



Health
Western NSW
Local Health District

BME in Rural & Regional Areas: Possibilities for Education- WNSWLHD

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Background

- WNSWLHD covers approximately 250000 square kilometres.
- We operate out of 2 workshops- Dubbo and Orange with a total of 11 techs which includes 2 apprentices.
- We look after 42 health facilities and MPS with approximately 16000 assets.
- We also look after the RFDS and some public schools and shires under the Oral Health directorate.
- We are also committed to our community as good corporate citizens in being a local source of employment.

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Challenges

- We are geographically dispersed.
- We have FTE restrictions.
- WNSWLHD is developing and growing at a fast rate.
- We struggle to have local applicants apply for our positions with biomedical or electronics qualifications.
- Local TAFEs do not offer Electronics and Communications courses.



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Options

Internal



We do everything in house. This includes being a RTO that offers various courses related to the BME sector.

Pros

- Become a source of education.
- Readily available applicants when vacancies are available.
- Confidence in the quality of qualification.
- Tailor made course structure.

Cons

- Enormous amount of financial and capital resources required.
- Not feasible for the number of potential students.
- Requires the recruitment of specialised educators.
- Increase in FTE.



External

We utilise external education providers. This includes universities, TAFEs, and private institutes.

Pros

- Eliminate the amount of financial and capital resources will be needed for internal option.
- FTE increase will not be a concern.
- Continues collaboration between BME industry and education institutes will lead to an enhanced course structure.
- Tailor made course structure to a certain degree.

Cons

- Some overseas qualifications can be questionable.
- Not all rural education institutes offer the courses needed for BME.

Mixed

A collaboration between BME and external education institutes in delivering a program encompassing theoretical and practical skills.

Pros

- BME plays an integral part in the education program.
- Readily available applicants when vacancies are available.
- Confidence in the quality of qualification.
- Increased man power without effecting FTE restrictions.
- Being recognised as a suitable provider for local apprenticeships.
- Allowing for current staff the opportunity to increase their education.
- Students can opt to exit at a certificate level or continue to Advanced Diploma level.

Cons

- May require an increase to workshop space.
- More tools and test equipment will be required.
- A slight adjustment to annual budget.



Interfacility

- Collaboration between BME departments.
- Facilitates the establishment of CoP.
- Allows for networking.
- Expansion of knowledge and skills from sharing experiences.
- Fosters a sense of comradery.
- Allows technicians to learn in a familiar environment.
- Creates unity in the BME industry.



Adopted option/s

WNSWLHD has adopted the Mixed and the Interfacility options. This has allowed us to:

- Offer apprenticeships.
- Increased HR without affecting FTE count.
- Networking.
- Expansion of knowledge and skills from sharing experiences.
- Facilitated the opportunity for apprentices to continue to Advanced Diploma if they wish.
- Allowed for flexibility in recruitment options and selection criteria.
- More education options for current staff wishing to further their education.



Conclusion

- Increase your education if you can.
- Doesn't have to be in the biomedical field only- look outside the square.
- Always try to plan for your future.
- Never too old to learn.

Albert Einstein “Intellectual growth should commence at birth and cease only at death”

Thank you



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Questions