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Pathways to the changing world of Work

The North Central LLEN (NCLLEN) is working on a range of initiatives to help inform students, parents, businesses, and industry about the changing world of work and how young people can prepare for the future.

In the final week of this six part series, the focus is on the transferrable skills young people will need to adapt in a time when automation is predicted to transform every job across the Australian economy by 2030 in some way.

North Central LLEN Executive Officer Jane Hosking says change has always been a constant in the world of work, however automation, globalisation and flexibility has led to an unprecedented level of change.

“Technological advancement has made us part of an increasingly global economy where geography no longer matters as long as workers have a computer and an internet connection, something we have seen in action during Covid-19,” she said.

“According to the Foundation for Young Australians, the amount of young people in casual full-time employment has more than double since 1992 and almost one in five are juggling multiple jobs to work full-time hours,” she said.

“The combination of these factors means that the average 15-year-old will need to be able to negotiate an average of 17 jobs over five careers in their lifetime,” said Ms Hosking.

So how do we prepare 4.6 million young Australians for this changing economy? According to North Central LLEN Careers and Pathways Manager Jerri Nelson, it is by helping young people to build a portfolio of skills, both hard and soft.

“‘Hard’ skills are the technical skills required to undertake a particular role in the work place - for example a construction worker needs to know the fundamentals of building, while ‘soft’ skills are transferable skills that workers can use in all workplaces, such as problem solving.

She said up until recently Careers Education Programs have tended to focus on the development of hard skills, however the World Economic Forum has recently identified 6 soft skills that all workers will need to possess if they are to be successful in the future.

“Creativity, emotional intelligence, critical thinking, active learning with a growth mindset, judgement and decision making, and interpersonal communication skills will be integral to the success of employees in the future.”

“Therefore it is important that we look at ways to enhance these skills in our students through their studies and work experience activities now,” said Ms Nelson.

Principal of St Arnaud Secondary College Mr Tony Hand says the school recognises that many of the jobs of the future have not even been invented yet, and that for students to have an ‘edge’ in the work place it is important that they have a diverse mix of skills that are transferrable across industries and workplaces.

“That is why we have partnered with the North Central LLEN on this initiative, recognising that it is a whole of community role to prepare our young people for the changing world of work,” he said.

For more information, visit www.ncllen.org.au and follow the links to the Careers and Pathways page.