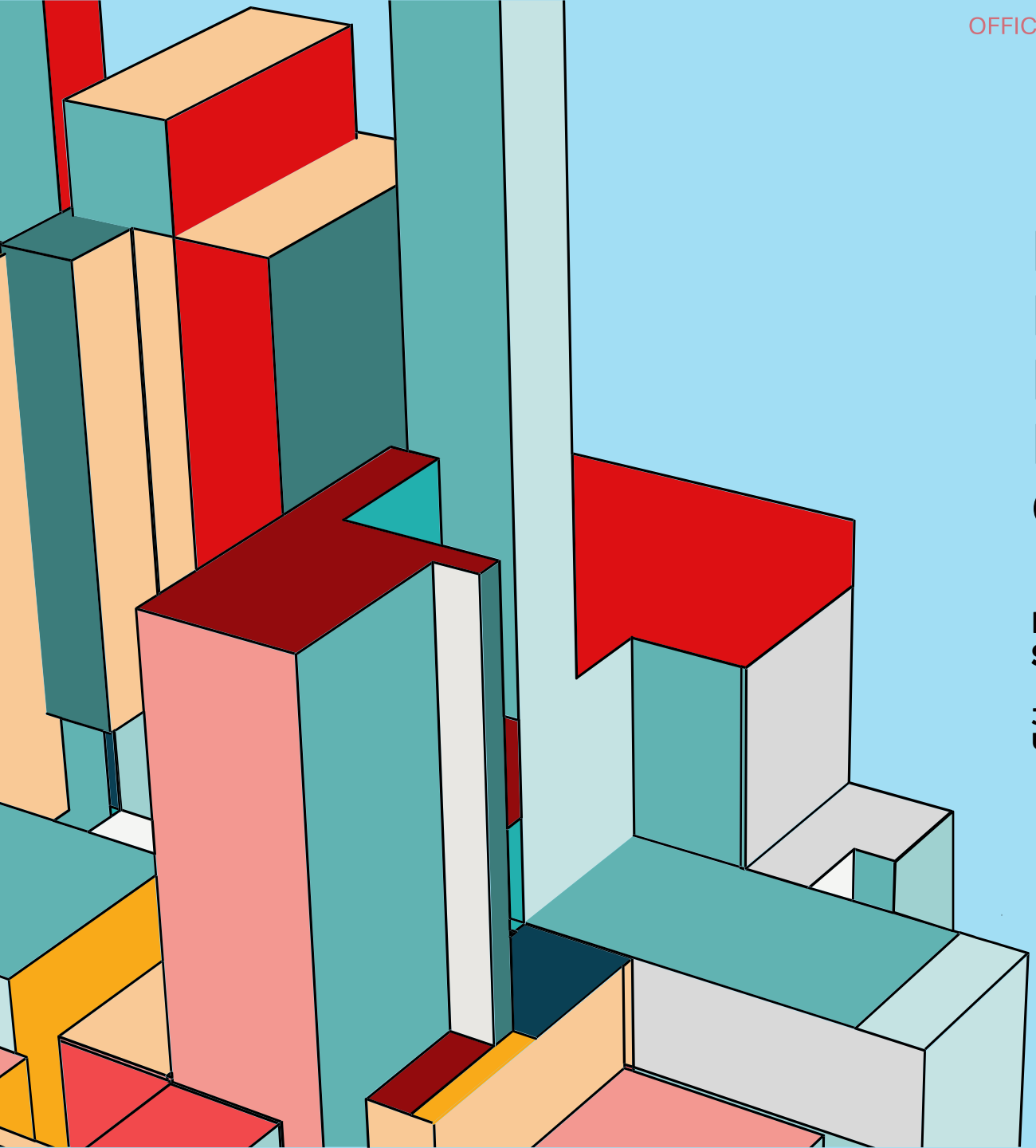
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EXPLORING COMMUNITY-BASED MENTORS' DIVERSE PERSPECTIVES ON THEIR ENGAGEMENT IN A TESOL GRADUATE PRACTICUM

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SWINBURNE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

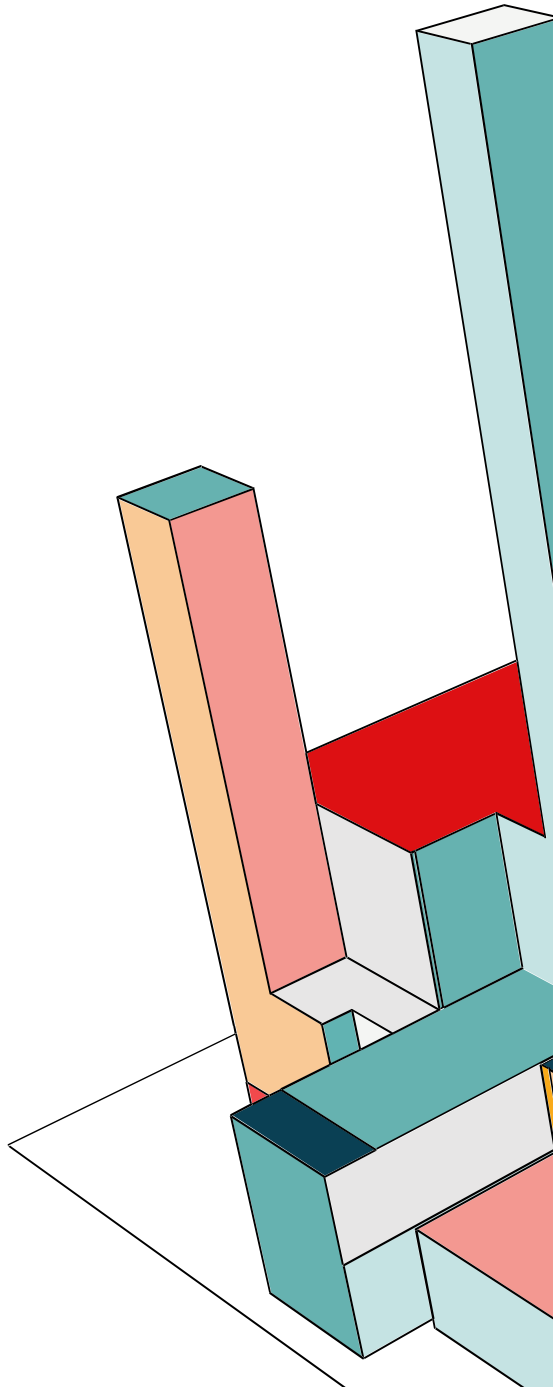
30 OCTOBER 2026, VICTESOL SYMPOSIUM
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

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EDUCATION INNOVATION EXCHANGE

OVERVIEW

- TESOL qualifications
- (TESOL) teaching practicum: Industry links and contexts
- University practicum as a WIL activity
- Study findings
- A Landscape of Practice (LoP)
- Reference list

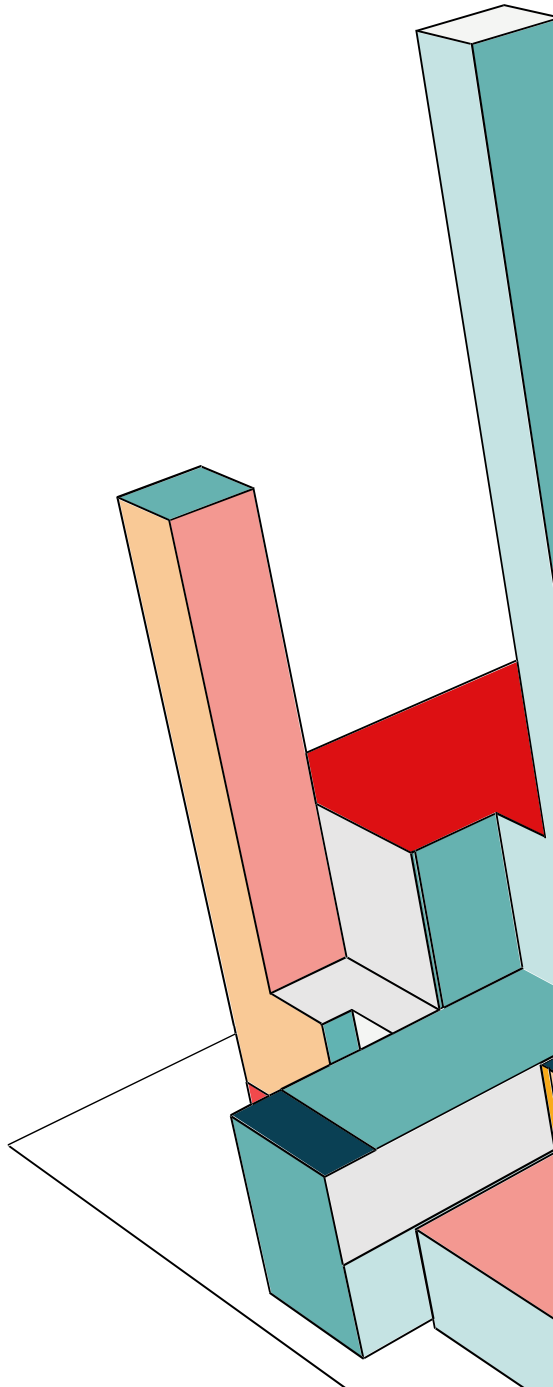


TESOL/EAL DIVERSE QUALIFICATIONS LOCALLY



INDEPENDENT, VOCATIONAL AND MORE

- CELTA
- CertTESOL
- 1021NAT Certificate IV in TESOL
- 111479NAT Certificate IV in Communicative TESOL
- Part of undergraduate/postgraduate degrees
- Postgraduate qualifications: Master of TESOL, Graduate Diploma in TESOL and Graduate Certificate in TESOL





TESOL TEACHING PRACTICUM

Industry links and contexts in Australia

POTENTIAL TESOL PRACTICUM CONTEXTS IN AUSTRALIA

Kindergartens

Schools

Adult and Community Education (ACE)

TAFE

SEE

ELICOS centres

Universities

Industry settings

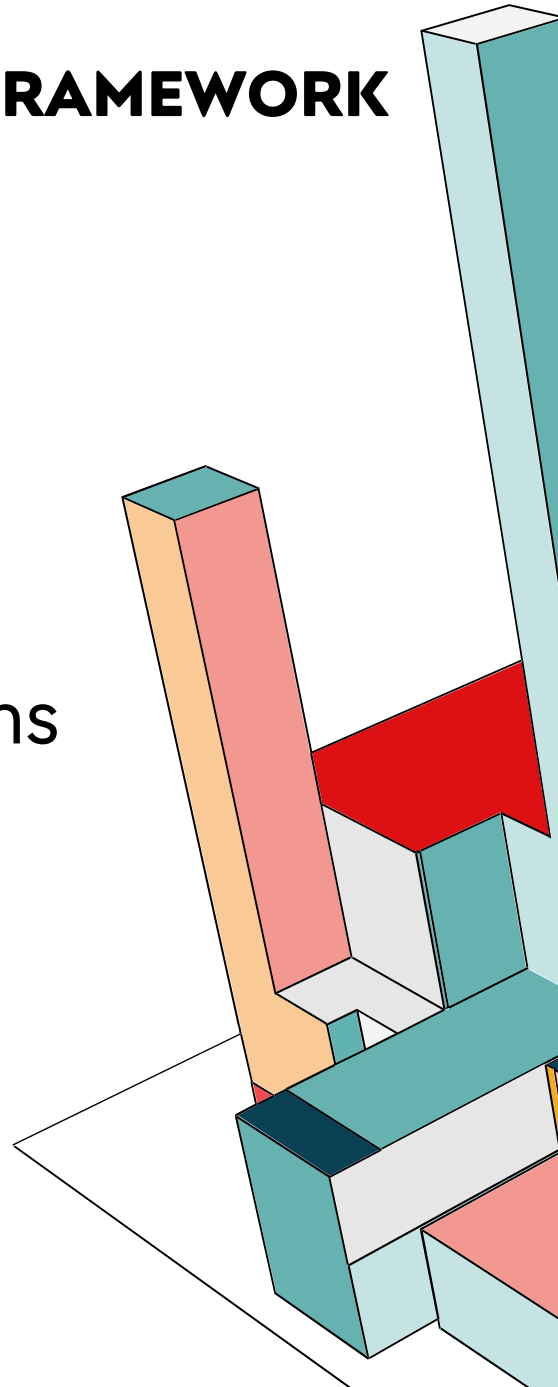
AMEP

COMMUNITY-BASED PROVIDERS DELIVERING THE EAL FRAMEWORK

The EAL Framework is used across a number of educational settings:

- Adult & Community Education (ACE),
- TAFE and
- private RTOs both in Victoria and nationally
- a range of correctional facilities through Corrections Victoria

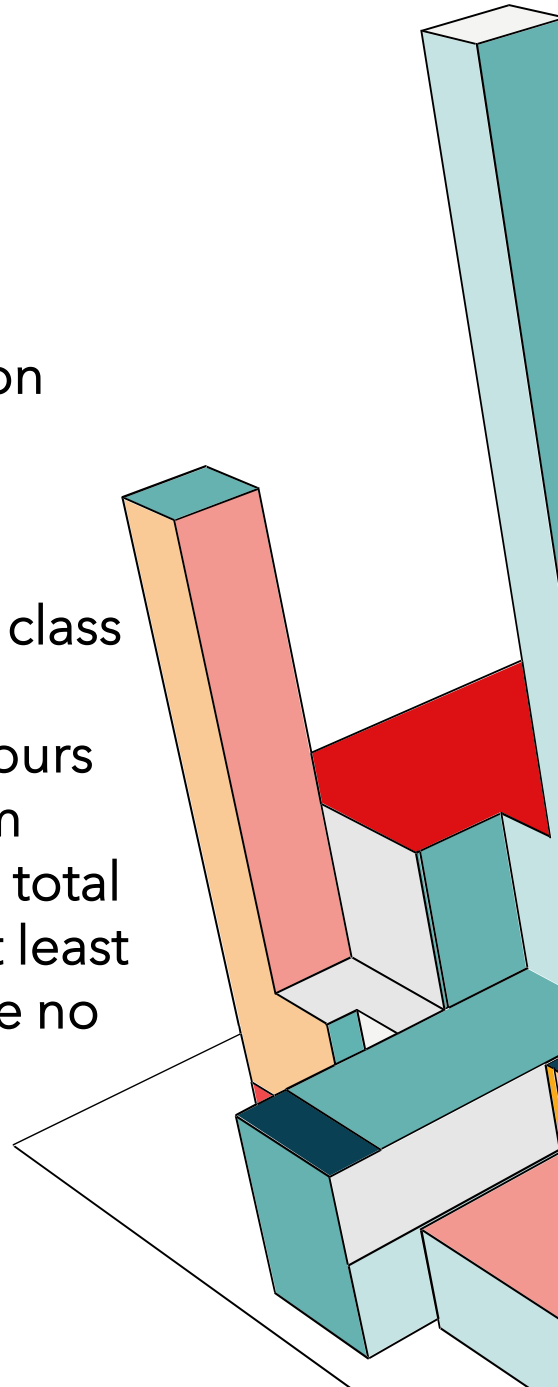
As well as being delivered in Victoria, the EAL Framework is also delivered in other jurisdictions around Australia including Western Australia, NSW, Queensland and South Australia.



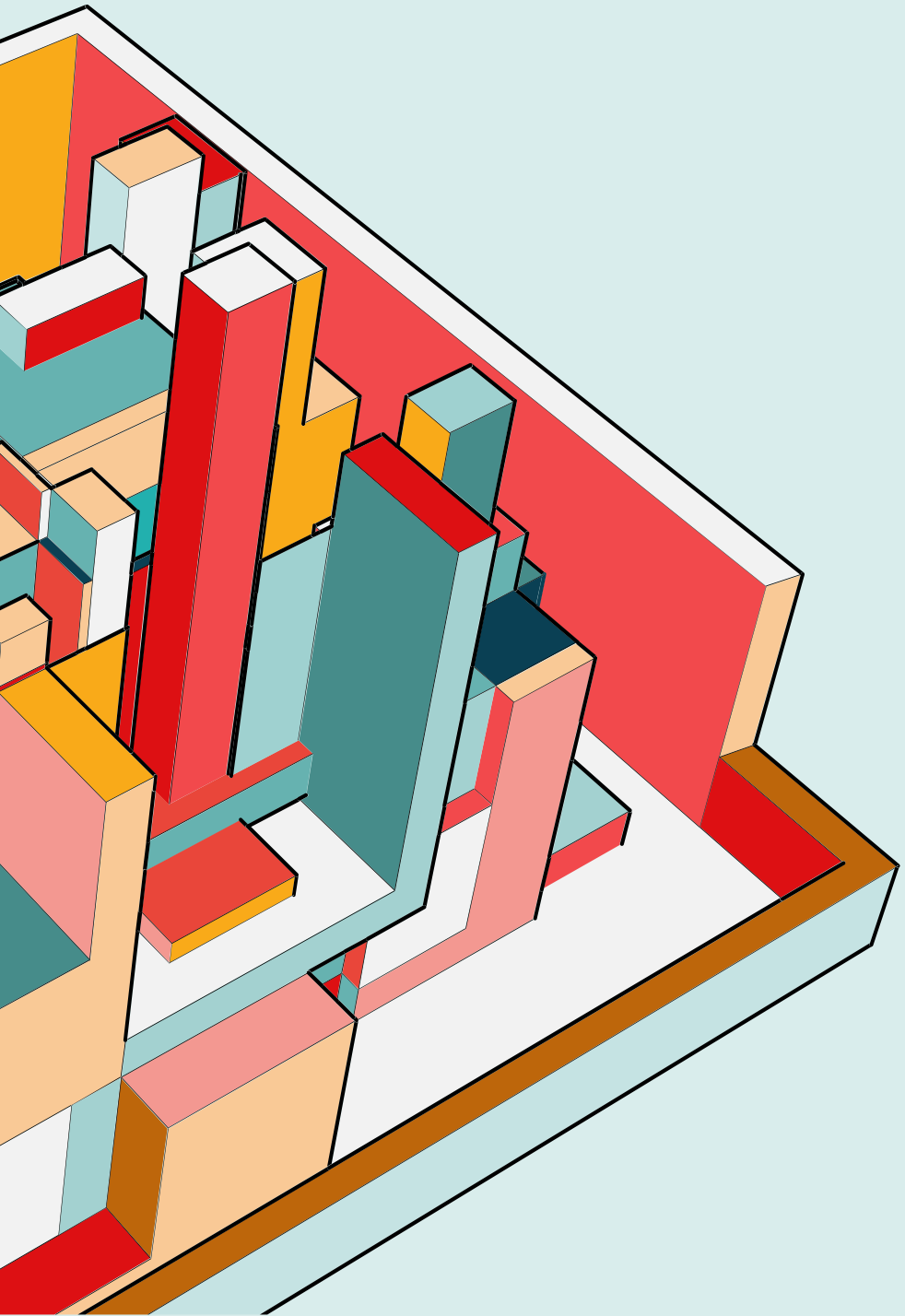
A QUALIFIED TEACHER AND ASSESSOR

A qualified TESOL teacher is a person who holds an appropriate qualification that includes a supervised teaching practicum in TESOL.

- Appropriate qualifications are diverse
- The supervised teaching practicum must involve at least 60 hours of class observation and supervised classroom teaching in TESOL. This will typically be a practicum taken over 22 days with an average of 2-3 hours teaching and observation each day. However, it could be a practicum taken over a longer or shorter period / over more or fewer days. The total number of hours of supervised teaching and observation must be at least 60. The ratio of teaching to observation may vary but there should be no fewer than 25 hours of supervised teaching.



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UNIVERSITY PRACTICUM

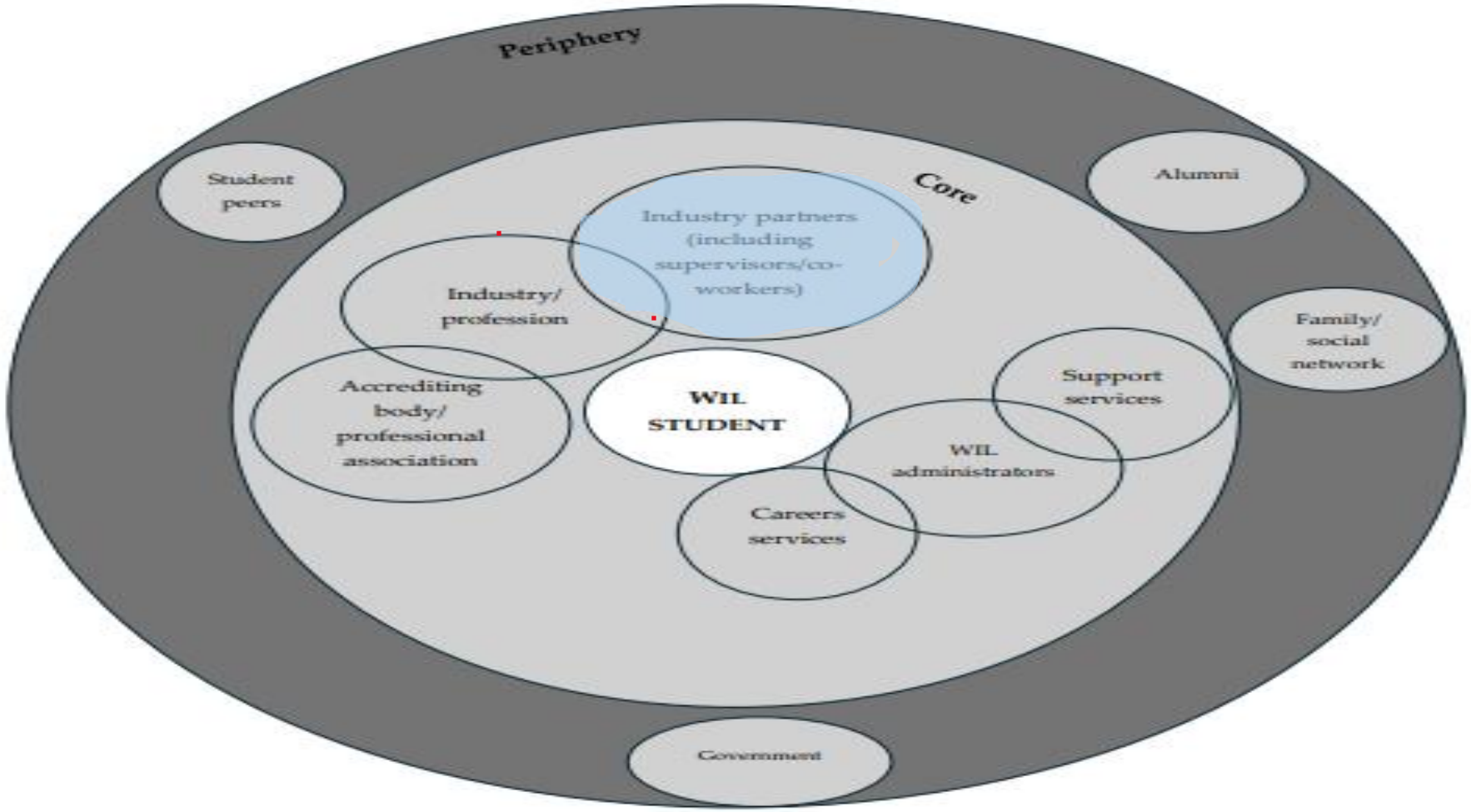
Work-Integrated Learning (WIL)

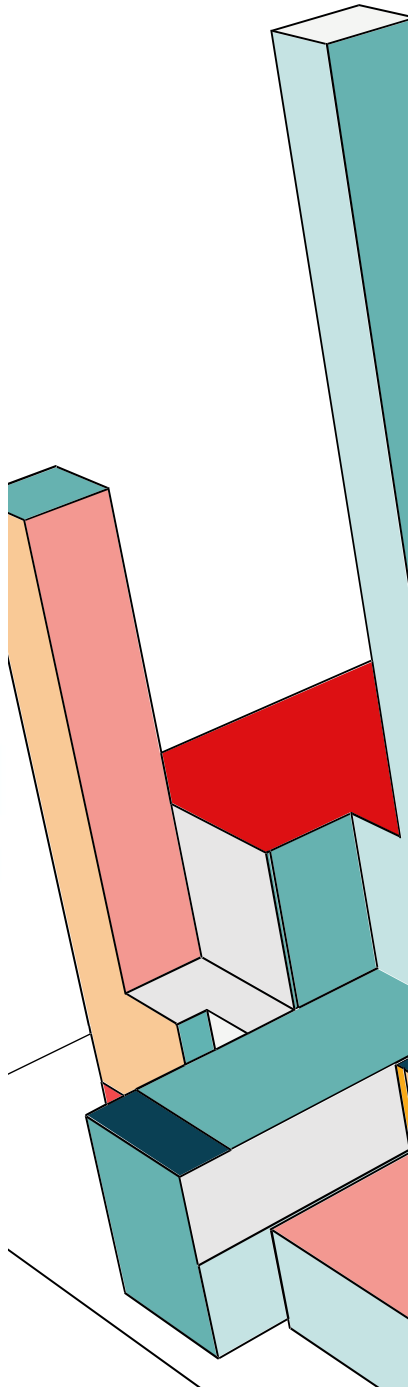
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(The image is taken from Jackson, Zegwaard, & Drewery, 2025)

MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

FIGURE 1: Examples of community of practice within the WIL landscape of practice.





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RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND CONTRIBUTION

The qualitative study with aims to identify key determinants of the professional collaboration as perceived by vocational supervising teachers by exploring (a) the factors which influence their decision to supervise a university graduate student, (b) the various tools they use to make it work within the parameters of their work or systems they operate in and (c) how the workplace context affects supervision in relation to understanding key educational concepts.

Data collection: Semi-structured interviews with 17 mentors (90 minutes +)

Data analysis: Reflexive thematic analysis using the Braun and Clarke's 6-step model (2006).

Contributing to the existing research to practicum (Andrew & Razoumova, 2017, 2022; Bailey, 2006; Cirocki et al., 2019, Crookes, 2003; Gebhard, 2009; Pu & Wright, 2022).

Theoretically, this study uses a concept of a Landscape of Practice (Jackson, Zegwaard, & Drewery, 2025).

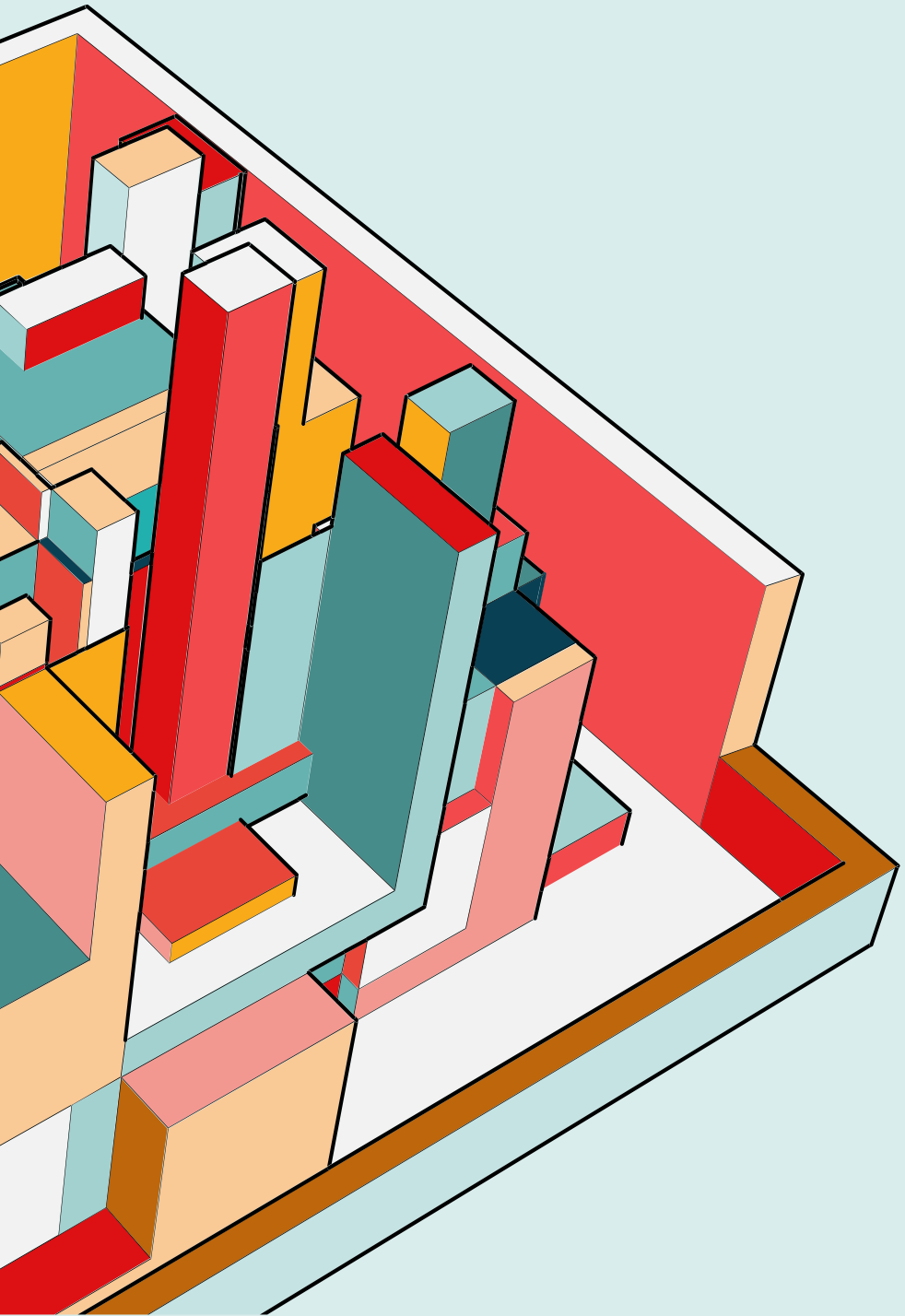


PARTICIPANTS

Participants/Mentors (Supervising Teachers/ST) were recruited using a purposeful sampling strategy and through placement community organizations that are listed as university partner organisations. Mentors at partner organisations are expected to meet the following criteria: (1) to be employed within Victorian Government contracted Registered Training Organizations (RTOs), including TAFEs, private RTOs, and Adult, Community and Further Education centres, registered Learn Local Providers (LL providers); (2) have had at least two years of full-time teaching experience as a TESOL teacher; and (3) to be willing to supervise a teacher candidate.



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KEY FINDINGS

Three themes:

- A personal dimension storytelling driven
- A professional dimension with authenticating practice in focus
- An industry dimension and industry convenorship

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PERSONAL DIMENSION

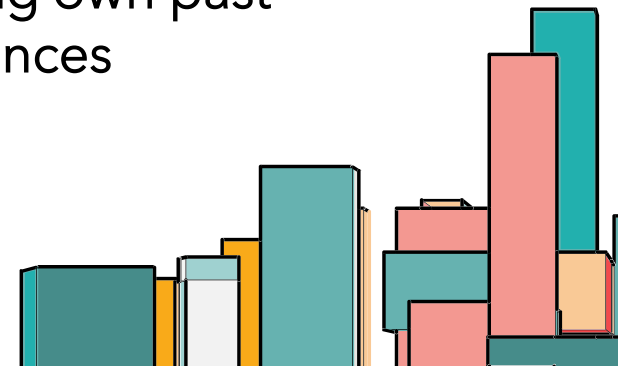
- *So, understanding of your students in the sense that not only are they adults, I think, like, for me, for me, I'm just going to talk about the personal experience. For me, I grew up, like, I'm a second generation in Australia…* (ST3)
- *I love learning…so when I see something …good and well-done, I* [think] *I can use that for my class … but I can do it better….* (ST12)
- *…the bottom line is: "Do they trust you to learn?" If they trust you, no matter what age they are, they will learn. They will learn differently and you will adapt*. (ST5)
- *I had a really bad experience. I do not want them [student teachers] to have the added stress of having a horrible mentor* (ST3).

Storytelling driven:

Mentors' lifelong learning stance

Nurturing emotional connection

Mending own past experiences



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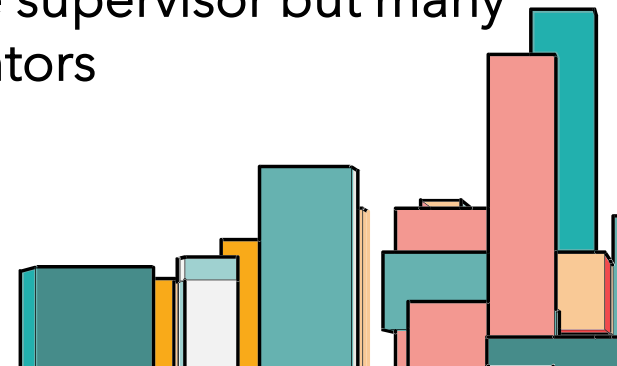
PROFESSIONAL DIMENSION

- *I think really, with teaching you never arrive. You can't just learn a magic formula and you've got it, especially with learners, who have very specific needs.* (ST9)
- *I actually don't give them feedback right away, because I want to see them doing the same thing one or two times and then [if it is wrong] I would go and say that you shouldn't be doing this…* (ST1)
- *With teaching … you're really dealing with people, aren't you? People bring their own experiences with them into the classroom so I think nothing really can prepare you for that scenario…. Get to know your learners. No university course or other course can properly prepare you for that reality.* (ST9)
- *Observing as many teachers as possible and noting what they do and how they do it* [teaching] *differently is what I wanted her* [a teacher candidate] *to do.* (ST13)

Authenticating practice through multiple ways (reflection, resourcing learning, holistic feedback, theory-practice talks)

Learner focused for a good classroom

One supervisor but many mentors



INDUSTRY DIMENSION

- *I have had one supervising student* [several years ago] *and there was very little contact with the institution. I was just getting some forms and it was all very remote. …. it is much better when universities are present*. (ST8)
- *I personally love having pre-service teachers; I do I enjoy it. I think it's valuable and it's mutual. They're learning and they become employable. I mean there's just a whole thing that works together for both, both of us. (ST3)*
- *In many ways, it is quite different in Australia, the ways… we teach…what we do is to encourage a more analytical … way of thinking… We try to be more learner centered… in Australia.* (ST8)
- *Of course, it's political…*[and]*…we definitely keep in mind, TESOL will always be affected by policies made by the government…especially in Australia*. (ST1)

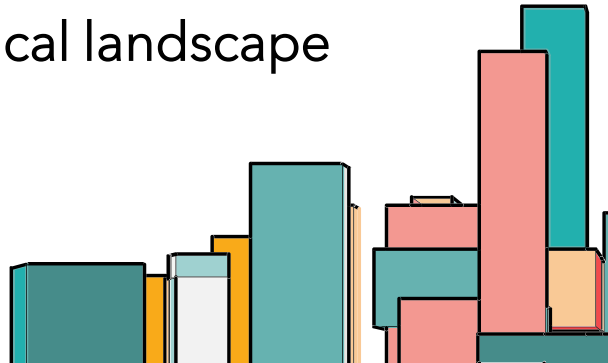
Industry convenorship:

University-community collaboration

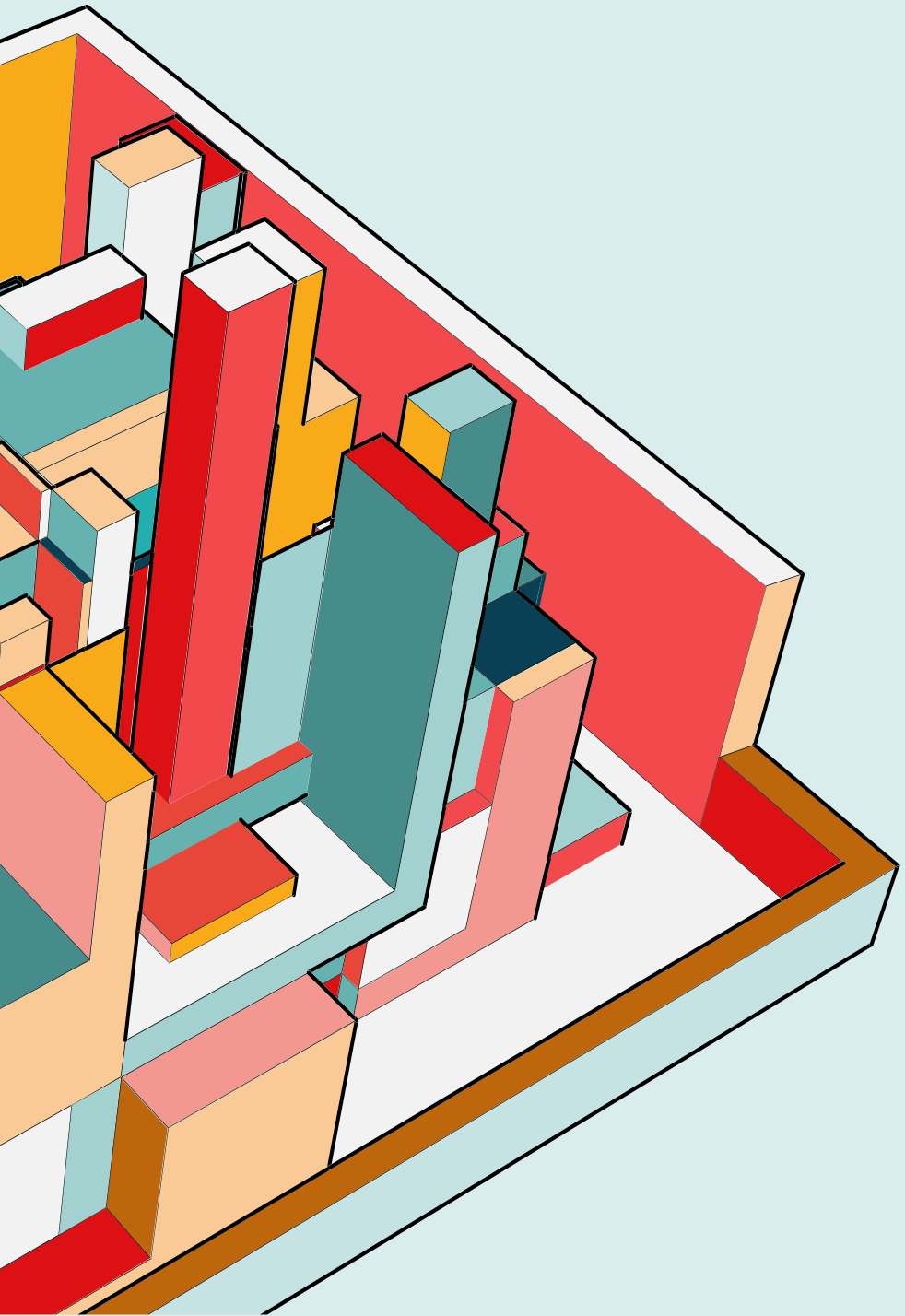
Resourcing the industry

Enhancing a place-based EAL methodology

Political landscape



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EDUCATION INNOVATION EXCHANGE

RETURNING TO A LANDSCAPE OF PRACTICE

- Community engagement
- Reconciliation of multiple community membership
- Boundary negotiation and immersion
- The role of personal resources
- The role of HE
- System conveners

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THANK YOU

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