

**CENTRE OF
EXCELLENCE**

Early
Childhood
Education
and Care

OVERVIEW



**A HUB OF INNOVATION IN
EARLY CHILDHOOD TRAINING.**

tafesa.edu.au/coe-ecec

tafeSA



Government of
South Australia

A MESSAGE FROM TAFE SA'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE



TAFE SA is proud to be the home of the National Centre of Excellence in Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC). Since its establishment, the Centre has worked at pace to identify and respond to the training needs of the sector. This work is ongoing, underpinned by strong engagement with all those who support and nurture our youngest learners.

A thriving early childhood education and care sector is essential to Australia's social and economic wellbeing and requires a skilled and engaged workforce. TAFE SA is committed to delivering high-quality vocational education and training that aligns with this skills need at the state and national level.

Guided by the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Early Childhood Education and Care, the Centre of Excellence is collaborating with all partners in the sector to develop and implement practical solutions to support inclusive practice, workforce development and meaningful pathways for educators.

The work of the Centre brings together TAFE SA's depth of expertise, strong partnerships and focus on innovation to strengthen the capability of the national ECEC workforce. This commitment aligns with TAFE SA's objective to deliver training that is relevant, targeted and sustainable.

We are pleased to be leading the national conversation on workforce skills and career pathways in early childhood education and care through the Centre of Excellence. I invite you to explore the Centre's work and join TAFE SA as we continue to elevate the ECEC profession.

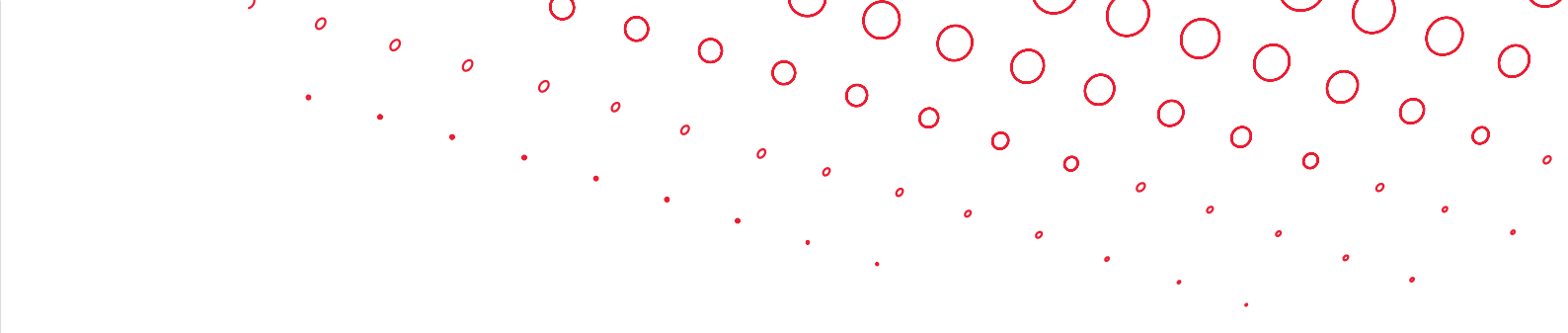
Adam Kilvert
TAFE SA Chief Executive

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

TAFE SA acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the lands. It is a privilege to be sharing this land on which we live, work and learn. The Centre is based on Kaurna Country where we pay our respect to Elders past and present and emerging.

Artwork: Karen Briggs (Yorta Yorta)





A HUB OF INNOVATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD TRAINING

The TAFE SA Centre of Excellence in Early Childhood Education and Care is a nationally focused, timebound, innovation hub established under the National Skills Agreement to strengthen the future of Australia's early learning workforce. Funded in partnership by the Australian and South Australian governments, the Centre is part of a nationally networked system of TAFE Centres of Excellence designed to address critical skills priorities across the country.

Located at TAFE SA's Adelaide campus on Wauwi (Light Square), the Centre brings together educators, researchers, sector leaders and communities to design and champion accessible, evidence informed training and resources. As part of the National TAFE Network and supported by TAFE Directors Australia, we share knowledge, teaching innovations and best practice learning products across Australia to strengthen ECEC capability nationally.

By addressing qualification, skills and workforce gaps, we contribute to a resilient national ECEC workforce that's equipped to nurture Australia's youngest learners and meet the sector's evolving needs.



OUR WORK

SHAPING A STRONGER SKILLED WORKFORCE

We scope, develop, design and deliver a coordinated suite of initiatives that strengthen the ECEC workforce and elevate professional practice across Australia.

Through deep collaboration with employers, training providers, advocacy organisations and early childhood services, the Centre co-creates curriculum, training products and workforce development solutions that respond directly to sector needs.

The breadth of our work can be grouped into three priority areas: entry pathways, career development, retention and recognition, ensuring people begin, build and sustain meaningful careers in early childhood education.

These priorities are supported by a robust evaluation framework underpinned by our **Pillars of Excellence** – the guiding principles that shape how we design, deliver and measure high-quality workforce development initiatives.



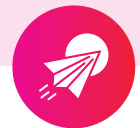
**NATION AND SECTOR
LEADING EDUCATION
AND SKILLS TRAINING**



**PATHWAYS AND
ACCESSIBILITY**



**PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**



**ACCELERATING
RESULTS WITH
RESEARCH**

ENTRY PATHWAYS

ACCESSIBLE ROUTES TO THE SECTOR

APY LANDS TRANSLATION AND METHODOLOGY

A culturally responsive initiative translating key concepts within three Certificate III in Early Childhood Education and Care (CHC30121) units into Pitjantjatjara, supported by bilingual glossaries and animations. It is designed to support Aboriginal workforce development and improve access in remote South Australian communities.

SHORT COURSE: KICKSTART YOUR FUTURE IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

A free, self-paced online course developed by the Centre to introduce participants to the ECEC sector. Includes foundational knowledge, career pathways, and a digital certificate to support further study.

VOCATIONAL DEGREE / DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP

Development of an AQF Level 7 vocational degree in early childhood teaching to educate early childhood teachers. Delivered through a paid, workplace-based pathway, combining employment with study. Designed to remove financial and structural barriers for educators aspiring to become early childhood teachers.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

OPPORTUNITIES TO BUILD SKILLS AND GROW PROFESSIONALLY

CAREER INFORMATION FOR PRIORITY COHORTS

A stream of work that provides tailored responses and activities to attract and retain men, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and regional populations.

EFFECTIVE MENTORING FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

A new program to build educator capabilities to mentor and strengthen professional practice that promotes quality improvement and leadership.

Following its 2025 pilot and evaluation, the program will soon be ready for distribution across the TAFE network.

INTRODUCTION TO AUTISM FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS

This newly developed training supports educators to understand and respond to children's needs before formal diagnosis, fostering inclusive environments and early support.

Piloted in 2025, this training will be rolled out across TAFE SA with plans for future national implementation by TAFEs.

RETENTION AND RECOGNITION

REMOVING BARRIERS, VALUING EXPERIENCE



BRIDGING SKILL SET

A review of entry requirements to enable experienced Certificate III educators to progress through a bridging skill set CHCSS00147 Entry to Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care, removing unnecessary barriers and recognising workplace experience.

DIPLOMA TRAINEESHIP

A flexible model including mentoring and tailored support to increase uptake and completion of the Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care (CHC50125).

RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING (RPL) DIPLOMA TOOL

A nationally scalable toolkit developed by the Centre, that supports experienced educators to gain formal recognition of their skills and knowledge, streamlining access to the Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care (CHC50125) through RPL.

SCOPING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Centre continues to develop initiatives that strengthen training quality, support learner success and respond to emerging workforce needs. Alongside its flagship projects, new programs and resources are continually being designed and refined to address evolving sector priorities.





ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER GRANTS PROGRAM

Development of a national grants program to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led initiatives that address workforce challenges in the ECEC sector. The program aims to improve attraction, retention and career progression for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators, and enhance outcomes for the children in their care.

CHILD SAFETY

Development of learning and assessment materials aligned to training package requirements and ECEC needs. Working with sector partners, employers and regulators to create robust resources that strengthen national child-safety practice.

SIMULATED ENVIRONMENTS

Research and recommendations on the use of technology, physical resources, and virtual learning environments to inform the design and integration of authentic, real-world settings that support best-practice education delivery and ECEC training.



MORE INFORMATION

Explore the full range of current and upcoming initiatives on the Centre's webpage. Subscribe to our e-newsletter to receive the latest updates.

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OUR APPROACH

Collaboration and listening are at the heart of everything we do. Our approach is grounded in genuine engagement with the ECEC sector, ensuring every initiative is shaped by the insights, expertise and lived experience of those who deliver and depend on high-quality early learning.

Our work is guided by core principles of co-design, transparency, sector insight and evidence-informed practice. These principles shape the way we connect, through processes that are inclusive, open and grounded in what works for children, families and the workforce.

We tailor our involvement in each project, drawing on a range of consultation methods from large-scale forums to targeted deep conversations.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

We use a comprehensive evaluation framework to assess Centre work against defined goals and outcomes. Central to this is a detailed review process for each initiative we deliver.

Demonstrator sites play a crucial role by providing real-world environments in which initiatives can be trialled, evaluated, and refined. This approach supports continuous improvement, ensuring our work remains evidence-informed, fit for purpose, and responsive to sector needs. These partnerships strengthen our engagement with the ECEC sector.

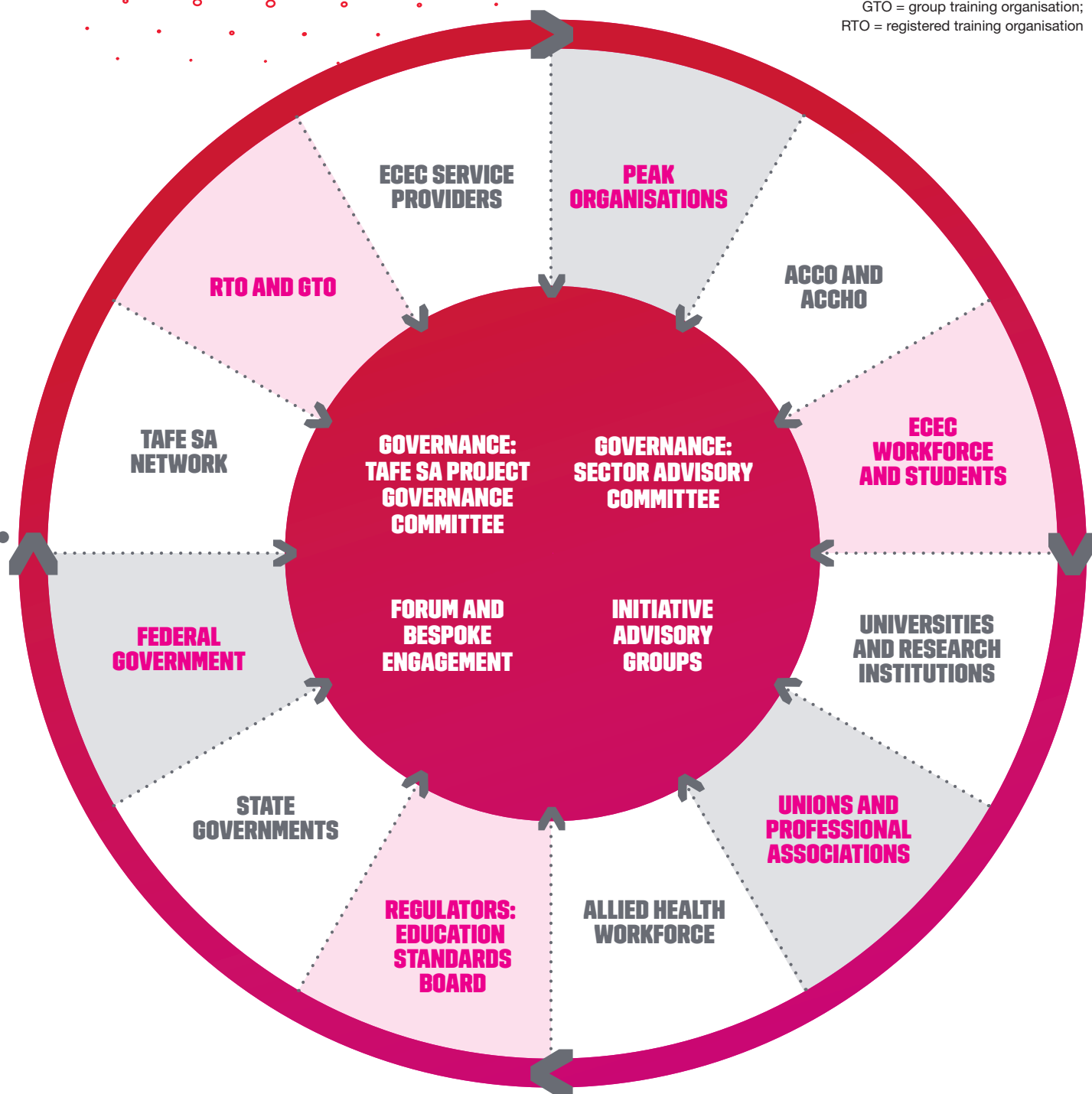
ADVISORY MECHANISMS

The Centre of Excellence in Early Childhood Education and Care uses a number of advisory mechanisms to bring together stakeholders – leaders, practitioners and specialists – with deep expertise and a direct interest in the Centre’s work. These stakeholders provide guidance, test emerging ideas and ensure our initiatives remain relevant, responsive and aligned with sector priorities.



Abbreviations:

ACCO = Aboriginal Community-Controlled Organisation;
ACCHO = Aboriginal Community-Controlled Health Organisation;
ECEC = early childhood education and care;
GTO = group training organisation;
RTO = registered training organisation

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The TAFE SA Centre of Excellence in Early Childhood Education and Care is a valued partner in strengthening outcomes for the early childhood workforce. TAFE SA is highly regarded as a leading provider of education and training in South Australia, and our collaboration reflects a shared commitment to professional learning, workforce development and sector improvement. Through our involvement in the Centre's Sector Advisory Committee, we strongly support work that responds to current and emerging workforce needs across the early childhood sector.

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SAMANTHA PAGE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
EARLY CHILDHOOD AUSTRALIA



WHO WE ARE

TAFE SA is South Australia's largest vocational education and training provider. We deliver job-focused training across a range of industries from entry-level certificates to bachelor degrees, at locations across the state.

Our focus on practical, hands-on skills and experience ensures students graduate with a competitive edge and with the skills employers value.

- TAFE SA is South Australia's largest vocational education and training (VET) provider (and also a registered higher education provider).
- 90% of TAFE SA graduates are satisfied with the overall quality of their training*.
- 87% of TAFE SA graduates would recommend TAFE SA to others*.

*Research by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) 2023.

TAFE SA is responsive to the needs of employers, working with industry groups to deliver relevant, high-quality training that aligns with contemporary career opportunities.

AWARD WINNING



South Australian Training Awards –
School-based Apprentice or Trainee
of the Year 2023 & 2022

South Australian Training Awards –
Industry Collaboration 2023

South Australian Training Awards –
Large Training Provider of the Year
2022 & 2021

South Australian Training Awards –
Apprentice of the Year 2022

South Australian Training Awards –
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Student of the Year 2022

South Australian Training Awards –
3 x finalists in the VET Teacher/Trainer
of the Year 2022

Governor's Multicultural Awards –
Finalist (Public Sector Category) 2022

Australian Training Awards –
Australian School-based Apprentice
or Trainee of the Year 2022

Australian Training Awards –
Runner up Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Student of the Year 2022

Weld Australia Training and
Education Award 2022

South Australian Training Awards –
VET teacher/trainer of the Year 2021

South Australian Training Awards –
Vocational Trainer of the Year
2020 & 2019

South Australian Training Awards –
Trainee of the Year 2020

Wine Communicator Awards –
Best Wine Educator 2020



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If you are a person who is Deaf, hard of hearing or with communication support needs contact us through the National Relay Service accesshub.gov.au

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