

# Literacy, numeracy and foundation skills in VET

## Vodcast Discussion Notes #2

### Background

ACER and Aspire—both not-for-profit educational companies—are collaborating on the issue of Foundation Skills, particularly language, literacy and numeracy (LLN), in VET. As part of this, we are developing and making available to our clients a series of short vodcasts that promote LLN in VET and discuss the use and role of the Foundation Skills Training Package (FSK).

This set of accompanying Discussion Notes is designed for RTOs to use as starting points for discussing LLN in their delivery and training in VET. We recommend you use them before staff and trainers view the vodcasts.

## Discussion notes

### Vodcast 2: LLN Acronyms ACSF, FSK and more

<https://aspirelr.com.au/pages/digital/vodcast-library/lln-acronyms-acsf-fsk-and-more>

This vodcast looks at some of the terminology and acronyms we use when talking and writing about adult literacy and numeracy. Education in general—and maybe VET in particular—is great at deploying acronyms. Within literacy and numeracy circles, for example, we have LLN, ACSF, CSFW, FSK, ESL, EAL, CALD, NESB. Then there's ALLS, PIAAC and more.

### Reflection questions

**1. Before watching the vodcast, have a small group discussion about these points:**

- What do you understand by the term Foundation Skills?
- How does this compare with LLN? What does LLN mean and how do these skills relate to FS? Have you used other terms and their acronyms when describing LLN or FS before, for example ABE?
- Are you familiar with the two national FS frameworks: the ACSF and the CSFW? How do they relate to each other? What are their differences?
- Are you aware of the Foundation Skills Training Package (FSK)? Does your RTO use the FSK?
- Do you know why the FSK was developed? (**Note that vodcast 4 discusses the FSK in greater detail.**)
- Given Australia's multicultural diversity, it is widely acknowledged that learners from non-English speaking backgrounds are a crucial part of the VET landscape. Which terms and related acronyms refer to such learners?
- An important acronym in VET is AQF. What do you know about the AQF? How it is used in VET and elsewhere? What do you know about the relationship between AQF levels and ACSF levels?



**2. After watching the vodcast, reflect on the key messages and information presented, and have a small group discussion about the following:**

- Did you learn anything new? Were you already familiar with the range of different terms used in relation to foundations skills in VET?
- Are there any specific comments or issues raised by the vodcast that you want to discuss and reflect on, or to investigate further?

## FS ACRONYMS

### **ABE/ALBE**

Previously used terms for LLN: Adult Basic Education and Adult Literacy and Basic Education

### **ACSF**

The Australian Core Skills Framework, which features:

- Learning
- Reading
- Writing
- Oral communication (including speaking and listening)
- Numeracy

### **ALL or ALLS**

The Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey, which was the earlier survey of adult literacy and numeracy before PIAAC (see below)

### **AQF**

The Australian Quality Framework

### **CALD**

Culturally and linguistically diverse

### **CSFW**

Core Skills for Work (employability skills)

Ten skill areas organised around three key clusters, which are:

1. Navigate the world of work
2. Interact with others
3. Get the work done

### **CSPA**

Core Skills Profile for Adults

### **EAL**

English as an additional language

### **ESL**

English as a second language

### **FS**

Foundation Skills

### **FSK**

Foundation Skills Training package

**IALS**

The International Adult Literacy Survey, which was the survey of adult literacy undertaken by Australia before ALLS (see above)

**LLN**

Language, literacy and numeracy

**NESB**

Non-English speaking background

**NRS**

National Reporting System (predecessor to the ACSF)

**PIAAC**

The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies. [PIAAC](#) is a program of assessment and analysis of adult skills.

**VET**

Vocational Education and Training