

Special eVALBEC • September 25, 2006

This is the electronic newsletter of VALBEC, the Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council, and is sent to about 900 practitioners on the first of each month (other than January). This particular eVALBEC is in addition to the normally monthly editions. It is also available in the 'News' section of our web site <http://www.valbec.org.au>

Disclaimer: The activities, goods and services mentioned in eVALBEC are not endorsed by VALBEC in any way. People should make their own judgment about the suitability of each item.

CGEA Re-accreditation

Members are urged to log in to the SITNTALK website to read the documents and add your feedback by contacting the CMM before COB Friday September 29th 2006.
sicmm.generalstudies@vu.edu.au

For those of you who have been following the progress of the CGEA re-accreditation you will be aware that the endorsement of the documents by the Project Steering Committee will be happening very soon. VALBEC was able to delay this for two weeks so that there would be more time for people to look at the draft documents available on the SITNTALK site. <http://tls.vu.edu.au/cf/sitntalk/default.cfm?areaid=2>

VALBEC members will be involved in a 'critical friends' examination of the documents with the project team next Friday in an attempt to clarify some of the detail in the documents in their current form. A representative from a medium size ACE provider, a representative from a large TAFE and two members of the VALBEC committee will meet with the project team. We have received some written feedback from two TAFE programs and welcome other feedback in the remaining few days. This is a small attempt to have some influence in the context of the major shift that has occurred in the re-accreditation of the CGEA. If you would like to have input to this session please contact VALBEC info@valbec.org.au

VALBEC has been involved in the CGEA re-accreditation process through:

- representation on the Project Steering Committee
- attendance at consultations
- providing an opportunity for consultation at the VALBEC conference in May
- promoting the SITNTALK website in eVALBEC
- holding a forum in August to discuss the first draft documents
- providing feedback to the CMM
- ongoing discussions with members and at committee meetings
- letters to the CMM, ACFE and the PSC chairperson to raise our concerns about the time constraints, consultation process and the draft documents.
- offering to be part of a 'critical friends' review of the documents

The VALBEC committee has endeavored to represent a range of opinions and inform members of the developments in the re-accreditation process. The tight timeframes for consultation and the scale of changes to the course have meant that many practitioners have not been able to follow nor keep informed, especially with the current term break, when the final draft documents have become available for comment. There is much that is part of the bureaucratic strictures of this process but there are also matters of pedagogy and adult learning principles that have been raised by VALBEC and others.

VALBEC still questions the rationale for changing the format to one based on Units of competence rather than Modules. The training package format has been cited as the default template and providing clarity, easier benchmarking and national consistency. For many it is 'foreign territory' and does not reflect the educational framework that was part of the previous certificates nor the general education that the CGEA provided for learners in a whole range of contexts. The field has indicated that they want 'smaller chunks' of reading, writing and numeracy and a level below introductory that this document has delivered. The implementation phase will be the test of how learners will benefit from these changes.

Since the draft documents have become available in August and practitioners have had some opportunity to examine them, it has become clear that we can see no advantage educationally in this shift in emphasis which aligns general education, literacy and numeracy with units of competence and the performance of workplace tasks

VALBEC considers that the processes of the re-accreditation have been problematic for the level of change to the CGEA accredited course. We consider that practitioner feedback and involvement is critical for the successful implementation of the new course and that professional development following the endorsement of the document cannot replace input and critical review by practicing teachers in the field, during the development stage.

We trust that members support VALBEC in this position and urge to log in to the SITNTALK website to read the documents and add your feedback by contacting the CMM before COB **Friday September 29th 2006.**
sicmm.generalstudies@vu.edu.au

The feedback form referred to as 'Read This First' is a PDF document available from the Finder/Links Page which describes how to give feedback. A copy is attached.

Lynne Matheson & Ann Haynes
VALBEC co-presidents
25/9/06

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