

# Australian Flexible Learning Framework

supporting e-learning opportunities

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Australians in regional, rural and remote communities face some unique challenges in accessing education and training opportunities due to isolation, distance and a lack of teaching and learning programs.

Technology can and is making a difference, enabling more and more people to access education and training regardless of their age, location or background.

In 2006, the national training system's e-learning strategy, the Australian Flexible Learning Framework, funded six projects working to foster and embed e-learning in some of these communities.

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**5]a .** To arm small and home-based businesses in regional and remote areas with the key skills to help ensure their success. Distance and time constraints exclude many small business operators from attending class-based training.

**@YUfb]b [ ` a cXY`.** North Queensland Small Business Development Centre developed a 20-hour e-learning course using a virtual classroom and web-based resources. Learners were given an initial face-to-face workshop introducing them to the technology and took part in two follow-up workshops. They received two hours 'virtual' c!æã}ã} \*Á [ }Á^æ&@Á [-Á- [ ~!Á { [ ã ~|^•KÁ&æ•@Á { æ}æ\*^ { ^}cÉÁ { æ! \^cá} \*ÉÁ, }æ}&^Áæ} ãÁ] !á [ !ác^Á•^ccá} \*ÉÁV@^•^Á, ^!^Á!^& [ !á^áá for learners who could not make the 'live' sessions. Learning was supported by eight hours of online help, which included group discussion, resource links and access to the e-learning project manager.

**C i hWc a Yg.** Two pilot programs were conducted involving 34 business owners from Ingham, Giru, Ayr, Alice River, Hughenden, Townsville and Thuringowa. More than 100 businesses expressed an interest to get involved in the program, with more being planned in 2007. Learners could use evidence collated from the program towards Small Ó~•ã}^••ÁÔ^!cá, &æc^Á& [ ~!•^•Áæc@^ÁÓæ!iá^!ÁÜ^^-ÁQ}•cã~c^Á [-ÁVCEØÒÈ

**DUfhbYfg`.** Thuringowa City Council, Thuringowa Chamber of Commerce, North Queensland Area Consultative Ô [ { { äcc^^ÉÁÓæ!iá^!ÁÜ^^-ÁQ}•cã~c^Á [-ÁVCEØÒÁæ} ãÁÔ [ { { ^!&^ÁÜ~^^}•|æ} ãÈ

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