Southern Cross Farms*



Category 7
Cr. Ali Cupper
*Councillor,
Mildura Rural City Council*



Category 7
Cr. Glenn Milne
*Councillor,
Mildura Rural City Council*



Category 7
Cr. Simon Clemence
*Councillor,
Mildura Rural City Council*



Category 8
Ofa Hakalo
*Committee Member,
Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic
Communities Council*



Category 8
Josh Cole
*President,
Sunraysia Youth Alliance*



Category 9
Jenene Murray
*Children's Koori Court
Liaison Officer, Department of
Education & Training*



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GOVERNANCE

Committee of Management

Committee of Management is drawn from 11 membership categories

Membership Category		Number of Committee Members
1	Schools: Government and non-government	3
2	TAFE Institutes or Universities with TAFE Sectors	1
3	Adult Community Education organisations	1
4	Other education and training organisations including private registered training organisations, universities and Group Training Companies	1
5	Trade Unions	1
6	Employers, Peak employment organisations, Regional employer organisations and employment agencies	4
7	Local Government	1
8	Other community agencies and organisations, Commonwealth and State government departments, Parent Organisations, School Focussed Youth Service, Adult Community and Further education Regional Councils, Regional Youth Councils, Regional Development Australia	2
9	Koorie Organisations, Peak Koorie agencies and Regional Koorie organisations	1
10	Community Members	1
11	Co-opted member appointed by the Committee of Management as a community member or a person associated with an organisational member	-

86% of
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2-16) remain
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Committee of Management member changes

In 2017 the following changes to the Committee of Management occurred:

Members retiring were: Sandra Stewart (Category 9).

Members who resigned: Ruth Fox (Category 6), Cr. Ali Cupper (Category 7)

New members were: Jenene Murray (Category 9), Peter O'Donnell (Category 6), Cr. Simon Clemence (Category 7).

Note: Cr. Glenn Milne replaced Cr Ali Cupper whilst she was on family leave.

Northern Mallee LLEN thanks all new, retiring and continuing Committee of Management members for their contributions in 2017.

Executive Sub Committee

The role of the Executive Sub Committee is to ensure the efficient operation of Northern Mallee LLEN through receiving reports, monitoring financial reports and make recommendations to the Committee of Management for consideration and approval.

The Executive Sub Committee meets monthly.

Chair: Fiona Harley (*Chair*)

Members: Ruth Fox (*Deputy Chair*) –Resigned June
Peter Devilee (*Treasurer*)
Chris Hobart (*Secretary*)
Ron Broadhead (*Executive Officer*)

Governance Sub Committee

The role of the Governance Sub Committee is to establish and maintain a governance framework for the Northern Mallee LLEN Committee of Management which includes development of policies and procedures in line with the funding body's framework. It also monitors the performance of the organisation.

The Governance Sub Committee meets as required.

Chair: Fiona Harley (*Chair*)

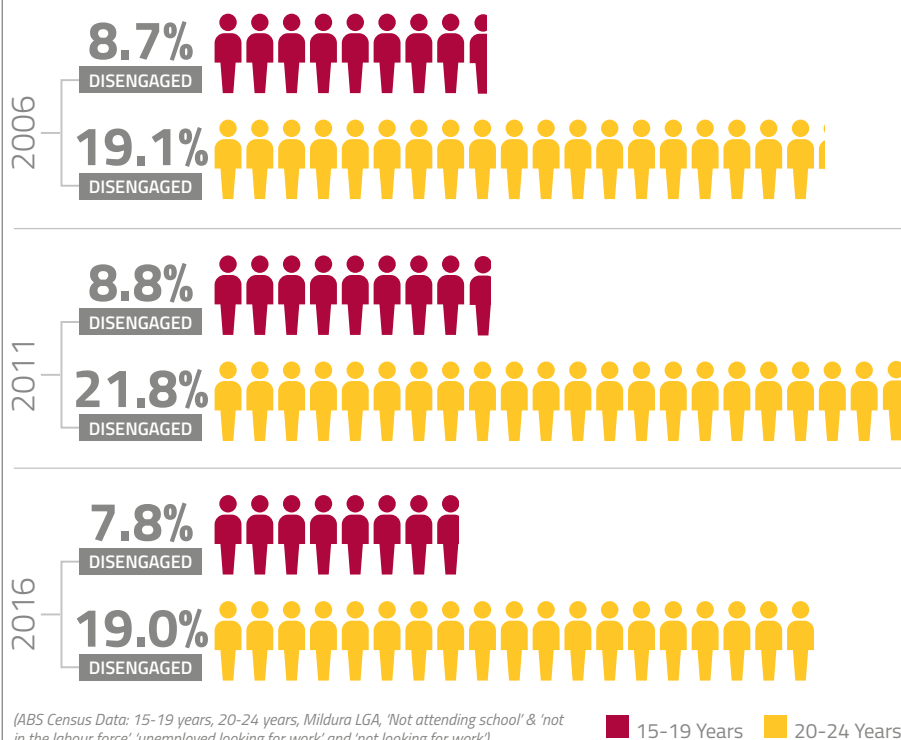
Members: Chris Hobart (*Secretary*)
Don Palazzo (*Committee member*)
Geoff Dea (*Committee member*)
Peter O' Donnell (*Committee member*)
Ron Broadhead (*Executive Officer*)



DATA SNAPSHOT

For the year 2017

Youth Disengagement - Mildura LGA - 2006-2016



141
TOTAL number of referrals received
(so far in the program)

114
TOTAL number of clients
who have received case management since program began

61
TOTAL number of young people returned to education

Navigator

Mallee area (Mildura LGA, Swan Hill LGA, Gannawarra Shire (excluding Cohuna) and Sea Lake in the Buloke Shire.

VET in Schools Survey received 1069 responses

28%

were studying a VET subject
Top subject areas:
Hospitality - Retail & Engineering

49%

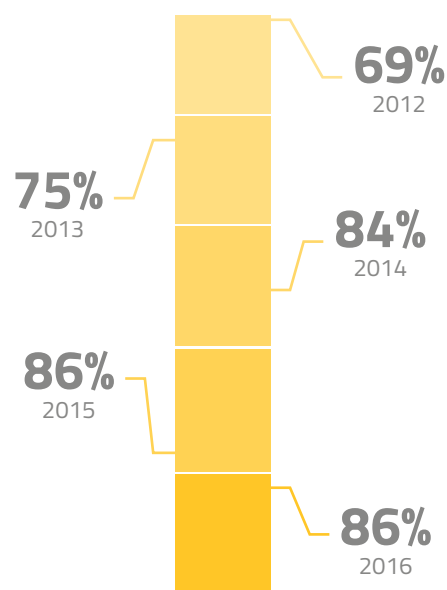
of VET courses as part of a career pathway
Top VET career paths:
Electrical - Building & Construction

74%

of all students had a career pathway in mind
Top overall career paths:
Health - Trades & Education

Destinations of Students in FLO Programs

Percentage of students remaining engaged in education, training or employment the following year



Total students reached 2012-2016
FLO in Schools: 468 | FLO connect: 173

Brokering strategic partnerships with stakeholder groups resulting in better outcomes in education, training and employment for young people.

On Track Connect 2017

17

young people referred to NMLLEN for advice on education and training or assistance seeking employment.

