

Our reference: SI 05-01/TK/hg

12 April 2005

Ms Janet Holmes
Inquiry Secretary
Standing Committee on Education,
and Vocational Training,
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Ms Holmes

Re: Inquiry into Teacher Education

Thank you for your letter of 3 March 2005 inviting NCVER to provide a submission in response to the Inquiry into Teacher Education.

I am pleased to attach our submission which provides some background information from our statistics and research work to assist the Committee in this inquiry.

If NCVER can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. I also invite you to access VOCED (the UNESCO/NCVER International Technical and Vocational Education and Training Research Database www.voced.edu.au), which is a specialised database unique to vocational education and training. VOCED indexes over 120 key Australian and international journals as well as monographs, research reports, policy documents, conference proceedings, published statistics and much more.

Yours sincerely



Tom Karmel
Managing Director

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Submission

By National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)

to

*House of Representatives
Standing Committee on education and Vocational Training*

Inquiry into Teacher Education

NCVER is in the business of collecting, analysing and broking information about vocational education and training (VET). The organisation is responsible for collecting and managing national VET and New Apprenticeship statistics, and managing national surveys of TAFE graduates and students, and employers' views of training. We undertake a strategic program of research, and collect and provide VET research findings from Australian and international sources through the Vocational Education and Training Research Database (VOCED).

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research Ltd (NCVER) provides the following information as background to the inquiry into teacher education:

To inquire into and report on the scope, suitability, organisation, resourcing and delivery of teacher education and training courses in Australia's public and private universities. To examine the preparedness of graduates to meet the current and future demands of teaching in Australian schools

Introduction

The vocational education and training sector is not directly involved in the training of teachers for Australian schools. However, vocational education in schools has become increasingly important in recent years, to the extent that close to 50 per cent of students in years 11 and 12 take at least one subject that is accredited in the vocational education and training sector. Thus developments in vocational education and training are becoming increasingly relevant to school teachers.

The submission covers two areas of NCVER's work. The first is research and statistics on the delivery of vocational education and training in schools. The second is research into what can loosely be described as teaching and learning in the vocational education and training sector; some of this may well be of relevance to the training of school teachers. Indeed, some schools are now registered training organisations and are accredited to deliver certain vocational education and training modules. Before providing a listing of relevant research and statistics on these two areas, the submission provides a brief description of vocational education and training and how it fits into the overall educational framework.

The vocational education and training sector in Australia

Vocational education and training (VET) is one of the three major sectors of education and training and involves education and training arrangements designed to prepare people for work or to improve the knowledge and skills of people already working in Australia.

The foundation of VET in Australia was laid in the mid to late nineteenth century when institutions such as mechanics' institutes, mine schools, and technical and working men's colleges were established and offered industry training and skills development in predominantly male trades.

In 1992 Commonwealth, State and Territory governments agreed to having a national training system and the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) and its board were set up to advise ministers on national policy and regulation. The Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training and each State and Territory Training Authority have the primary policy and operational responsibility to implement nationally agreed VET decisions in their respective jurisdictions. ANTA works closely with governments, industry and other stakeholders to advise the ministers and develop a strategic focus for VET. Industry has an important role in VET and a network of Industry Skills Councils advise ANTA and its board about current and future industry training needs. NCVET's role is to develop and implement Australia's national VET research and evaluation effort, together with the collecting and reporting of national statistical and other information about VET.

Today, Australia's VET system is an important component of a broader educational network that includes schools, universities and adult and community education. VET is offered not only in the public TAFE system, but also through private and community training providers and in secondary schools. It also has links to university study options, and provides up to six levels of nationally recognised qualifications in most industries, including high growth new economy industries. More information about qualifications is provided below.

The Australian VET system is sophisticated and important to achieving social, economic and environmental sustainability. Firstly, it is industry led. Employers, unions and professional associations of an industry define the outcomes that are required from training. Secondly, it is national. The VET system is jointly managed by State, Territory and Commonwealth governments acting in partnership with industry and training providers. Thirdly, it is client focused—the VET system aims to be flexible, relevant and responsive to employers and individuals who access VET products and services.

The fundamental elements of the VET system include national recognition through qualification and quality frameworks, registered training organisations (RTOs), and State and Territory registering authorities. The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) defines all nationally recognised qualifications. In addition, there is also the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) which is a set of nationally agreed standards that ensure high quality VET services throughout Australia. Training organisations must meet AQTF standards to become registered. Only RTOs can issue AQF qualifications and deliver training and assessment services. National recognition is the cornerstone of the AQTF. Under this framework, registered RTOs can be regarded as having equal recognition across all states and territories, and similarly AQF qualifications and statements of attainment issued by RTOs Australia wide can also receive equal recognition. Mobility in the labour market is thus supported through the pillar of national recognition. State and Territory registering authorities are responsible for registering and monitoring training organisations and ensuring that they comply with AQTF standards. They also accredit VET courses and approve the delivery of VET to overseas students by RTOs.

Training Packages are a central component in the delivery of VET training and are developed by industry to meet the training needs of an industry or group of industries. A Training Package is an integrated set of nationally endorsed standards, guidelines and qualifications for training, assessing and recognising skills.

A philosophy of flexibility is the basis of the national training system. This enables choice on what, when, where and how people learn. Flexible learning enables smooth integration of training in the workplace, while supporting different learning styles, availability and life-balance.

How VET fits into the overall educational framework is clearly demonstrated by the AQF. The AQF provides a unified system of national qualifications in schools, vocational education and training (TAFE and RTOs), and the higher education sector (mainly universities).

The following table provides a diagrammatic representation of how the qualifications and sectors are integrated:

Schools Sector Accreditation	Vocational Education and Training Sector Accreditation	Higher Sector Accreditation
Senior Secondary Certificate of Education	Vocational Graduate Diploma Vocational Graduate Certificate	Doctoral Degree
		Masters Degree
	Advanced Diploma Diploma	Graduate Diploma
		Graduate Certificate
	Certificate IV Certificate III Certificate II Certificate I	Bachelors Degree
		Associate Degree, Advanced Diploma Diploma

There is growing provision of VET in the schools sector which may be recognised at the appropriate Certificate I-IV level, or as a credit towards the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education. Some Certificate I-IV qualifications are also issued in the higher education sector and there is also a VET pathway to the Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma.

A Statement of Attainment under the AQF is a record of recognised learning which may contribute towards a qualification, either as partial completion of a course leading to a qualification, attainment of competencies within a Training Package, or completion of a nationally accredited short course which can also contribute towards a qualification through a process of recognising prior learning.

Vocational education and training in schools.

NCVER draws the Committee’s attention to the following relevant publications of research and statistical findings.

- Johns S, Kilpatrick S, Loechel B, Prescott L (2004) *Pathways from rural schools: does school VET make a difference?* NCVER: Adelaide.

This publication offers a concise report on an investigation of the medium-term outcomes of vocational education and training (VET) programs delivered by rural schools for youth and their communities. The research was designed to: investigate the extent of linkages between rural youth's participation in school VET programs, participation in post-school VET courses, labour market status, and their retention in their local communities; examine the features of school VET programs delivered in rural schools that enhance skills acquisition, influence rural youth's participation in

post-school VET courses, and influence the ability of rural youth to secure local employment within their chosen industry area; and explore whether the outcomes of participation in rural school VET programs are the same as those reported for school VET programs more generally. Former students from six rural school clusters in six states were surveyed, including those who participated in school VET programs and those who did not. Principals and school VET program coordinators provided information on the purpose, nature and outcomes of their VET programs. Case studies of three states, Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania, are included in summary in this report.

Key findings from this research include: school VET courses intended as a pathway to local employment appear to be successful in terms of retaining students who otherwise may have left school early, and are assisting the transition from school to work; work placements are a key component of the success of these programs, in terms of aiding the transition to local jobs and apprenticeships and thereby increasing youth retention in the community; rural school students apparently undertake VET and work placements as a pathway to their goal of local employment: their choice of VET field of study is, generally, closely aligned to their employment goals, as are their post-school education and training choices; many of the outcomes of participation in VET for rural school students are similar to those for school students identified in other research; and school students who participate in VET programs are more likely to indicate their intention to live in a rural location during their working life than those who do not undertake a VET program. These findings suggest that school-based VET programs in rural areas have special potential to develop skills and pathways for the future workforce of rural Australia. The research also suggests that pathways from school-based VET programs in the primary industries area need to be more flexible to improve access to training and participation, particularly in remote areas. In addition, females need to be encouraged to consider areas of school VET study that lead to career paths in rural areas.

Availability:

This concise report may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nr1028.pdf> . The full report containing additional information, only available in electronic form, may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nr1028s.pdf> .

- Knight B (2004) *Vocational learning in schools as an equity strategy* in *Equity in vocational education and training: research readings*, edited by Kaye Bowman. NCVER: Adelaide.

This book of readings was developed as a contribution to the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) document 'Shaping our future: Australia's national strategy for vocational education and training 2004-2010'. It reviews the achievements realised for the equity groups identified in 'Bridge to the future: Australia's national strategy for vocational education and training 1998 - 2003', and reveals the issues these groups are currently facing and how they might be addressed. It also considers whether there are other groups who experience disadvantage and the role that vocational education and training (VET) could play to improve their opportunities. Finally, it discusses approaches and frameworks which need to be developed to bring about further improvements in equity in VET.

The chapter, 'Vocational learning in schools as an equity strategy', looks at how well the development of vocational learning in schools has worked as a means of keeping young people engaged in education who otherwise might have left school early. It complements research which argues that, where the reasons for leaving school early are due to lack of interest in school work or low achievement, this is best tackled at its roots, through the introduction of more varied programs in schools. Although VET works well for many early school leavers as a means of offsetting, or at least lessening, the potentially negative effects of interrupted schooling, this pathway perhaps should be promoted mainly to those young people who leave school early for economic reasons.

Availability:

The complete volume from which this chapter was indexed may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nr2201.pdf> .

- NCVER (2004) *Australian vocational education and training statistics: students and courses 2003: summary*. NCVER: Adelaide.

This publication provides a summary of 2003 data relating to students, courses, qualifications, training providers and funding in Australia's public vocational education and training (VET) system. It presents information on VET delivery funded wholly or in part from public funds. VET activity covered in this summary includes: all VET delivered by TAFE and other government providers; all VET delivered by multi-sector higher education institutions; public VET delivered by registered community providers; and public VET delivered by registered private providers.

Availability:

This document may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistics/vet/ann03/sum03/sum03.pdf> .

- NCVER (2004) *Australian vocational education and training statistics: students and courses 2003*. NCVER: Adelaide.

This publication provides detailed statistical information about activity in the public vocational education and training (VET) system in Australia in 2003. VET programs are undertaken by students of both sexes, from all age groups, and from a diversity of backgrounds. These include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students born overseas, students whose main language is not English, students with a disability, students who are employed, unemployed or who are not in the labour force, and students from the full range of prior-education levels. As well, an increasing number of VET students undertake VET while still attending secondary school, either as part of their secondary school program (VET in schools) or by undertaking VET subjects independently of their secondary school studies. This publication reflects the enormous diversity of Australia's VET system. It contains information on VET students and courses for each state and territory and for Australia. The statistics included in the publication are derived from the national collection of data from VET providers. The Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information and Statistical Standard (AVETMISS), which facilitates nationally comparable data and includes a range of data items relevant to the VET system, underpins the national data collection. This publication contains

information only on those VET programs that have a specific vocational focus and provide students with the skills that enable them to enter or re-enter the workforce or upgrade their existing skills.

Availability:

This document may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistics/vet/ann03/id03/idall03.pdf> .

- NCVER (2003) *Australian vocational education and training statistics: Students and courses 2002: at a glance*. NCVER: Adelaide.

Vocational education and training (VET) comprises formal learning activities which are intended to develop knowledge and skills which are relevant to the workplace. This publication provides, based on the 2002 data, a snapshot of the public VET sector in Australia. It covers VET delivered by TAFE institutes and other government providers, registered community education providers and registered providers in the private sector that receive public funding to deliver VET programs.

Availability:

This document may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistics/vet/ann02/glance02/glance02.pdf> .

- NCVER (2003) *Australian vocational education and training statistics 2002: students and courses: in detail*. NCVER: Adelaide.

This publication contains statistics which reflect the diversity of the Australian vocational education and training (VET) system at the client, provider and program levels. It provides detailed statistical information about publicly-funded VET activity in Australia in 2002, including TAFE, other government providers (for example agricultural colleges and university VET campuses), community providers, some VET delivered in schools, and private providers who have been allocated public funds to deliver VET programs. Data collection is underpinned by the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS), which facilitates nationally comparable data and includes a range of data items relevant to the VET system.

Included are the personal characteristics and educational backgrounds of clients, public and private training providers, funding of training, and enrolments by vocational as well as by personal enrichment programs. Data breakdowns by state and territory are given.

This is an ANTA national project. Related publications are: Australian vocational education and training statistics 2000: at a glance and Australian vocational education and training statistics 2000: financial data.

Availability:

This document may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistics/vet/ann02/id02/idall02.pdf> .

- Nguyen N (2004) *Australian vocational education and training statistics: VET in Schools 2003*. NCVER: Adelaide.

The introduction of vocational education and training (VET) within the senior secondary curriculum was designed to broaden students' choices beyond subjects which predominantly led to university, and to provide alternative pathways to tertiary education and work. This publication provides information about senior secondary school students undertaking vocational education and training (VET) during 2003, either through VET in Schools programs or school-based New Apprenticeships. An overview of student characteristics are provided, including participation rates for VET in Schools program students, qualifications and the type of training undertaken. Figures presented in this publication are derived from two sources: the National Centre for Vocational Education Research National VET Provider Collection; and the Ministerial Council on Employment, Training and Youth Affairs Transition from School Taskforce.

Availability:

This document may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistics/aag/schools2003/sp413.pdf> .

- Polesel J, Helme S, Davies M, Teese R, Nicholas T, Vickers M (2004) *VET in schools: a post-compulsory perspective*. NCVER: Adelaide.

In the context of significant growth in the provision of VET in Schools programs in the past decade, this study sought to investigate the place of vocational education and training (VET) in school culture and policy. For the purposes of this study, VET in schools refers to accredited VET delivered to students in Years 11 and 12 as part of their Higher School Certificate (HSC). The study examined the consequences for students of supportive and negative school cultures in terms of access to VET while at school, attitudes to lifelong learning, self-confidence, and knowledge of employment and training options. A further component of the study was to look at the provision of VET for young people through the perspective of TAFE institutes. The study gathered information from 12 schools and six TAFE institutes in New South Wales, Queensland and Victoria. The school data represented the views of over 300 teachers, over 1100 Year 11 students and over 400 exit Year 12 students. The findings of the study indicate a change in secondary schools. Resistance remains among some teachers. There is a view among some in the more academically inclined subject departments that VET is disruptive, that it does not fit easily into the timetable, or that it is simply not needed. But in the schools in this study, teachers such as these appear to be in the minority. For most, VET plays an essential role in managing diversity, in improving learning and in securing a range of good outcomes for school leavers. Even among non-VET teachers, there is a majority view that VET is needed, and it is effective. In the perceptions of students, VET is seen as providing opportunities and pathways which are essential. Alternatives to the traditional pathway to university are provided in VET programs, giving these young people a senior schooling experience which caters for their diverse needs and learning styles. Students enrol in VET to widen career options, to obtain workplace training and to gain a VET qualification. More than half of the students enrolled in VET to gain access to better part-time work than would be available without training, reflecting the importance of part-time work to students in senior secondary school and in university. Students' feedback strongly suggests that VET has satisfied their need for work-related skills and experience, and that the work placement has contributed to

increasing their self-confidence. There is also encouraging data to suggest that VET has contributed to student learning more generally. Re-engaging disaffected learners and creating pathways to further education and training (in addition to the well-trodden university pathway) are important steps in forming the confident lifelong learners of the future. The feedback from TAFE staff seems to confirm these views. There is an acknowledgement that schools and students are beginning to view VET (and consequently TAFE itself) in a more favourable light. By valuing VET, schools are also paving the way for a more positive view of TAFE as a post-schooling option.

Finally, while both TAFE institutes and schools have done much to accommodate the need for high-quality VET programs for school students, there are still issues to be addressed. The need for funding and administrative flexibility is chief among them. While access to VET remains complex and troublesome, residual resistance to VET will remain and some students who need VET programs will continue to miss out. There is a need for a frank appraisal of the issues facing schools in different settings if they are to offer high-quality VET programs to all students who need them. These issues include access to TAFE programs, funding arrangements, school size, isolation and the provision of trained teaching staff. These issues all involve funding, and affect different schools in different ways. Unless adequate acknowledgment of the need to provide quality VET in a range of settings (and not just in those where it is easy) is made, access to VET will continue to be limited for many young people in Australian schools.

Availability:

This document may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nr1029.pdf> . A supporting document, available only in electronic format, contains the Issues paper, briefs for TAFE papers and the survey instruments and may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nr1029s.pdf> .

- Robinson C, Misko J (2003) *Extending learning opportunities: a study of cooperation between TAFE institutes and schools and universities in Queensland*. NCVER: Adelaide.

There has been widespread recognition of the importance of developing new and better pathways for the majority of young people who are not going to enter university directly from school, increasing completion of secondary schooling through new pathways offering senior students a greater variety of vocational options while remaining at school.

This report aims to explore the extent of inter-sectoral co-operation between Queensland Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes and schools, and between TAFE institutes and universities in recognition of the growing importance of new learning pathways to meeting Queensland's diverse skills needs. It also aims to review the progress being made, and the role Queensland TAFE institutes can or should have in developing new and meaningful vocational options for young Queenslanders while they are still at school. It was anticipated that models would be developed to enhance local inter-sectoral arrangements in Queensland and a number of case studies would be undertaken to explore a range of innovative and proactive strategies that could be applied locally to improve inter-sectoral relationships in specific areas within the State.

The review found that if TAFE institutes are to provide a richer and diverse range of VET opportunities for young Queenslanders who stay on at school, it is important that Education Queensland, non-government independent and Catholic school authorities, and the Queensland Board of Senior Secondary School Studies (QBSSSS) identify ways that may facilitate the use of existing TAFE resources for these programs. It is also clear from the case study findings that successful inter-sectoral arrangements, between universities and TAFE, schools and TAFE and schools and universities, were especially contingent upon the support and enthusiasm of those in senior management positions in all sectors. This support ensured that resources and staff were allocated to identifying and implementing mechanisms for providing access to TAFE courses for school students, or advanced standing in university programs for TAFE graduates. Findings from the case studies suggested that arrangements for articulation and credit transfer were more likely to be straightforward and successful where faculties from both sectors had negotiated a joint program leading to a TAFE qualification as well as a university degree. However, these programs also tended to take time to develop and were dependent on the driving force of an individual or individuals who had the necessary ability, experience and commitment to negotiate a successful result. The findings of the review suggest the adoption of a new state-wide approach to promulgating better articulation and credit transfer arrangements between TAFE and universities, and to provide an advisory service to TAFE institutes and universities. The other main finding of the review is that portfolio arrangements that integrate education (especially school education) and training make no difference to the quality of cross-sectoral collaboration between TAFE institutes and schools and universities. Good policy frameworks are important irrespective of portfolio configurations, and there is no substitute for good arrangements between TAFE institutes and schools and universities on the ground.

Availability:

This document may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/commercial/op254.pdf> .

- Smith E, Wilson L (2003) Learning and training in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. Conference: 5th, Melbourne, Australia, 2002 in *Making a world of difference?: innovation, internationalisation, new technologies and VET: proceedings of the 5th annual conference of the Australian VET Research Association (AVETRA)*, edited by Fran Ferrier and Cathy Down.

The number of young people commencing apprenticeships and traineeships whilst at school, and monitored by their school, has grown considerably, encouraged by State and Federal governments, since the first participants began in 1997. There has as yet been little research into the nature of the training given to, and learning experienced by, such young people; most published literature has related to organisational issues. This paper reports on a research project funded by the National Research and Evaluation Committee [NREC] into learning and training in school-based new apprenticeships (SBNAs). A questionnaire was sent to a large sample of all SBNAs in three States: Queensland, Victoria and South Australia, using a survey instrument adapted from a previous NREC study, 'School students' learning from their paid and unpaid work' (report indexed at TD/TNC 68.01). The results present an overview of SBNA employment, training and learning practices which will provide an important basis for development of policy and practice in this area.

Availability:

This document may be found on the AVETRA web site at: http://www.aveutra.org.au/abstracts_and_papers_2002/smith-wilson.pdf and from the NCVET website at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/vetsystem/publications/908.html> .

- Taylor A (2004) *Entering industry: a case of links between a school vocational program and the building and construction industry*. NCVET: Adelaide.

This study reports the findings of a case study investigating links between an industry-specific school vocational education and training (VET) program and subsequent work transitions to the building and construction industry. It provides important insights into the early career experiences of young people. The program under consideration, the Family of Trades, is a one-year cross-sectoral school VET program auspiced by the building and construction industry in Western Australia and in operation in schools in the south-east metropolitan region of Perth between 1999 and 2001. In this program, Year 11 students, drawn from up to seven schools (government and non-government) attended the local technical and further education (TAFE) campus for one day a week for one semester to receive trade instruction in four building and construction trades. In the second semester, 120 hours of structured work experience were undertaken in one of these trades. The study population was drawn from a low-income region where high numbers of local students are considered to be at risk of not completing formal education. The region also shows generally low levels of qualifications and pockets of high unemployment. The report identifies positive short- and longer-term outcomes of the Family of Trades program and clearly demonstrates that the program was instrumental in assisting career decision-making and entry to work. The data presented in this report do not allow definitive links to be made between the school VET program and school-to-work transition, however the findings suggest some tentative relationships between the two can be identified. The majority of the respondents expressed confidence, enthusiasm and satisfaction over the transition process and early career experiences. They clearly saw the value of persevering with their training despite the challenges, and this is reflected in the high retention rate for these young people in apprenticeships.

Availability:

This document may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nr1025.pdf> .

- Teese R (2004) Early school leavers and VET in *Equity in vocational education and training: research readings* edited by Kaye Bowman. NCVET: Adelaide.

This book of readings was developed as a contribution to the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) document 'Shaping our future: Australia's national strategy for vocational education and training 2004-2010'. It reviews the achievements realised for the equity groups identified in 'Bridge to the future: Australia's national strategy for vocational education and training 1998 - 2003', and reveals the issues these groups are currently facing and how they might be addressed. It also considers whether there are other groups who experience disadvantage and the role that vocational education and training (VET) could play to improve their opportunities. Finally, it discusses approaches and frameworks which need to be developed to bring about further improvements in equity in VET.

The chapter, 'Early school leavers and VET', discusses how one in four young people in Australia leave school without completing his or her senior secondary certificate. This has been a fairly stable pattern throughout the 1990s, although at the start of the decade recession kept somewhat more young people at school. This chapter looks at the context in which early school leaving occurs in Australia, the causes, the consequences, and the ways in which its impact is reduced through VET. The two major motives identified for quitting school early are demand for work or an income, and lack of interest in schoolwork. There are large variations across the states and territories, ranging from about 11% who leave school early in the Australian Capital Territory to nearly 50% in the Northern Territory (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2002). There are also large differences between boys and girls. About one in five girls does not complete secondary school compared with about one in three boys. As well as the gender gap, and the gap between the states and territories, there are other very significant dimensions of variation, such as by region, socio-economic status, and Aboriginality. Within three years of leaving school early, between two-thirds and three-quarters of these young people have some contact with VET. The evidence from a variety of sources is that this contact is positive in terms of employment and other social benefits. There is also evidence that including VET in schools programs contributes to retaining more young people to the end of secondary schooling. Overall, VET plays a large role in ensuring growth of learning among young people.

Availability:

The complete volume from which this chapter was indexed may be found on the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) web site at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nr2201.pdf> .

- Woods D (NCVER) *Young people and vocational education and training options: at a glance*. NCVER: Adelaide.

Vocational education and training (VET) programs for young people in Australia have significantly expanded over the past decade. This publication provides an overview of research into the VET options available to school-aged people, including: recognised VET subjects and courses undertaken as part of the senior secondary certificate; school-based New Apprenticeships; and recognised VET options undertaken by early school leavers. It also details the emerging social benefits and outcomes of undertaking recognised VET options. The challenges which face the implementation of vocational education in schools are also summarised.

Availability:

This document may be found on the NCVER web site at: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nd3102g.pdf> .

Teaching and learning in the vocational education and training sector

NCVER draws the Committee's attention to the following relevant publications of research and statistical findings.

- NCVER (2004) *The vocational education and training workforce: New roles and ways of working - At a glance*, NCVER, Adelaide.

Reforms to Australia's vocational education and training (VET) sector over the past few years have brought about significant changes to the work of VET staff and the focus of their roles. This publication summarises recent research into the changing roles of VET leaders, managers, teaching and support staff, and the way they work. The role of senior managers is increasingly focused on the external environment and building links with stakeholder organisations. Front-line managers focus on internal business practices and how to modify these to meet new clients' needs. The role of VET teachers is becoming more diverse and team-based. Within these teams, teaching support staff play a critical part. The publication also summarises a range of human resource and professional development issues, identified by VET staff, which need to be tackled to help them work more effectively in the future.

Availability:

This report is currently available from the NCVER website:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1521.html>

- NCVER (2004) *Profiling the national vocational education and training workforce*, NCVER, Adelaide.

Future workforce planning in private and public enterprise requires reliable information on which projections are made. Currently limited information exists about vocational education and training (VET) professionals. This report consolidates two national studies on the TAFE workforce, and on VET professionals in private and public registered training organisations. The findings have important implications for workforce planning. Within the TAFE sector, the number of teachers aged over 45 is almost double the average for the Australian workforce, and the employment status is shifting from permanent qualified teachers to non-permanent teachers who are less qualified. Outside the TAFE sector, the credentials of VET professionals are also an issue.

Availability:

This report is currently available from the NCVER website:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1522.html>

- Roger Harris, Michele Simons, Berwyn Clayton (2005), *Shifting mindsets: The changing work roles of vocational education and training practitioners*, NCVER, Adelaide.

Reforms to Australia's vocational education and training (VET) sector have had a significant impact on practitioners' work in public and private providers. This study analyses practitioners' perceptions of, and reactions to, the changes. The scope of these changes has been substantial and has required shifts to practitioners' habits,

norms, skills and knowledge. While the greatest changes have been increased work responsibilities and shifts in relations with industry in particular, a key theme is the varied impact the changes have on VET organisations and practitioners.

Availability:

This report is currently available from the NCVET website:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/1524.html>

- Clive Chappell, Robyn Johnston (2003) *Changing work: Changing roles for vocational education and training teachers and trainers*, NCVET, Adelaide.

This report focuses on the professional culture of vocational education and training (VET) practitioners and the impact of changes in the VET sector on their work. The themes covered include commercialisation, administrative work, and educational and industry identity. The report also includes career biographies and provides insight into the working lives of VET practitioners, how their roles have changed and the range of work they now undertake. It is based on interviews with 28 VET practitioners working in TAFE, adult and community education (ACE), private colleges, industry and schools.

Availability:

This report is currently available from the NCVET website:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/teaching/publications/936.html>

- Tom Stehlik, Michele Simons, Lyn Kerkham, Ron Pearce, Judy Gronold, (2003) *Getting connected: Professional development of contract and casual staff providing flexible learning* - Volumes 1 and 2.

The experiences of contract and casual staff 'getting connected' with flexible delivery and online learning technologies and engaging in professional development is the focus of this report. The study finds a significant proportion of professional development relies heavily on learning by doing, informal learning, and networking with colleagues. The professional development needs of staff often become apparent after they use flexible delivery and online learning. Opportunities exist to increase informal learning and integrate contract and casual staff into wider working groups.

The report is published in two volumes. Volume 1 is the main report while volume 2 contains the appendices and is available in PDF format only.

Availability:

The first volume of this report is currently available from the NCVET website:

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/teaching/publications/1427.html>

- Berwyn Clayton, Thea Fisher and Elvie Hughes (forthcoming) *Sustaining the skillbase of technical and further education institutes: Some perspectives from TAFE managers*, NCVET, Adelaide.

The purpose of this research is twofold. Firstly, it seeks to examine the existing strategies that Australian public Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) have in

place to maintain the technical currency of their staff delivering VET programs. Secondly, it will examine the mechanisms being employed to transfer corporate knowledge and skills from those with significant expertise and experience to novices entering the sector.

Availability:

Publication of this research report is forthcoming, and is expected to be available from the NCVET website in the next two months. If the committee requires access to a draft of this report earlier, please contact NCVET.

- Roger Harris, Michele Simons and Julian Moore (forthcoming) *A huge learning curve: TAFE practitioners' ways of working with private enterprises*, NCVET, Adelaide.

The key objectives of the study are to:

1. identify, through in-depth analysis of six case studies across two States, how public VET practitioners work with and within enterprises
2. analyse the perceptions of these ways of working held by the public VET practitioners, industry personnel and their learners
3. critically evaluate, using learning network theory (LNT), the effectiveness of these ways of working, and
4. recommend how these ways of working may be enhanced in terms of effectiveness.

Availability:

Publication of this research report is forthcoming, and is expected to be available from the NCVET website in the next two months. If the committee requires access to a draft of this report earlier, please contact NCVET.