

Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training (SLPET)



Settlement
Council
of Australia



Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training (SLPET)

AT A GLANCE

Target participants: Migrants and humanitarian entrants with low English levels / AMEP eligible clients.

Aim of program:

The programs aimed to provides clients with employment-focused classroom tuition and an opportunity to gain work skills and valuable local work experience in Australia. At Navitas Skilled Futures (NSF), the Settlement Language Pathways to Employment and Training (SLPET) is known as the 'Pathways to Work' (PtW) program and is offered in the Sydney South West and Capital (ACT) contract regions.

Organisations involved / partnerships:

Navitas Skilled Futures is one of 13 AMEP service delivery providers around Australia and provides AMEP services in five regions in NSW, the ACT and Tasmania, in conjunction with its subcontractor, MAX Solutions.

Location: Sydney South West and Capital (ACT) contract regions.

Funding: The AMEP is a national program funded by the Australian Government.

INTRODUCTION

SLPET is an AMEP sub-program which provides clients with employment-focused classroom tuition and an opportunity to gain work skills and valuable local work experience in Australia in an industry of their choice. The program offers:

- 120-160 hours of in-class learning
- 40-80 hours of work experience
- Industry-specific training
- Resume-writing
- Interview support
- VET accredited training

NSF staff engage guest speakers for PtW courses to ensure currency of information for clients and to connect clients with potential employers in their chosen area of study.

Eligibility requirements include:

- current enrolment in the Pre-Employment English stream
- attendance in the AMEP in the last 12 months
- demonstration of reasonable progression in skills – both language and employment

AMEP Pre-Employment courses are offered to provide prospective PtW clients with an initial introduction into an area of interest. For example;

- English for Starting a Small Business
- English for Barista Coffee-making
- English for Volunteering
- English for Beauty
- English for Sewing
- English for Courier-driving
- English for Childcare

NSF develop tailored PtW courses in a range of industries, including those industries with a skills' shortage and demand for workers. This approach has attracted returning clients to specific pathway programs, while providing a pathway for lower-level AMEP clients to remain engaged in the program. The pre-employment stream included project work such as market days, starting your own business and working with community groups to create avenues for future employment.

The program provides valuable opportunities and insights for AMEP clients into a range of industries, being inside an Australian workplace and exposure to Australian work practices and environments.



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POINT OF DIFFERENCE

The PTW courses are a people and place-based response to AMEP clients wanting employment-focused English classroom tuition, vocational training, employability skills training, along with work experience.

The courses include an integrated range of supports for provision of a holistic approach. The Pathway Guidance Advisor provides career guidance and liaises with both the client and the employer to arrange the work experience placement and support the client and the employer during this period.

The Pathway Guidance Advisor also assists with addressing any additional non-vocational barriers the client may be facing. The English language trainer works with the vocational trainer to ensure the language and vocational skills training are aligned to the client's language and skill needs and goals.

CHALLENGES

The cost of public transport to attend the work experience placement is a barrier to some clients. The AMEP funding does not include provision of financial support for transport; consequently, work placements are arranged to minimise the cost of travel to the client.

Where a PTW client uses the AMEP Childcare service, changes may need to be made to the childcare to accommodate the work experience placement and the travel time. NSF works with our AMEP Childcare subcontractor, KU Children's Services, to put in place the necessary adjustments to support the work experience placement.

There are an increasing number of part-time AMEP clients who are unable to participate in the PTW due to the program design of 120-160 in-class training hours and 40-80 hours of work experience, over a 10-week period. Pathway Guidance Advisors work with clients to encourage full-time (20 hours per week) attendance for the 10 weeks, although this may not be logistically feasible for the client.

The provision of work placement in an Australian workplace will be a unique experience for the majority of the SLPET clients, so as an AMEP provider it is critical that the client is adequately equipped. The pre-training is invaluable for this in all aspects of communication and behaviour. Learning this is a classroom and putting this into practice in a real workplace can be quite confronting for some clients.

KEY LEARNINGS

The PTW provides an important opportunity for clients to 'try, test and learn' about jobs, career opportunities and industries. For clients it helps to inform their future pathways. It also helps them develop their English skills specifically for the workplace context and learn about Australian workplace norms.

The PTW training and work experience needs to reflect the needs and goals of the clients and the industries. The ACT has a very different client profile from that of Sydney South West and differing work placement and employment opportunities. The PTW needs to have the flexibility to meet the needs of clients and industry.

Support for employers and the clients during the work experience is a key element in the delivery of the program. Employers are supportive knowing that they can work with the Pathway Guidance Advisor if there are issues, and once employers are engaged they generally continue to be involved in the program. Working with the Pathway Guidance Advisor to work out a work direction and training pathway is critical to ensure a positive experience for employers and to put the clients on the pathway to success.

OUTCOMES

NSF partners with local Registered Training Organisations to deliver VET industry units of competency for specific industry areas, based on employer demand in local regions. Up to two weeks' work experience is a key feature of the PtW. This provides clients local work experience and the opportunity to practise their English in the real-life setting of a workplace.

Pathway Guidance Advisors, Stakeholder Engagement Managers and Academic Team Leaders engage with local employers to determine particular industry needs, tailor course content and source local work experience placements for PtW clients. NSF works with small, medium and large employers e.g. Woolworths and Coles, and both independent and Not-for-Profit organisations, to provide a pipeline of job-ready work experience participants. In 2022-23, 197 clients enrolled in 11 PtW courses in Sydney South West and the ACT and approximately 80 employers offered work experience placements.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT

<https://immi.homeaffairs.gov.au/settling-in-australia/amep/about-the-program>

<https://navitas-skilled-futures.com.au/courses-and-programs/pathways-to-work-slpet/>