

VIT Video

PD IDEAS

When it comes to professional development, schools and early childhood centres are very good at organising opportunities for staff. But what if you work in circumstances that make it difficult for you to access PD. Maybe you're a casual relief teacher. Or you live in a remote area. Or you work in circumstances other than a school or an early childhood centre. There are still ways that you can access valuable professional learning. Here's some ideas.

Online

There's a wealth of material available from a whole range of local and international sources. VIT's website has some handy resources for special needs and Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander educational learning. The Department of Education and Training website has online modules you can undertake, including material about Indigenous culture and cyber bullying. You can access free online learning from organisations such as Coursera and Khan Academy. crtpd.com is specifically tailored for CRT's. There are also international sources for PD such as the New York Times, the Intel teach series, Microsoft Innovative Educator programs and iTunesU.

Webinars

Webinars are a great way to access learning from wherever you are.

Professional Reading

This could include journals, research digests, books, discussion papers, reports or wikis.

Educational Organisations

You can find out about other professional learning opportunities through organisations like AITSL, VCAA, ACARA, Teacher Learning Network or Early Learning Association Australia. Sector organisations like CEO and ISV.

Professional Associations like ACE - the Australia College of Educators.

Subject Associations such as STAV for science teachers, VATE for English teachers and ACHPER for PE and health and human development teachers.

If you teach art, visiting a gallery can be a source of professional learning, especially if you access education materials and resources. Or a museum if you teach science or history. Even watching a movie can be valuable PD, depending on your subject of expertise.

Social Media

Twitter is a rich source of professional development ideas. For instance, follow the hashtag #PLN, professional learning network, and you can engage in professional conversations and find out about other resources. See who the thought leaders are, see who they follow. People who attend conferences often tweet valuable info and links so you don't always have to be at a conference to gain professional benefit from it. In some cases, you can even engage in the conference yourself through backchannel.

So as you see there are lots of idea starters out there. Whatever PD you do, remember it's not enough to just take in the learning, knowledge without application is worth nothing. So the next step is for you to incorporate your new knowledge in to your teaching practice. This takes your gallery viewing or museum visit from the personal, to the professional and from your learning, to the learning of those you teach. When you do this, you're meeting the VIT guidelines for renewal by referencing the standards.