



1.1. FRAMEWORK FOR A HEALTHY APPLIED LEARNING ECOSYSTEM

Perceptions of the status of applied learning can be apparent in the attitudes of parents, the expectations of teachers, the timetabling of classes and the allocation of resources within a school and between schools.

Practical support needs to be provided within the school but also at the local, regional/state and national levels in the form of supportive policy settings and strong partnerships.

This framework proposes a range of practical actions for school leaders to consider in building a strong applied learning ecosystem. Complementary suggestions are also included for policymakers, employers, community organisations, NGOs and higher education institutions can offer. Some of these initiatives, actions or policies may already be underway or embedded in your particular setting.

Objectives	Practical ideas to support applied learning	
	School Leaders	Ecosystem – Policymakers, Local employers, community organisations, non-government organisations, and higher education institutions
A culture that supports high quality applied learning	Promote the importance of applied learning to teachers, students, families and the local community, by providing a clear and consistent message about its value.	Maintain strong quality and performance measures that encourage schools offering applied learning across their subjects.
Strong partnerships that enable and support applied learning	Initiate and support partnerships with local employers, community organisations, non-government organisations and other educational organisations. Ongoing support could include creating a community engagement role within the school. Facilitate the establishment of teacher peer networks through the development of communities of practice.	Collaborate with schools to help teachers develop applied learning programs, provide mentorship and access to workplaces for visits and/or placements.
Teachers enabled to develop and deliver applied learning	Develop a school continuous professional development (CPD) plan that includes support specifically for applied learning initiatives. This could include: (1) fostering opportunities for teachers to critically examine their practice and (2) developing structures for professional experience, learning and collaboration. Support and foster a culture where teachers share applied learning resources (e.g. lesson plans, details of innovative assessment tasks). This could involve establishing a school-specific space (real or virtual) where resources can be shared or contributing to existing broader repositories. It could also involve celebrating teachers who exemplify this type of collaboration. Acknowledge the real constraints that hinder the introduction and development of applied learning, including limited time, competing pressures and fear of change. Take this into account when establishing timelines and monitoring progress.	Support continued development and refinement of applied learning (curriculum and pedagogies) as a core component of all initial teacher education courses. Support creation of accessible, high quality and current materials for professional development in applied learning and make available to teachers on digital government and organisational platforms.
Resources to deliver high quality applied learning	Ensure teachers have the resources they need to develop and deliver applied learning. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • facilitating access to equipment at a local business or technical institute • timetabling support • dedicated time for lesson planning and collaboration Draw on the expertise of the school and local communities to assist with the development and delivery of applied learning. This could include identifying mentors to help teachers develop authentic assessment tasks, or to provide career advice to students.	Assess what tailored professional development programs can be delivered to schools/teachers to uplift applied learning capability. Collaboratively develop and distribute high quality teaching and learning resources for schools and teachers to support continuing innovation in the delivery of applied learning. Encourage shared spaces for applied learning in networks of schools – see example of government funded <i>Tech Schools</i> in Victoria, Australia.