

Penny Sara
Graduate Certificate in Business
(Human Resource Management)
Certificate IV in Workplace Assessment and Training
B.A. Dip. Ed.

I originally qualified and worked as a secondary school teacher, then moved into teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) with school-aged students. My commitment to equal opportunity in both education and employment led me to research projects in TAFE, work as an advisor in the Australian Public Service (APS) and then to a very satisfying 17 years in adult education and training.

I worked in a variety of roles at the Council of Adult Education (CAE) for 13½ years. These included tutor, industry consultant and manager in Workplace Education, a unit responsible for delivering tailored Literacy and Numeracy, ESL and report-writing programs to hundreds of workplaces in the greater Melbourne area.

I then held the position of manager of the Adult Literacy and Basic Education program for 3 years, and in my last two years at CAE took up a number of shorter appointments. As Acting Manager VCE, Human Resources Project Consultant, Manager Human Services Education and Policy Officer, I was learning constantly as I met the challenges of these roles at a time of major change for the organisation.

My time at CAE was followed by 3½ wonderful and life-changing years as the Manager of Diamond Valley Learning Centre in Greensborough.

Now, after three years of devoting myself primarily to family and study, I have some new qualifications and skills, and have had a chance to reflect on ACE as a sector, as well as my time working within it. This has included writing a briefing paper on ACE for the National Tertiary Education Union and doing some casual work for an ACE organisation.

Coaching is a way of supporting people to meet their challenges by focusing on their strengths. I have found the readings and skills practice for the ACE coaching course very exciting and profound. I look forward to working with ACE managers and coordinators as they achieve great things, both in their broad and challenging work roles and in their personal lives.

I live in the inner northern suburbs of Melbourne, close to my beautiful grown-up family. I love to sing, and the highlight of my week is being part of the sweet harmony of the Diamond Valley Learning Centre choir.