



2018 ANNUAL REPORT







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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 2018, 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

2018 saw a year of new opportunities and continued challenges for the Board and staff of Northern Mallee LLEN.

Northern Mallee LLEN 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 making a difference. However, the levels of disengagement of our vulnerable young people are still too high and Northern Mallee LLEN and its partners need to continue their efforts in strengthening their capacity to remain engaged at school, to gain appropriate knowledge and skills and to pursue a pathway in higher or vocational education that leads to identified employment opportunities.

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 schools, industry, community-based organisations, government and community.

It gives me great pride to outline my last report as Chair, the work undertaken and the partnerships formed to realise the vision of Northern Mallee Local Learning and Employment Network.



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

Our major partnership in 2018 has been with the Office of the Victorian Skills Commissioner, building on the projects initiated in 2017.

Victoria's Skills Commissioner Neil Coulson, undertook a major consultation in 2017 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 findings of the Taskforce 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 2018 and will continue to do so in the future.

Northern Mallee LLEN has continued its role on the Mildura Region Trade Training Centre (MRTTC) Committee of Management which provides input and guidance on the future directions of the Deakin and Riverside Trade Training Centres (based at Mildura Senior College and St. Joseph's College respectively). 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. A major highlight for the MRTTC in 2018 was the ACT NOW event held in June with over 700 students visiting the Deakin TTC and Riverside TTC which showcased the range trades and further vocational training opportunities available for local students.

Northern Mallee LLEN, SuniTAFE and the MRTTC identified five new VET courses that have been offered to secondary

school students in 2019 that align with the skills shortages identified by the Victorian Skills Commissioner's Report.

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 this program as it gives them an opportunity to identify potential future employees.

The Board thanks Rod Martin in his role as Northern Mallee LLEN SWL Coordinator which he commenced in January in 2018. Through Rod's efforts, Northern Mallee LLEN arranged 200 SWL local opportunities loaded onto the SWL Portal with 83 of these being 'consumed' by students. These outcomes far exceeded the 2018 KPIs in the NMLLEN contract with DET. Across the State, the LLEN network arranged 8,807 opportunities for students with 5,907 being taken up by students which exceeded the State-wide KPIs targets set by DET.

In 2019 Northern Mallee LLEN will continue to work with schools to encourage more VET students to undertake an SWL placement as it is not compulsory for the vast majority of VET courses.

Building on our links with local employers, NMLLEN conducted a number of industry visits for students from schools to raise their awareness of future employment opportunities and to



*During 2018, 200 positions  
were placed on the SWL Portal*

assist them in identifying vocational and training pathways. These industry visits involving 190 students across Years 10-12 included:

- Buslink (Automotive and related trades)
- BEON Energy Solutions/Karadoc Solar Farm (Electrical trades)
- Nufarm (formerly Seven Fields) (Agriculture, Horticulture and Food Processing)
- Mildura Airport (Aviation and Administration)
- GTS Freight Management; Wakefield Transport (Transport and Logistics)
- Nu Edge Solutions Australia (Biological Farming)
- Lower Murray Water (Domestic and Rural Water Management)
- Monash Rural Health (Medical Technology)

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 NMLLEN 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 2018.









## Strengthen support for disengaging and disengaged youth.

The Board wishes to acknowledge and thank Red Cliffs SC and Mildura Rural City Council as the key drivers of the **FLO Connect** program of which NMLLEN is a partner. 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 **Flexible Learning Options in Schools (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.

However, recent anecdotal advice from schools has been that disengagement is a significant challenge for schools and the continual need to address the factors that contribute to student disengagement.

A major 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 provides intensive case management support for young people in schools aged 12-17 whose attendance at school 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: **201**
- Number of clients received case management support: **173**
- Number of clients returned to education: **84**

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 2018 include:**

### Robinvale College Year 9 Mentoring Program

Robinvale College Year Nine Mentoring, as part of the Year Nine Community Services Program, commenced in June. Mentoring at this level has been underway since 2013, and has become more and more embedded as an important part of the overall learning program at Robinvale College. The 2018 cohort of 38 students completed a five-week session of mentoring where students are matched and rotated with local industry mentors including hospitality, nursing, journalism and engineering.

Hilary Thiele (NMLLEN Project Officer) has been supporting the development and implementation of this program from its inception and the Board thanks Hilary for her commitment and passion for working with Robinvale College students and staff, and local employers.

### 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 SuniTAFE and local secondary schools, Northern Mallee LLEN conducted the **STEM4Sunraysia** two day event in October.

The event, held at the Mildura Campus of SuniTAFE, involved 70 Year 9 students engaging in a Tech School model of the world of work tomorrow; tour of local industry; identification of a 'technology' problem faced by local industry; working collaboratively in small groups to develop innovative solutions and 'pitching' these solutions to industry.

The event was a resounding success with students actively engaging in the Tech School model of exploration, investigation, collaboration and problem solving.





Northern Mallee LLEN thanks Irymple S.C., Red Cliffs S.C., Chaffey S.C., Merbein P-10; Robinvale College, St. Joseph's College, Trinity Lutheran College and Henderson College for their assistance in making this a success. We also thank Wakefield's Transport, Lower Murray Water, Mildura Regional Development, Monash Rural Health and Nu Edge Solutions Australia and for their participation and support of this program and especially our project partner SuniTAFE.

### **Parliament of Victoria Inquiry into career advice activities in Victorian Schools**

Northern Mallee LLEN made representations to the Committee conducting the inquiry when it visited Mildura in March to conduct hearings.

The LLEN Network also made representations to the Committee at its hearings in Melbourne.

The Committee's Report (containing 37 Findings and 46 Recommendations) was tabled in Parliament in September. NMMLLEN supports all the Committee's recommendations and urges Government to implement them.

It needs to be recognised and acknowledged that the Victorian Government in its 2018/19, Budget committed \$109m over four years and \$26.7m ongoing to redesign career education, to help students make better career and pathways decisions and to meet business and industry needs. It also committed \$50m to the Head Start Apprenticeships and Traineeships and \$25.9m to improve student's access to high quality Vocational Education and Training in Schools.

However, the Parliamentary Inquiry Report identifies further opportunities to improve and strengthen the important and vital role of career development activities in schools.

### **On Track Connect 2018**

In 2018 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 2017 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.

## Community Networks

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
- Mildura Regional Development
- Mallee Regional Partnership
- Sunraysia Mallee Ethnic Communities Council
- Mallee Children and Youth Area Partnership
- Mildura School Focus Youth Service Local Advisory Committee
- NWV School Focus Youth Service Regional Advisory Group
- JVEN Mildura

## Conclusion

The Board continues to monitor the progress of the organisation against our 2017-19 Strategic Plan and once again reviewed its role and adjusted processes in response to member feedback.

I wish to thank the members of the NMLLEN Board for their support throughout the past year.

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 2018.

We can all be very proud of what has been achieved.

**Fiona Harley OAM**  
*Chair*



Victorian Skills  
Commissioner

VICTORIA  
State  
Government

NML

n Mallee  
employment





# 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.



**ROD MARTIN** Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator

Rod commenced as the Structured Workplace Learning Coordinator in February 2018. He has extensive experience in the vocational training sector having worked at SMGT for 14 years.

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.



**AMANDA SMITH** Project Officer

Amanda joined NMLLEN in June 2018 as the Project Officer. She has extensive experience in the Vocational Training sector which involved working with local industry and those undertaking a trainee-ship, specifically in business with Sunraysia Skills Centre and SMGT.

Amanda's role is to work closely with the NMLLEN team, local secondary schools and industry to ensure the success of the project at hand.



**PETA MAAS (PART TIME)** Administration Officer

Peta joined NMLLEN in December 2018 as the Administration Officer. Peta has an extensive background in administration and management gained via her lengthy service in the Royal Australian Navy and other administrative roles.

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



**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.



**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.



**DALE HARVEY (PART TIME)** Structured Workplace Learning Program Project Officer

Dale joined NMLLEN in April 2018 as the Structured Workplace Learning Program Project Officer. He has extensive experience across Education and Employment Services Sector including as an Employment Consultant, School Based Training Coordinator and Business Development Officer.

Dale's role is to assist the SWL Coordinator in all facets of managing the program.



**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.

# 2018 COMMITTEE

of management



Category 10

**Fiona Harley** (Chair)

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



Category 2

**Geoff Dea** (Deputy Chair)

CEO,  
Sunraysia Institute of TAFE



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 3

**Marion Wilson**

Manager,  
MADEC Community College



Category 4

**Dr. Deb Neal**

Head of Campus,  
La Trobe University, Mildura





Category 6

**Melissa Wade**

*Executive Manager  
Sunraysia Community  
Health Services*



Category 6

**Don Palazzo**

*Manager Resources  
and Facilities,  
Mildura Base Hospital*



Category 6

**Avinish Kumar**

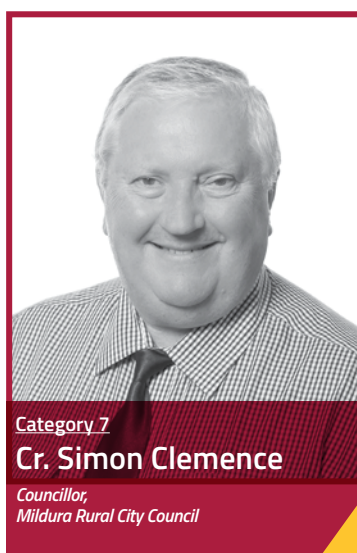
*Director of Workforce  
Mildura Base Hospital*



Category 6

**Peter O'Donnell**

*Executive Director,  
Southern Cross Farms*



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*



86%

## 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	-





*of FLO Students (2012-16)  
remain engaged the  
following year*

## Committee of Management member changes

In 2018 the following changes to the Committee of Management occurred:

Re-elected members at the AGM were: Marion Wilson MADEC (Category 3), Chris Hobart Australian Services Union (Category 5).

New members elected the AGM were: Avinash Kumar, Mildura Base Hospital (Category 6), Melissa Wade, Sunraysia Community Health Services (Category 6) Cr. Simon Clemence, Mildura Rural City Council (Category 7).

Retiring or members who resigned were: Don Palazzo (Category 6), Marion Wilson (Category 3) and Jenene Murray (Category 9).

Northern Mallee LLEN thanks all new, re-elected and continuing Committee of Management members for their contributions in 2018.

## 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:** Geoff (*Deputy Chair*)  
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.

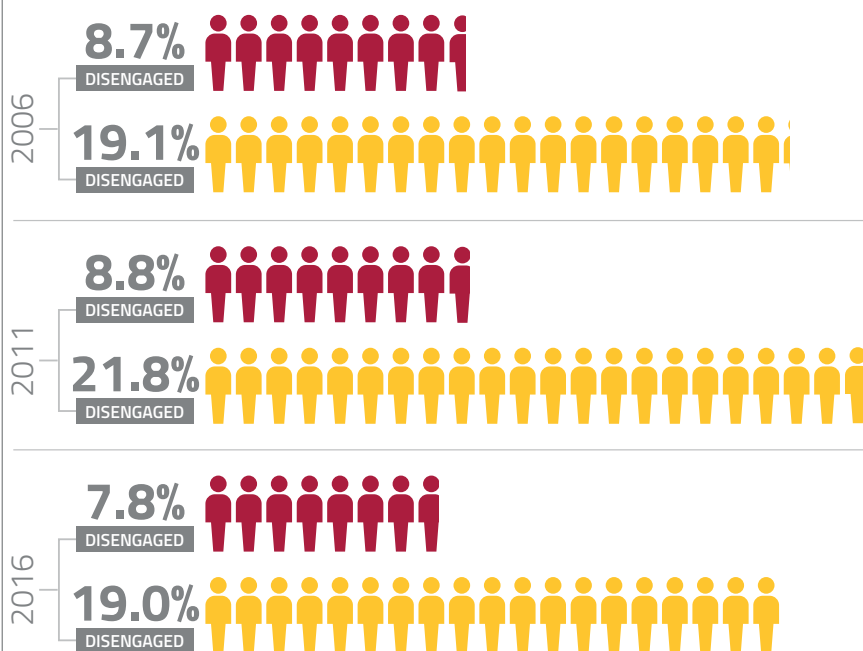
**Chair:** Fiona Harley (*Chair*)  
**Members:** Chris Hobart (*Secretary*)  
Don Palazzo (*Committee member*)  
Geoff Dea (*Committee member*)  
Peter O' Donnell (*Committee member*)  
Ron Broadhead (*Executive Officer*)



# DATA SNAPSHOT

For the year 2018

## Youth Disengagement - Mildura LGA - 2006-2016



(ABS Census Data: 15-19 years, 20-24 years, Mildura LGA, 'Not attending school' & 'not in the labour force', 'unemployed looking for work' and 'not looking for work')

■ 15-19 Years ■ 20-24 Years



## Navigator (Commenced Sept. 2016)

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

## Structured Workplace Learning (SWL)

### NMLLEN

New local work placement opportunities created and loaded onto Statewide Portal in 2018

TARGET 78 ACHIEVED 200

Local work placement opportunities 'consumed' by local students from Statewide Portal in 2018

TARGET 62 ACHIEVED 83

### LLEN Network Statewide

New work placement opportunities created across Vic. and loaded onto Statewide Portal in 2018

TARGET 5,765 ACHIEVED 8,807

Work placement opportunities 'consumed' by students across Vic. from Statewide Portal in 2018

TARGET 4,602 ACHIEVED 5,095

## Industry Visits

NMLLEN arranged visits for

# 190 students

(Years 10-12) in 2018 to local industries including:

Automotive and related trades

Electrical trades

Agriculture, Horticulture and Food Processing

Aviation and Administration

Transport and Logistics

Biological Farming

Domestic and Rural Water Management

Medical Technology

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

## On Track Connect 2018

# 19

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