



**Queensland
Government**

INQUIRY INTO VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

**BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

SUBMISSION BY THE QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT, 2002

Table of Contents

Executive Summary and Recommendations	2
Introduction	4
Term of Reference (a): The range, structure, resourcing and delivery of vocational education programs in schools, including teacher training and the impact of vocational education on other programs	7
Term of Reference (b): The differences between school-based and other vocational education programs and the resulting qualifications, and the pattern of industry acceptance of school-based programs	17
Term of Reference (c): Vocational education in new and emerging industries	22
Term of Reference (d): The accessibility and effectiveness of vocational education for Indigenous students	24
Other equity groups	27
Young people with a disability	27
Rural and remote locations	29
Students at risk	31
Attachment A: Statistics	33
Attachment B: Acronyms and Glossary	37

Executive Summary and Recommendations

Queensland is performing strongly in the provision of vocational education and training (VET) in Schools, with more than 55% of young people in Years 11 and 12 enrolled in VET. VET plays a critical role in providing a variety of options to equip young people for the future demands of a workforce marked by the presence of new and emerging industries.

The Queensland Government is committed to increasing opportunities for young people to reach their full potential. In March 2002, the Government announced reforms to build a strong education and training system that will provide the best education and life chances for young people in Queensland. As part of these reforms, the choices available to young people in post-compulsory education will be expanded. VET will be a significant component of the wider options offered to young people.

VET may be delivered to young people in various settings. Schools in Queensland foster partnerships with institutes of TAFE, other registered training organisations, employers, community and other educational sectors to provide a wide range of relevant options for young people. This means that school students may be engaged in VET at school, TAFE and various other non-school settings. The focus is not on the setting in which learning occurs, but on strengthening pathways and providing a broader-based education that enables young people to successfully make the transition to further education, training, employment or a combination of these.

The subsequent *Queensland the Smart State — Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper* (copy attached), which was released on 25 November 2002, outlines a number of initiatives designed to further strengthen the education and training system for all young people. In addition to increasing the education, employment and training alternatives for young people, the proposed reforms will establish systems to record all achievements and to provide stronger safety nets, including individual support and guidance. These reforms will improve collaboration between education and training sectors, universities, employers, industry and community groups.

VET in Schools is underpinned by the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF), which outlines national standards for delivery of vocational education and training. A number of strategies currently contribute to quality. These include:

- professional development
- strong relationships between the education and training sectors and industry, encouraging a shared commitment to young people
- highly qualified teachers and high standards of professionalism in Queensland schools, institutes of TAFE and other registered training organisations.

The Queensland Government has engaged in a number of research activities to improve the implementation of quality education and training opportunities for young people. Commissioned reports by John Pitman and Margaret Gardner recommend constructing greater choices in senior years of schooling and enabling seamless pathways for all young people, including those at educational risk.

Equitable opportunities are an important component of the Queensland Government's aim to build a strong workforce and a cohesive society. The Queensland Government has implemented a range of initiatives to ensure equal access to, and participation in, VET for students in schools. VET in Schools provides a pathway to strengthen transitions for Indigenous young people, young people with a disability, rural and remote young people, and young people at risk.

The Commonwealth has emphasised its commitment to the role that VET in Schools plays in supporting transitions for young people from initial education to further education, training and employment. The Commonwealth allocates \$20 million per year for VET in Schools. In 2002, Queensland received \$3.6 million (18% of the national allocation). However, a number of current issues related to Commonwealth funding need to be resolved to ensure strong and sustainable provision of VET in Schools in Queensland. The Commonwealth allocation of funding to Queensland fails to reflect the growing proportions of young people in Queensland and the percentage of those engaged in VET in Schools. Some jurisdictions receive four times the allocation that Queensland receives per student enrolled in VET in Schools programs. Queensland is being penalised financially for endorsing the policy objectives that the Commonwealth is promoting.

Recommendations

1. That the House of Representatives Committee note Queensland's strong performance in providing VET in Schools as an important component of the broad range of education, training and employment opportunities available to Queensland's young people, and that the Queensland Government is introducing significant reforms to further strengthen the education and training system for young people. VET for school students will play a pivotal role in these reforms.
2. That ANTA VET in Schools funds
 - a. continue beyond 2004, on an ongoing basis
 - b. increase substantially, to reflect the growth in numbers of students studying VET and the cost of this service
 - c. include a growth factor, to reflect the rapidly rising participation in VET in Schools
 - d. be allocated between jurisdictions by a more equitable model that takes into account student enrolment numbers and participation in VET
 - e. be available with more flexibility for service delivery
 - f. increase to provide strong career guidance support for students undertaking VET in Schools (see page 16)
 - g. be sufficient to allow provision for specialist support to students with a disability who are studying VET subjects. (see page 29)
3. That the Commonwealth commission marketing strategies to improve community understanding of VET in Schools. This marketing strategy should include a particular focus on improving the perceptions of employers and parents of the value of VET in Schools programs. (see page 21)
4. That the Commonwealth, through groups such as the Australian Industry Group and the Australian Chamber of Commerce, encourage new and emerging

industries to actively participate in partnerships across schools, training providers and further education and provide up-to-date career and pathways information. (see page 24)

5. That the Disabled Apprenticeship Wage Scheme (DAWS) be more broadly available to support school-based apprentices and trainees. (see page 29)

We invite the Committee to visit a range of Queensland schools to gain an appreciation of the diversity of services provided and community partnerships involved in providing VET in Schools programs in this State.

Introduction

The Queensland Government makes this submission, reflecting its role with government and non-government schools.

An increasingly complex economic and social future confronts all young people in the 21st century. They face multiple transitions through school and beyond to adulthood — transitions which are vital to their future well-being and success. Those who struggle with these transitions are at risk of becoming disconnected from our society.

The Queensland Government is committed to building a system that will provide young people with the best chance of success as they make their transitions from initial education to further education, training and employment. In March 2002 the Premier launched *Queensland the Smart State — Education and Training Reforms for the Future*.¹ *Queensland the Smart State – Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper* was subsequently launched on 25 November 2002, following substantial public consultation.

The vision set out in these documents is to build an exceptional state education and training system that will provide a more relevant and flexible education for all young people and support them through their transitions from initial education to further education, training and employment.

The Queensland Government recognises that a range of different options is needed to cater for the diverse needs of young people. The reforms include new legislation that will:

- make it compulsory for young people to stay at school until they finish Year 10 or have turned 16, whichever comes first
- require young people to participate in education and training for a further two years or until they have gained a Senior Certificate or Certificate III vocational qualification or have turned 17
- provide exemptions for young people who enter full-time work after they have completed Year 10 or turn 16
- foster a community commitment to young people to encourage employers, schools and trainers to improve pathways from school to work.

¹ Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet 2002, *Queensland the Smart State — Education and Training Reforms for the Future*, Brisbane.

The reforms include changing the Senior Certificate, building Year 10 as a transition into the Senior Phase of Learning, and introducing Senior Education and Training Plans for students in Year 10.

Other initiatives outlined in *Queensland the Smart State — Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper* include an additional 100 youth support workers, a trial of new TAFE courses which are more tailored for 15- to 17-year-olds, and more assistance for schools and TAFE institutes to enhance career guidance and counselling. Grants programs will be established to improve participation, retention and attainment in learning for 15- to 17-year-olds. Amongst other things, this will include purchasing industry or vocational education and training expertise to support schools in rural and remote areas. School-based apprenticeships and traineeships will be expanded, especially in rural, remote and Indigenous communities. Further incentives will be offered to employers to take on school-based apprentices and trainees, including young people living in rural and remote areas.

Central to these reforms is a commitment to ensure young people who study VET in Schools achieve qualifications that are highly regarded by industry. The Queensland Studies Authority will work with the Training Recognition Council to develop better ways to accredit and deliver VET in Schools that will provide high quality options for young people that position them for success in further education, training and employment.

The Government will work with communities to develop localised services and better access to education and training for young people in rural, remote and Indigenous communities. It will also enhance distance, online and virtual education.

VET in Schools – an important component of a wide range of options

A number of options are available to meet the diverse needs of young people and to ensure that all Queensland students either:

- stay at school to complete Year 12, which may include VET while still at school
- start an apprenticeship or traineeship
- enrol in a VET program at Australian Qualification Framework Level III or a program that could articulate to this level of qualification
- commence higher education
- obtain employment
- engage in a combination of any of the above.

VET for school students will continue to play an important role in the provision of multiple education and training choices for Queensland's young people. VET is a crucial element of the education and training reforms, aimed at:

- providing students with alternative pathways
- providing students with broad-based educational opportunities that will equip them to deal with an increasingly complex world where workers need a blend of technical, cognitive and social skills
- building relationships beyond students' immediate communities that can greatly benefit students and schools.

The reforms being implemented in Queensland are consistent with national and international research. Specifically, they emphasise the need to strengthen pathways for young people from school to further education, training and employment and to

provide broad-based education that equips young people to cope with a rapidly changing world.

The Queensland Government recently commissioned two reports that informed these reforms. *The Senior Certificate: A New Deal* (the Pitman report) recommends a single Senior Certificate that prevents students from being locked into a single pathway, allows a mix of VET and general education studies and enables students to change pathways without losing credit for their achievements to date. The *Review of Pathways Articulation* by Professor Margaret Gardner focuses on the connections between school, TAFE and university to improve the pathways available to young people.

The following part of the submission is organised around the four terms of reference of the Inquiry.

Term of Reference (a): The range, structure, resourcing and delivery of vocational education programs in schools, including teacher training and the impact of vocational education on other programs

Key points:

- **Queensland has a range of special characteristics that impact on the delivery of VET in Schools, such as a high rural and remote population and a high Indigenous population.**
- **High schools are registered training organisations and can deliver VET in Schools programs in their own right up to Certificate II. Accordingly, each school meets the Australian Quality Training Framework requirements.**
- **There is a wide range of delivery models of VET for school students.**
- **VET plays an important role in Queensland schools, with more than half of post-compulsory students enrolled in a broad range of VET in Schools programs.**
- **There has been very strong participation in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships in Queensland.**
- **Current Commonwealth funding for VET in Schools has no growth factor and no commitment beyond 2004. Queensland is disadvantaged by the current allocation model.**

Special characteristics of Queensland

Queensland has a unique combination of characteristics which impact on the range, structure and resourcing of VET in Schools. Specifically, Queensland has the following features:

- the most dispersed population of any state or territory other than Tasmania
- a larger Indigenous population than most other jurisdictions
- a high proportion of small businesses
- the highest rate of population increase of any state or territory.

Schools as registered training organisations

VET in Schools refers to a structured sequence of training and education recognised within the Australian Qualifications Framework. Most of this structured training assumes the form of accredited competencies from endorsed training packages, based on industry competency standards leading to recognised qualifications under the Australian Qualifications Framework.

Queensland is unique in that most VET in Schools programs are delivered by schools that are also registered training organisations (RTOs). Almost every school

with post-compulsory-aged students is an RTO — approximately 360 schools. A delegation from the Queensland Training Recognition Council allows the Queensland Studies Authority to register schools for the delivery of VET up to Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate level II, and Certificate level III in Information Technology. School applications for registration to provide courses outside the delegation must be lodged with the Training Recognition Council.

Currently, 95% of Queensland secondary schools are registered for the delivery of VET.

Typically, students access VET through the following models:

- recognised VET as part of their school curriculum programs, in Category A or B subjects²
- approved apprenticeships and traineeships while studying for the Senior Certificate
- vocational qualification delivered in its own right ('stand-alone'), separate from school subjects
- VET delivered by TAFE and other registered training organisations.

Most VET delivered by Queensland schools is through Category A and B subjects. The popularity of this model is due to a state government direction to the then Queensland Board of Senior Secondary School Studies (now the Queensland Studies Authority) to incorporate VET in these subjects. The Government favoured this model because of its potential to recognise VET assessment for university entrance calculations.

Nationally, industry has expressed some concerns about the delivery of VET in Schools in some industry areas. There has been a perception among some employer groups that the standard of VET delivered in schools is different to that delivered in another setting. In particular, those industries in traditionally trade areas that have a long history of on-the-job training are uneasy about the ability of the school system to deliver quality training.

Concern is most often raised in relation to the 'embedded model' of VET in Schools provision, where VET studies are 'embedded' within broader senior secondary subjects. Additionally, their concerns relate to the vocational competence of teachers and the amount of practical workplace experience available to students.

These concerns were discussed in the *Report of the Review of the ANTA VET in Schools Program* (June 2000). While this perception is of concern, there is no hard data available to substantiate these views.

Nonetheless, Queensland has and continues to implement a range of strategies to continuously improve the quality of VET delivered in schools. In particular, three key strategies were employed to assist schools in meeting the requirements of the AQTF: additional funds were provided for professional development activities in government schools; a one-off payment was provided to each government school registered or preparing to register as an RTO to assist them to put into place systems that meet

² Student achievement in Category A (formerly Queensland Board of Senior Secondary School Studies) subjects is used to calculate ranking for university entrance. Achievement in Category B (formerly 'Board-registered') subjects is recorded on the Senior Certificate but not included in the calculation of rankings for university entrance.

the national requirements for vocational education and training; and the Queensland Board of Senior Secondary School Studies (now the Queensland Studies Authority), in conjunction with the Queensland schooling sectors, developed materials that can be used by schools when demonstrating compliance with the AQTF.

The data gathered from AQTF audits conducted since January (when the AQTF was implemented for first-time registrations or registrations to expand the scope of registration) shows that no Queensland school has been refused registration, been involved in a de-registration process, or been de-registered. Recent audits of schools have generally identified few major compliance problems. The Queensland Studies Authority conducted these audits using nationally accredited auditors.

As a result, VET in Schools programs are being undertaken by a broad cross-section of students, including those intending to attend university. Of the top third of academic achievers in Queensland, 24% were enrolled in at least one unit of competency. This contrasts with the perception that VET is only studied by less able students.

Delivery models

The Queensland Government will continue to expand VET options for school students. An important factor in providing expanded opportunities to students is the delivery options chosen by schools. The delivery options are informed by students' needs, human resources and facilities.

Queensland schools have shown flexibility in organising their timetables to ensure that students are provided with the opportunity to undertake VET in Schools programs. The following are some of the approaches that schools are adopting to facilitate VET in Schools programs:

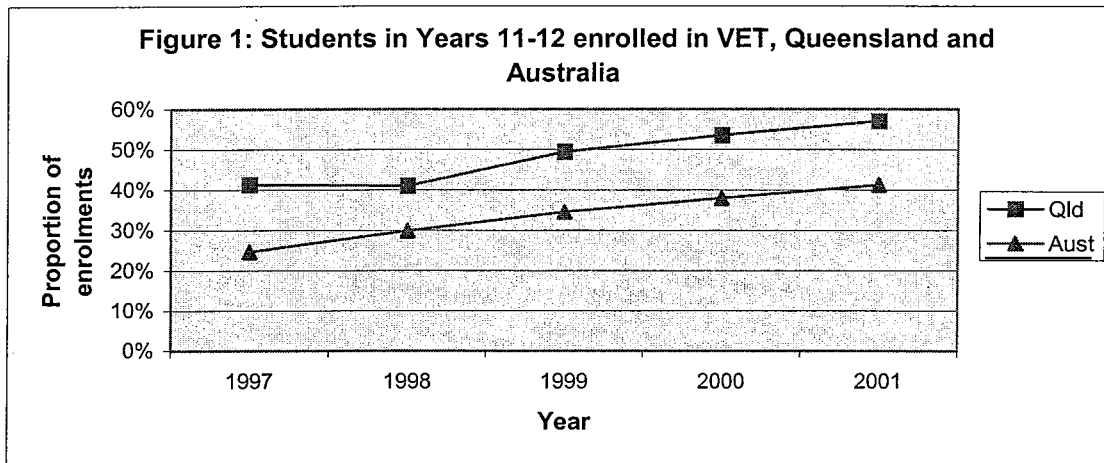
- Designating one set day per week as a lesson-free day. This is the most common approach in schools.
- Structuring the timetable so that larger blocks of time are available. This makes it easier for students to attend block release off-the-job training.
- Elongating the day to include early morning and/or late afternoon classes.

These expanded options are underpinned by career information and guidance. The focus will be on providing young people with the support necessary to make good decisions to secure their successful transitions from school to further education, training and employment.

TAFE institutes, schools, employers and the community have mutual and interdependent roles in ensuring that young people have a range of quality VET options.

Enrolment in VET

Queensland student enrolments in VET qualifications are higher than the Australian average and continue to increase (see Figure 1). In 2001, approximately 48,000 students (more than 55% of Years 11–12 students in government and non-government schools)³ were undertaking some VET, many in more than one vocational area. Currently, the demand for VET programs in Years 9 and 10 is also increasing.



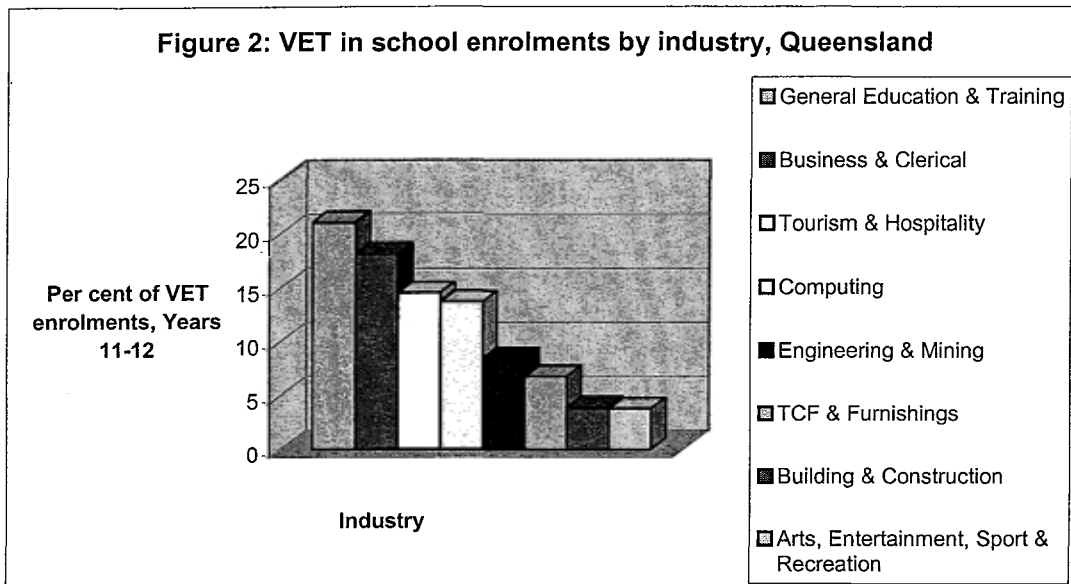
Source: VET enrolments from MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools, *Report*, July 2002; school enrolments from Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Schools Australia*.
Note: these figures include stand-alone VET but exclude school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.

It is Queensland Government policy to increase the proportion of Year 12 students in government schools who gain a full VET certificate at an Australian Qualifications Framework level. There is a statewide target to raise this from 30% in 2001 to 43% by 2005⁴. Each government school with Year 12 students will report annually on its progress towards this target.

As can be seen from Figure 2, a wide range of VET courses are available to Queensland school students. A future challenge is to provide VET that optimises young people's opportunities for future education, training and employment. This requires strong relationships with industry to identify training needs.

³ Source: VET enrolments from MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools, *Report July 2002*; school enrolments from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Schools Australia*.

⁴ Education Queensland, *Destination 2010 – the action plan to implement Queensland State Education – 2010, 2002–05*, 2002, p. 9.



Source: Derived from MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools, *Report*, July 2002.

In 2001, 9,995 Queensland students achieved an Australian Qualifications Framework Certificate, representing almost a quarter of all Year 12 students. Attachment A provides details of the range of qualifications gained and the numbers of students.

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships

Queensland has consistently led the way, with higher commencements in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships than the rest of Australia. As noted in the *National Evaluation of School-Based New Apprenticeships (2002)* report, 'Queensland by far has the most significant take up of School-Based New Apprenticeships, with around 62% of commencements in 2001'. The participation rate of Years 11–12 students in these apprenticeships and traineeships in Queensland is three times the national average.

Table 1: School-based apprenticeship and traineeship commencements, Queensland⁵

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002 (up to 10 Oct)
Apprentices	18	157	409	526	608	594
Trainees	23	859	1,759	2,446	3,500	3,136
Totals	41	1,016	2,168	2,972	4,307	3,730

The strong participation in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships in Queensland reflects the priority placed on providing quality experiential learning and on using strong relationships that have been formed with Queensland's industries. Factors that have positively influenced the uptake of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships include:

- strong leadership and proactive policies by the Queensland Government

⁵ Department of Employment and Training, DELTA Database.

- supportive industrial relations arrangements increasing the range of industries available for school-based apprenticeships and traineeships
- an active approach by Queensland agencies and some schools to establish relationships with local industries that expand options for young people
- the willingness and ability of Queensland schools to build more flexibility into school timetabling
- the Queensland Government's decision to provide funding to support and pay for the delivery of the off-the-job training
- the development of operational policy, procedures and guidelines for staff and stakeholders
- well-targeted marketing campaigns
- the Youth Access Program, which assists students who are at risk of leaving school early to gain the necessary vocational skills to enter into a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship
- supportive teacher and VET-network professional associations
- the provision of financial support for tutorial assistance, note taking and interpretations for school-based apprentices and trainees experiencing difficulties with training
- the provision of financial support for school-based apprentices and trainees who travel more than 100 kilometres to attend off-the-job training
- the establishment of the School-Based Apprenticeship and Traineeship Advisory Committee comprising industry and union representatives, peak employer organisations, the Queensland Studies Authority and the three school sectors. The committee is chaired by the Department of Employment and Training and provides strategic advice and direction to ensure ongoing success.

The registered training organisation responsible for delivering the training of school-based apprentices and trainees is a TAFE institute or private provider.

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships provide valuable skilling opportunities for school students, employers and industry. They offer a major pathway for students to gain skills that assist their transition from school into the workforce.

Queensland the Smart State — Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper commits the Queensland Government to further increasing school-based apprenticeships and traineeships. Targets will be set for the employment of school-based apprentices and trainees. Further incentives will be offered to employers to take up to 1,750 extra school-based apprentices and trainees. Up to \$4,000 will be provided to not-for-profit community organisations for each school-based placement that provides at least 96 days work in two years. Up to \$2,000 will be provided to private employers who provide a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship for the required period to young people living in rural and remote communities.

Resourcing

Numerous national reports and policies, outlined below, recognise the need for an ongoing commitment by all governments to support young people's transitions:

- the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs *Common and Agreed National Goals for Schooling in the Twenty-First Century*, which outline the role that VET plays in a quality education system
- the Report from the Commonwealth Youth Pathways Action Plan Taskforce *Footprints to the Future* (2001), which refers to the need for a national transitions system that 'guarantees all young people access to 12 years of schooling or its vocational equivalent'
- the *New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools* negotiated by the Commonwealth, states and territories, which represents a holistic approach to supporting successful transitions and strengthening pathways for young people
- the Joint Declaration by Ministers of Education, Training, Employment, Youth and Community Services *Stepping Forward – Improving Pathways For All Young People*, which outlines Commonwealth, state and territory Ministers' commitment to young people
- the Australian National Training Authority *Annual National Priorities for 2003*, which reflect bilateral commitment to the role played by VET in Schools.

The current Commonwealth funding for VET in Schools needs to be revised to demonstrate and support a sustained commitment to building a strong framework for VET in Schools.

Resourcing issues have been discussed at various national forums. Most recently, the Australian National Training Authority Ministerial Council has agreed to a national working party to provide advice to itself and the Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs in 2003 on future options for the funding of VET programs that are fully integrated into the resourcing arrangements for post-compulsory education.

With the increasing role that VET in Schools plays in strengthening young people's transitions, Queensland supports the fundamental need for the Commonwealth to reconsider the models for funding VET in Schools.

Issues for consideration include the following:

The need for a commitment to the ongoing funding of VET in Schools

The Commonwealth has not made an ongoing commitment to continue funding for VET in Schools beyond 2004. This lack of secure funding detracts from the capacity of school systems and the ability of schools to plan ahead and employ staff on a long-term basis.

The rationale for the current arrangement of limited-term funding is based on the incorrect assumption that the costs of VET in Schools can be met entirely by shifting funds from the teaching of other school subjects, once a transition period is over. If Commonwealth funds for VET in Schools were to expire, some schools would have to make the unenviable decision to cancel either their VET offerings or other school subjects.

The need for a funding model that reflects growth

The Commonwealth has allocated \$20 million nationally for VET in Schools each year since 1996. These fixed amounts fail to accommodate the rapid rate of increase in the number of school students undertaking VET, which has caused a corresponding increase in costs. The lack of growth funding for VET in Schools contrasts unfavourably with current practice in Commonwealth funding for most other modes of education and vocational education and training, in which growth has been recognised.

There are two key factors that will impact on the growth of VET in Schools in Queensland:

- Demographic patterns indicate that Queensland is experiencing a higher growth rate of young people than any other state or territory. Queensland's population of 15–19-year-olds is projected to increase by 11,132⁶, representing 43% of national population growth for this age group. The number of students in Years 11–12 in Queensland is estimated to increase by 18.3% over the next decade, more than double the estimated national increase of 8.8%.⁷
- The education and training reforms being forged in Queensland will expand the range of options available to young people in schools. VET is an important component of this.

The need for a funding model that reflects the additional costs of VET in Schools

The *Report on Costing of VET in Schools* by Ernst and Young (1999) found that there are ongoing additional costs to schools in providing VET, stemming from on-the-job training, coordination and smaller class sizes than for other subjects. The report estimated these additional costs at \$94.5 million nationally in 1998, of which \$30 million were transitional costs.

Building on this report, the Department of Education, Science and Training in 2002 commissioned a study to investigate the cost of VET in Schools. Queensland is participating in this national study that is further examining the issues raised in the previous report regarding cost drivers.

This study has provided States, Territories and the Commonwealth with the opportunity to discuss funding for VET in Schools. The additional costs of VET in Schools are associated with:

- teacher work placement in industry
- infrastructure and equipment
- transport for students
- accommodation for students who need to live away from home for work placements or training
- liaison with industry and employers

⁶ Source: the Australian Bureau of Statistics, *3222.0 Population Projections, Australia*. Using series II, the Medium Series.

⁷ Derived from enrolment projections by the Department of Education, Science and Training, 2002, unpublished.

- coordination of job placements
- organisation of on-the-job assessments
- monitoring of student welfare
- increased numbers of teachers to allow smaller class sizes.

The impost placed upon the Queensland Government, which is currently making additional financial contributions to support the quality and growth of VET in Schools

To overcome this shortfall, the Queensland Government has provided financial support for vocational education in schools, through:

- regular school funds transferred from the teaching of other subjects
- an additional \$5 million to pay for off-the-job training of 10,500 school-based apprenticeships and traineeships over three years (2001–04)
- an investment of approximately \$9m (1999-2004) for the Youth Access Program.

Additional Commonwealth funds are required if VET for school students is to continue to grow and maintain its quality.

The Commonwealth allocation to Queensland does not reflect the population of young people in Years 11–12, nor the percentage of those engaged in VET in Schools.

Queensland is disadvantaged by the current Commonwealth allocation of funds for VET in Schools.

Of the \$20 million per year that ANTA grants for VET in Schools, Queensland receives \$3.6 million. This represents 18% of the national allocation, which is significantly less than its proportion of either students in Years 11–12 (21%) or students enrolled in VET (28%)⁸. Queensland receives an inequitable amount compared to other jurisdictions. For example, Tasmania receives 4.0 times and Victoria 2.7 times the amount that Queensland receives per VET enrolment (see Attachment A for details).

This limits the support schools can provide for students and places a burden on the Queensland Government and Catholic and Independent schools in excess of that in other states and territories.

Queensland is being penalised financially for endorsing the policy objectives that the Commonwealth is promoting.

This inequity is also evident in funding by the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation, which allocated \$10.934 million of Commonwealth funds to structured workplace learning programs across Australia in 2002. These funds have been critically important to schools providing work placements for students. Queensland received only 16.9% of these funds.

The need to revise the current guidelines

⁸ Sources: enrolments in Years 11–12 from the Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Schools Australia 2001*; enrolments in VET from MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from Schools, *Report July 2002*.

ANTA's *Principles and Guidelines for Improving Outcomes for VET in Schools 2002-04* limit the use of these funds to the expansion of VET in Schools programs rather than the delivery of existing programs, and to developmental projects. The ANTA submission to this Inquiry states that 'it was never intended that the \$20m would be exclusively used for delivery.' These guidelines are restrictive and do not recognise the ongoing additional costs incurred by school systems in providing vocational education. In addition to increasing the quantum of funding for VET in Schools, it is proposed that ANTA should review its guidelines to provide more flexibility for the use of the funds.

Career guidance

A number of recent reports⁹ endorse the need for effective career guidance programs and suggest that the current level of provision is insufficient in school systems. Career guidance helps students clarify their career goals and to select subjects that best fit these goals.

Effective career guidance programs enable students to make informed decisions on whether to study VET at all or a specific VET subject. Career guidance therefore underpins effective investment in VET in Schools.

In recognition of the support that young people need to make effective goals for further education, training and employment, *Queensland the Smart State — Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper* includes a commitment to providing funding to help young people improve participation in learning and achieve qualifications. Included in this commitment are up to 100 additional youth support workers and assistance for schools and TAFE institutes to coordinate VET and enhance career guidance and counselling. A Commonwealth commitment to more effective career guidance would enhance the reforms being implemented in this state.

Recommendation

That ANTA VET in Schools funds

- a) continue beyond 2004, on an ongoing basis
- b) increase substantially, to reflect the growth in numbers of students studying VET and the cost of this service
- c) include a growth factor, to reflect the rapidly rising participation in VET in Schools
- d) be allocated between jurisdictions by a more equitable model that takes into account student enrolment numbers and participation in VET
- e) be available with more flexibility for service delivery
- f) increase to provide strong career guidance support for students undertaking VET in Schools.

⁹ Watts, A. 2002, *The OECD career guidance policy review: A progress report*. Warsaw: OECD; Jones, B. 2002, *Youth transitions*, Enterprise and Career Education Foundation; Gardner, M. 2002, op.cit.

Term of Reference (b): The differences between school-based and other vocational education programs and the resulting qualifications, and the pattern of industry acceptance of school-based programs

Key points:

There is ongoing national discussion regarding the quality of VET in Schools. Queensland is committed to quality VET and is an active participant in ongoing reviews of VET in Schools. In Queensland, VET in Schools is underpinned by the aim to ensure widespread industry acceptance. This is achieved through:

- ***a framework for quality in VET in Schools***
- ***developing stronger relationships between the education and training sectors and industry, marked by a shared commitment to young people***
- ***the continuous evaluation and improvement of VET delivery for students.***

A strong framework for quality in VET in Schools

Under the Queensland *Training and Employment Act 2000*, the Training Recognition Council has the authority to register and regulate training organisations and accredit and regulate courses for the delivery of VET in Queensland. The Training Recognition Council has delegated this function to the Queensland Studies Authority with respect to schools. It is limited to senior secondary schools for programs up to AQF level II. A select number of schools have been registered by the Authority for the delivery of Certificate III in Information Technology. Within the scope of this delegation, the Authority registers and regulates schools to deliver VET, conducts audits against the AQTF, accredits courses where no national Training Package exists and recognises vocational placement schemes.

Recently this delegation has been renewed and extended to include students in Year 10. The quality of this delegation is assured by an annual independent audit of the Authority and the training of auditors against National Standards; by combined audits of schools and other RTOs by both the Department of Employment and Training (DET) and Authority auditors to ensure consistency of audits; and by DET and the Authority sharing responsibility for the professional development of school personnel.

The AQTF was introduced nationally in July 2002 to ensure quality VET both in schools and other providers. The Framework has now been put in place and schools must meet the same standards as other registered training providers.

Significant activity has been undertaken to support the implementation of the AQTF in Queensland:

- Under the standards of the AQTF, assessments are only conducted by persons with specified competencies from the *Training Package for Assessment and Workplace Training* or demonstrated equivalent competencies. Additionally, TAFE and other registered training organisations throughout Queensland have formed strong relationships to ensure assessment is consistent with industry standards and the AQTF.

- A quality manual for schools in the AQTF, mentioned earlier, has been produced. The manual demonstrates the range of evidence that may be used to show compliance with the standards for registered training organisations set out in the AQTF.
- Education Queensland conducted a wide range of professional development activities for school staff delivering VET in Schools. In 2001–02, a total of 1,043 teachers from all school systems attended workshops on implementation of the AQTF conducted by the then Board of Senior Secondary School Studies. A further 579 government school staff attended workshops on competency-based assessment during 2001.
- In early 2002, Education Queensland allocated a one-off payment of up to \$1,000 from Commonwealth grants to each government school registered, or preparing to register, as a training organisation to assist in the implementation of systems that meet national requirements for VET.
- Specialist staff in Education Queensland, the Queensland Catholic Education Commission and the Association of Independent Schools of Queensland provide professional support and advice to school staff delivering VET in their schools.
- Administrative measures have been introduced to ensure quality in traineeship arrangements. For school-based apprentices and trainees, the parties to the training contract, together with the school principal and the registered training organisation, must negotiate and sign an Education, Training and Employment Schedule. This schedule details the integrated plan of VET, schooling and paid work, and makes explicit the responsibilities of each party.

While the quality of vocational education in Queensland schools meets national standards, there is scope for improvement. It is desirable to increase the amount of structured workplace learning, to increase the range of employers offering structured workplace learning and to increase the coordination between schools and employers.

However, it is difficult to improve the quality of vocational education in schools at the same time as expanding the program to serve the growing number of students who request vocational education unless there is a major increase in funding.

The Commonwealth currently provides in Queensland \$3,635,569 through the VET in Schools program and \$1,851,226 through the Enterprise and Career Education Foundation Structured Workplace Learning Coordination funding. These funds support 48,335 students enrolled in VET subjects, which represents \$75 and \$38 per student respectively. This level of funding is not sufficient to support enhanced quality.

Strong relationships between the education and training sectors and industry in which there is a shared commitment to young people

Successful transitions for young people from school to further education, training and employment depend on clear articulation between VET in Schools and other courses and a shared commitment to young people.

The Queensland Government recently commissioned two reviews to investigate how all activities undertaken by school students can be counted towards a Senior Certificate and how relationships between the sectors can be improved to strengthen

opportunities of young people. The reports, by John Pitman¹⁰ and Margaret Gardner¹¹, are complementary and provide important insights into how the Queensland Government can strengthen opportunities for all young people. These reports recommend the following strategies to:

- prevent students being locked into a single pathway
- allow a mix of VET and general education studies
- allow students to change pathways without losing credit for their achievements to date
- support students in their educational and training decisions.

Queensland the Smart State — Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper outlines the Government's commitment to young people who study vocational education in schools to leave with qualifications that are highly regarded. Young people will be helped to choose courses that lead to qualifications and the Government will ensure that there is a strong component of workplace experience in the courses. Schools will deliver VET that satisfies the quality requirements of industry and students will be encouraged to complete their courses. The Queensland Studies Authority will work with the Training Recognition Council to develop a better way to accredit and deliver VET in schools.

Improving opportunities for Queensland's young people is a shared obligation. The Queensland Government will continue to develop relationships between the education and training sectors and industry to provide VET opportunities for young people in schools.

During 2003, Queensland will trial education and training initiatives to strengthen pathways and overcome barriers to seamless transitions for young people, including those in regional areas. The aim of the initiatives is to foster a shared obligation of all stakeholders to ensure that all young Queenslanders, including those at risk, have maximum opportunities to engage in learning.

A number of innovative practices are under way in various communities:

- the development of individual plans to support young people in their decisions for further education, training and employment
- the development and trialling of strategies for local coordination of planning and delivery of education, training and employment programs for young people; this will strengthen relationships between VET in Schools programs and industry
- the expansion of education and training pathways for young people
- collaboration with local industry, employers, group training organisations, public and private VET providers to coordinate planning and delivery of education, training and employment programs for young people
- exploration of public-private partnership opportunities.

¹⁰ Pitman, J and Herschell, P, et al. 2002, *The Senior Certificate: A New Deal*, Education Queensland, Brisbane

¹¹ Gardner, M. 2002, *The Review of Pathways Articulation through the post-compulsory years of school to further education, training and labour market participation*, the Department of Employment and Training and the Department of Education, Brisbane.

The *Central Queensland Training and Employment Strategy*¹² exemplifies partnerships that will be forged with industry during 2003. At its heart, the strategy emphasises the notion that industry and government can optimise outcomes through a shared investment in VET. An aim includes for schools to utilise the increased industry activity that is occurring in the region. The Queensland Government will work with industry to ensure that VET in Schools provides young people with the opportunity to access training opportunities that accompany economic growth in the region. In turn, the increased skills of students in schools will strengthen the supply of future workers to support industry growth in the Central Queensland region.

Workplace experience is an important component of VET. As outlined in *Queensland the Smart State — Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper*, there will be a continued emphasis on ensuring that students participating in VET in Schools undertake workplace experience. The forging of stronger relationships with employers will contribute to securing the opportunity for school students undertaking VET to develop skills in an authentic workplace situation.

'Talking to students who left school last year, I find that all students remember their structured workplace placement experience and have given it extraordinary value. All say it gave them confidence. Most say it helped them in their career. Even those who are unemployed say that they think it was the best thing at school.' (VET coordinator, Holland Park State High School)

While there are successful partnerships with many employers, encouraging more employers to participate in VET in Schools programs remains a challenge. Many employers, particularly those in small businesses, often do not have the time to consider or organise participation in VET in Schools programs. Juxtaposed with this, is the high level of positive feedback provided by employers who have engaged with school students undertaking VET¹³.

The issue of the need to strengthen the marketing and awareness of VET in Schools programs has been raised in a number of national forums. As a component of this inquiry, the Commonwealth should consider marketing strategies to promote VET in Schools.

A marketing strategy could improve the image of VET in schools, and engender a shared commitment to VET in schools. A marketing strategy would need to conduct research to segment the market. It is anticipated that the target groups for an effective marketing strategy would include employers, parents and students.

The Commonwealth is the appropriate body to commission such marketing, for two reasons. First, it has created expectations for VET in Schools, and second, effective marketing campaigns directed at such large target groups rely upon national mass media to communicate their message.

¹² TAFE Queensland 2002, *Queensland Government Training and Employment Strategy for Central Queensland*, Department of Employment and Training, Brisbane.

¹³ Andrews P, Kenman S, and Smith L, 2000, *An Evaluation of School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships*, Department of Employment, Training and Industrial Relations, Brisbane.

Continuous evaluation and improvement of delivery of VET in Schools

Models used to provide practical experience in VET in Schools include structured workplace learning, work sampling, work shadowing, research work experience, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships and simulated workplaces.

The models deployed depend on a variety of factors, including the nature of industry and the willingness of employers to provide workplace experience, transport and timetabling issues.

There is currently debate about the quality of delivery and outcomes of solely institutional-based delivery of vocational education, compared to workplace delivery. This debate is not confined to VET in Schools. The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring VET in Schools arrangements, and VET arrangements, meet the required industry standards.

Towards this goal, Queensland continuously evaluates VET in Schools. The Department of Employment and Training is undertaking a project to develop strategies for enhancing training outcomes in a range of delivery and assessment environments. This project will provide an analysis of delivery and recognition outcomes in three industries, with a focus on barriers and risks to the regulation of training and assessment.

To ensure the learning needs of young people are met in a holistic fashion, the Queensland school systems aims to provide various learning opportunities. A number of systems in schools support quality such as:

- The provision of educational opportunities that support their holistic development through curriculum offerings (other than VET) that develop broad analytical and other skills and knowledge to support employability.
- Systems to support partnerships with industry to deliver school-based programs include:
 - Committees of employers, students, teachers and community representatives that oversee the VET qualifications delivered by the schools and allow employers to shape the program and ensure it is of a satisfactory quality, relevant to industry needs.
 - Incorporated Education/Community partnerships that have industry representatives on their management committees and support from local clusters of schools.
 - Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs) chair the curriculum advisory committee that selects the VET qualification for inclusion in each senior subject that contains VET modules.

Recommendation

That the Commonwealth commission marketing strategies to improve community understanding of VET in Schools. This marketing strategy should include a particular focus on improving the perceptions of employers and parents of the value of VET in Schools programs.

Term of Reference (c):	Vocational education in new and emerging industries
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Key points:

- ***A highly skilled workforce capable of readily adapting to new and emerging industries is essential for Queensland's growth.***
- ***Equipping the future workforce to take advantage of new and emerging economic opportunities is an important role for VET for school students.***

The revolution in information and communications technologies has dramatically impacted on the types of jobs and the nature of work. Labour market studies show that many jobs currently held by Australians did not exist thirty years ago. They also predict that many more new jobs will emerge in the years ahead.

Young people's capacity to participate effectively in emerging industries is contingent on their ability to adapt to change, achieve qualifications and to continue to learn throughout their lives. This means young people must have new skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, collaborative learning and communication. Also, a range of new technical skills is needed for growth and innovation in emerging industries.

The Queensland Government has promoted the development of new and emerging industries in this state, as part of its Smart State policy. Funding strategies for VET will target innovative and emerging industries. Examples of new and emerging industries are information and communication technologies, biotechnology, advanced materials, environmental management, aquaculture, telecommunications, aviation, wine, pharmaceuticals and creative arts.

Partnerships with industry will be an important component of Queensland's aim to ensure that VET in Schools programs include new and emerging industries. This will require an education and training system that is responsive to emerging industries. Training providers will need to deliver new training packages as they emerge.

A wide range of existing competencies to equip young people with the high level of conceptual, analytical and other employability skills necessary to work in new and emerging industries are available. The challenge lies in responding quickly to technical competencies that will be required in the future.

Information technology is an enabling technology for many new and emerging industries. In 2001, a total of 4,409 students obtained certificates in Information Technology. In addition, a new Year 12 subject, Information Technology Systems, was trialled in 16 schools with 114 students. A student's achievement in this subject may be used in the calculations for tertiary entrance purposes. The subject was developed around three Certificate level III qualifications.

Attachment A provides further information on VET qualifications in new and emerging industries. There are also general education subjects that prepare students for new and emerging industries.

Future growth prospects of the manufacturing industry in Queensland provide excellent opportunities for young people to effectively transition from school to work, further training and higher education.

The Gladstone regional Making it Real – Links for Excellence in Engineering initiative seeks to develop itself as a best practice model in this process. It comprises a range of partnerships and strategies to ensure that more young people will *want* to make engineering their career of choice and that they will have the necessary experiences, knowledge, skills and attitudes to make this happen.

Meeting the needs of VET students in this way requires extensive external links with industry and training providers and requires an extensive redirection and reorganisation of school curriculum – by linking what is taught and how it is taught, with workplace learning and enterprise education throughout the curriculum.

A \$4.6 million world-class aviation training centre will be opened by the Premier on 18 December 2002. The Aviation Australia Centre of Excellence will provide career pathways and lifelong learning opportunities for school students and new and existing aviation industry personnel. It has partnered with Wide Bay Group Training to set up Aviation Australia Group Training as a group training organisation. The Queensland Government is funding a school-based apprenticeship program, which will be facilitated by Aviation Australia Group Training and other private providers.

At the initiative of local wine industry leaders, Stanthorpe State High School established a Wine Tourism program, a cross-curricular, multi-tiered program linking students to the industry through Years 11 and 12. The program was recognised in 2001 as a significant statewide innovation and was awarded a \$30,000 Strategic Initiative grant. Students in the Wine Tourism program connect with the industry through work experience, career orientation, structured industry placement in tourism, hospitality, horticulture/viticulture and retail, school-based traineeships and cadetships. The Wine Tourism program represents a strong school–industry partnership.

Career information and advice on new and emerging industries is needed to help young people consider their future. Students and teachers need access to information on the available pathways, through VET and articulation arrangements for university courses. The Queensland Department of Innovation and Information Economy has a careers website www.smartfuture.qld.gov.au offering advice on careers in new and emerging industries, especially in mathematics and technology fields.

Moreover, general education VET provides a broad base for employment in a wide range of new and emerging industries.

Vocational education in new and emerging industries relies upon a partnership between schools and industries, so that schools are aware of emerging needs and have access to structured workplace learning opportunities in emerging industries. The Commonwealth Government could perform a useful role in encouraging employers to participate in such partnerships. It is likely that industry would respond more positively if these messages came to them through their industry associations.

Recommendation

That the Commonwealth, through groups such as the Australian Industry Group and the Australian Chamber of Commerce, encourage new and emerging industries to actively participate in partnerships across schools, training providers and further education and provide up-to-date career and pathways information.

Term of Reference (d): The accessibility and effectiveness of vocational education for Indigenous students

Key points:

- ***VET in Schools provides opportunities to strengthen pathways for Indigenous students***
- ***A range of programs is provided to assist Indigenous students with VET.***
- ***There are considerable challenges in remote locations and, where students do not reach Year 11, is the point where accredited VET usually begins.***
- ***Many Indigenous students leave school before they can access VET.***

Educational outcomes and employment opportunities for young Indigenous people are crucial to the future opportunities and improved quality of life for Indigenous Australians. Sixty per cent of Australia's Indigenous population are under 25 years of age.

The Queensland Government's commitment to improving the standard of living and quality of life for Indigenous people is outlined in *The Ten Year Partnership*, which aims to improve standards of living over the next 10 years. Throughout Queensland regions the Government has been working with Indigenous communities to link employment and training programs and services to the communities' social and economic needs.

Education and training play a central role in ensuring that Indigenous young people have maximum opportunities to reach their potential. VET is an important component of a wide range of educational and training options that can strengthen the pathways of young Indigenous people. The Queensland Government clearly aims to increase the engagement of young Indigenous people in education, training, employment or a combination of these.

Queensland the Smart State — Education and Training Reforms for the Future: A White Paper includes a commitment to improve participation and achievement for Indigenous students. Strategies will include improving standards of education, improving employment and career development, improving literacy, developing school and community partnerships, and enhancing VET options.

Currently, thirty-one per cent of Indigenous students in Queensland leave school between the Years 8 and Years 11. Although the number of Indigenous students in Year 12 in 2001 was relatively low (888 out of a total Year 12 cohort of 25,453 in government schools), a high proportion of those do study VET. Over 70% of those in Year 12 were enrolled in one or more VET qualification. The equivalent figure for all students in government schools was 61%.

Indigenous Students Link with Industry (ISLIP) Project: Mackay, Mackay North, Mirani and Pioneer State High Schools

The project involves Indigenous high school students from Years 9 and 10 attending TAFE or work placement one day a week throughout the year. During this time, the students undertake a Certificate I in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Educational and Vocational Access.

Those due to complete Year 12 in 2002 have a retention rate of 50%. The group to complete Year 11 in 2002 has a retention rate of 83%. This compares favourably to a national Year 12 retention rate of approximately 30% for Indigenous students and approximately 70% for all students.

Four students are currently in school-based apprenticeships and another seven are in paid part-time work as a direct result of their involvement in this project.

Absence rates for students involved in the project are 30% less than for all Indigenous students in the same schools and compare favourably with absence rates for all students in Queensland government schools.

The project was awarded a State Training Award in 2002 (Queensland Indigenous Peoples Training Initiative Award).

Recognising the benefits of VET as a pathway to secure successful transitions from school to employment or further education and training, the Queensland Government is addressing challenges to increase the opportunities and options available for young Indigenous people to enrol in VET.

The proportion of Indigenous secondary students in Queensland who live in localities with fewer than 10,000 people is twice that of other students (39% compared to 19%, in July 2001). Many young Indigenous people living in rural and remote regions may not have access to VET through TAFE or a local high school. Data contained in the national strategy *Partners in a Learning Culture* suggest that 64% of Indigenous Australians in rural areas live more than 50 kilometres from the nearest TAFE institute.

Geographical isolation makes it difficult for Indigenous students to undertake work placements. Workplace experience is a vital component of VET for young people. Workplace experience provides young people with the opportunity to acquire skills in authentic contexts, ensures that training is closely related to industry standards, and improves their chances of success in future employment. In many rural and remote communities, there may be few, if any, local businesses that have the capacity to supervise students on work placements or as part of the school-based apprenticeship and traineeship program.

The Queensland Government and Indigenous people have developed working partnerships to achieve better education, training and employment outcomes for young Indigenous Queenslanders.

Initiatives are already in place to expand the range and quality of VET options available to young Indigenous people. Partnerships between TAFEs, schools, employers and the community, the use of flexible delivery, off-site campuses and educational precincts are emerging as important strategies.

Comalco Ltd has recently pledged to give a job to every Indigenous Western Cape York student who completes Year 10 or higher. The message is: 'If you want to work at Comalco, make sure you stay at school'. This initiative provides an example of the kind of partnerships that are fostered in Queensland. Community commitment to young people is an important component of Queensland's education and training reforms for the future.

One of the more successful initiatives in Queensland is the *Step-by-Step* program, a five-step model helping Indigenous communities to develop and document their education and training needs. This program is assisting young Indigenous people to be active in their communities and participate in decision making on issues that affect them.

Through the Skills Centre Program, the Queensland Government has established partnerships with Indigenous communities throughout Queensland for the delivery of VET. The establishment of these centres enables Indigenous young people to access VET within their own communities, enabling them to stay with their families and friends and to develop programs that best suit their training needs.

Mount Isa Education and Training Precinct

The Training Precinct will amalgamate two state high schools (Kalkadoon and Mount Isa), a TAFE Institute and a residential college (for 60 students) to form Spinifex State College, Mount Isa, in 2003. Indigenous students will make up 25% of the college population.

The majority of students will undertake a vocational course of study, gaining certification up to Certificate III level. The number of subjects based at TAFE will increase from three to eight.

Students will engage in on-the-job training at various work sites within Mount Isa. The Indigenous VET coordinator, community education counsellor and parent liaison officer will provide individual support to students and families.

Currently, students receive career education through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Career Aspiration Pathways Program (AICAPP), tertiary visits through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Tertiary Aspiration Program (AITAP) and various other career information sessions offered to the school community.

The education and training reforms being forged in Queensland will build on these local community partnerships to foster a shared commitment to the needs of all young people.

The *Indigenous Employment Policy for Queensland Government Building and Construction Contracts* demonstrates the possibilities for collaborative relationships to increase participation in VET programs and enhance outcomes for students by linking training with future employment opportunities. Specifically, it stipulates that Queensland government contracts in Deed-of-Grant-in-Trust communities and selected shires must include a clause stipulating that 20% of labour hours are to be employed from the local community. At least half of the local recruits, who include school students, must undertake apprenticeships or traineeships or other structured training

Under the *Breaking the Unemployment Cycle* public sector employment program, Indigenous people have 15% of traineeships and apprenticeships with Queensland government departments, statutory authorities, local councils and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Councils. This initiative was extended to school-based apprentices and trainees in July 2001. Ten per cent of placements in the first year have been for Indigenous school students.

Partnerships with the Commonwealth

The Commonwealth has implemented a range of important programs that support young Indigenous people in VET. The Queensland Government will continue to foster strong relationships with the Commonwealth to improve co-ordination, reduce duplication and close any existing gaps in current programs and services, and this includes those that are provided for young Indigenous people.

Other equity groups

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring that all young people have optimal opportunities to participate in education, training and employment. VET in Schools is a critical component of a strong education and training system in which young people have a range of options that address their individual needs. VET in Schools is an avenue to employment and further studies, especially for those who face barriers to educational achievement.

Key points

- ***Some young people face single or multiple barriers preventing their successful transition from initial education to further education, training and employment.***
- ***VET embodies a range of options that strengthen transitions for students who are disadvantaged.***

All young people deserve quality education, training and employment opportunities. However, some among this group experience specific disadvantage, or multiple disadvantages. As a part of its commitment to social justice, the Queensland Government has used various strategies for young people who experience disadvantage.

Young people with a disability

In Queensland, VET in Schools has emerged as an important option for many young people with a disability, enabling these students to develop a range of vocational pathways within and post school.

Most students with disabilities attend secondary schools supported by special education programs and services where they have opportunities to access VET in Schools. VET offerings for students with severe intellectual impairment are also available through some special schools. Cooperative partnerships between schools, TAFE and other providers also exist to meet the training needs of students.

Students with disability possess a diverse range of skills, abilities and specialised learning needs. Some students, for example, require a flexible approach to the way in which training is delivered. Certificate 1 in Work Readiness and Certificate 1 in Work Education were developed to enable flexible and individualised delivery of VET in schools for these students. Queensland supports the recognition of student achievement and learning outcomes including VET outcomes through the Queensland Studies Authority trial of the Certificate of Post-Compulsory School Education.

A trial project in 2001, identifying the individual transition goals of senior students with a disability in Queensland government schools, found that one in five of the sample planned to study accredited VET at school and one in eight planned to do a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship¹⁴.

There has been high growth in the numbers of students with special needs wanting to participate in VET in Schools. In addition to the secondary schools that are Registered Training Organisations, 19 special schools in Queensland are registered training organisations. Aspley Special School also has an ANTA-funded Skills Centre for Hospitality. In 2001, about 150 students from special schools undertook VET courses in hospitality and horticulture.

In 2001, 338 students with a disability participated in the school-based apprenticeship or traineeship program, a 45% increase on the previous year. Education Queensland supports school-based apprenticeships and traineeships through literacy and numeracy support.

The Commonwealth Disabled Apprenticeship Wage Scheme (DAWS) provides payments (through the Department of Education, Science and Training) to employers who employ eligible apprentices with disabilities who would normally face difficulty obtaining an approved apprenticeship, or currently employ an apprentice who has become disabled during his/her apprenticeship and subsequently needs assistance. However, school-based apprentices and trainees are not eligible for assistance through this scheme. The Queensland Government considers the current exclusion of school-based apprentices and trainees from DAWS to be inconsistent and inequitable.

The Commonwealth VET in Schools funding model does not allow for the costs associated in interviewing, allocating students to appropriate courses and supporting students in training. The workplace accommodations that need to be considered for a student with a disability are not met through the current model.

There are also high costs associated with releasing special education teachers to industry to ensure industry currency. These releases are not as easily absorbed as in regular state high schools due to different allocation models for staffing.

In many cases, young people with a disability do not require costly assistance - minor adjustments accommodate their needs. Other students, however, require substantial services to facilitate their successful participation in VET and industry placement. Specifically, young people with a disability may require support such as workplace mentoring, tutorial support, length of course accommodations, modification of learning materials, adaptive equipment, transition planning support, transport to the industry and training placement and on the job support.

¹⁴ Education Queensland, *Post School Options Data Collection Trial*, 2001, unpublished.

The models for funding VET in Schools need to take account of the additional costs that are incurred to assist students with a disability.

A student with autism at Tin Can Bay P-10 State School embarked on the Certificate II in Information Technology with the Open Learning Institute. The practical orientation of the course is well suited to his special needs, and he is rapidly achieving a record of successful completion.

Recommendations

That Commonwealth funding for VET in Schools be sufficient to allow provision for specialist support to students with a disability who are studying VET subjects.

That the Disabled Apprenticeship Wage Scheme (DAWS) be more broadly available to support school-based apprentices and trainees.

Rural and remote locations

Queensland has a geographically dispersed population, with 56% of Queenslanders living outside the capital city. VET programs play a pivotal role in aiding young people who live in rural and remote areas in Queensland to progress from school to further education, training or employment.

Queensland also has many schools which are hundred of kilometres from the nearest TAFE institute or private training provider. Many of these schools have difficulty accessing a broad range of employers to be involved in VET in Schools programs.

A school's location can severely restrict its students' access to training and to workplace learning. It also adds major costs to their vocational education, such as for transport to and accommodation in a regional centre for a block of training. For example, it costs \$1,500 per student for students at Thursday Island State High School to fly to Cairns for one week of structured workplace experience in industries that are not available locally.

These disadvantages are compounded by the generally smaller size of remote schools, which may limit the range of curriculum offerings that they can provide to students.

In many rural areas, schools may be the only accessible VET provider. While this places some pressures on the school, it also provides an opportunity for the school to play a key role in enhancing community partnerships and assisting the reduction of population drift from the area. The role schools play in remote sites emphasises both their importance and the need to establish networks with the community, employers and other education and training sectors.

Despite these barriers, there are many examples of small communities successfully delivering VET to young people. For example, a high school in the Darling Downs with 131 senior students offers ten different VET qualifications, and another school in the Cape and Gulf district with only 61 senior students offers nine qualifications in 2002.

It is essential that students are not disadvantaged in the VET in Schools options available to them simply because of where they live.

Proposed Atherton High School – TAFE precinct

The proposed relocation of the Tropical North Queensland TAFE - Atherton Campus to the high school is a positive step toward realising continuity of education in Atherton at a single site. This initiative will provide choices and opportunities for both secondary school students and young people who have completed school. The partnership between Atherton State High School and Tropical North Queensland TAFE will strengthen secondary-TAFE links and build cooperation between Education Queensland and training providers. The co-location will:

- *provide an integrated education and training precinct for school students and community members*
- *support school students to “mix and match” pathways including vocational education to encourage them to remain at school or in training*
- *improve access to vocational training courses*
- *offer students still enrolled at school a post-school environment*
- *offer enhanced learning opportunities through course, staff and resource sharing which will translate into a richer, fuller learning environment and a valuable educational precinct for the people of Atherton Shire*
- *allow the integration of training and education in real-world situations without students moving off campus*
- *promote the educational concept of life-long learning with adult and teenage students sharing courses, facilities and training providers*
- *increase the exchange of teaching ideas and strategies between the staff of both educational sectors, which will provide a richer educational experience for TAFE and high school students.*

Flexible delivery is integral to the Queensland education and training system. Information technology based programs are a facet of this, and are particularly relevant to young people in remote and isolated sites. Schools in rural and remote communities in western and far northern Queensland, however, are unable to fully participate in information technology based programs due to a lack of access to adequate bandwidth. It can take several minutes for these schools to download a document, rather than the several seconds required in urban schools. This is especially problematic for multimedia files. Increased bandwidth would:

- support broadband access to the Internet by students
- give teachers realistic response rates from learning resources provided by Education Queensland
- support administrative functions of school systems.

The Queensland Government will continue to foster the flexible delivery of programs. This includes distance, on-line and virtual delivery. Enhanced bandwidth services in Queensland will enable the expansion of high quality flexible delivery. The Queensland Government will collaborate with the Commonwealth to improve the current infrastructure for bandwidth in Queensland.

Funding models need to take account of the additional costs of flexible delivery. The Queensland Government seeks, and will continue to seek, the assistance of the Commonwealth in the provision of high bandwidth telecommunication services at affordable prices to schools. This issue has been raised at the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs.

Students at Risk

There are strong indications currently that some young people are not faring well in education and training systems or in the Australian workforce. The Queensland Government has undertaken a stocktake of its young people, and estimates that some 10,000 young Queenslanders are currently not in any form of schooling, training or employment — they are disconnected, or seriously at risk of being disconnected, from society.

Stepping Forward: Improving Pathways For All Young People challenges all Australians to meet the needs of young people, particularly those at risk. This declaration has been signed by twenty-six of Australia's state and federal Ministers for education, employment, training, youth affairs and community services. It demonstrates the shared commitment to making a real and lasting difference to the lives of all young people by increasing their social education and employment outcomes.

In Queensland there has been a concerted effort to support young people in their transitions, particularly those at risk. *Queensland the Smart State — Education and Training Reforms: A White Paper* outlines various education and training reforms that will strengthen Queensland's response to the transitional needs of young people at risk, particularly reforms to strengthen their successful engagement in learning or employment activities.

The reforms are inspired by international and national research stating that strategies to facilitate effective transitions from initial education to work are not based on single solutions or models, but on coherent policies that draw on key success ingredients.

Innovation in VET in Schools to meet the needs of students at risk

There is a good deal of innovation occurring throughout Queensland, including exciting examples of government agencies, employers, learning sectors and the community collaborating to provide opportunities for young people. In Queensland, the Departments of Education and Employment and Training are working together more closely than ever before to build strong pathways for young people.

Innovation is required to find ways to engage young people. We know that young people have different learning styles. They do not see the world through the same lens that older generations use. Education and training needs to be relevant and engaging. Programs and pathways need to be negotiated with young people, and focused on their individual needs.

Successful strategies must include:

- well-organised links between education and work or further study
- tight-knit assistance for those at risk of leaving school early
- additional support and alternative education programs for those disengaged from learning

- employment programs specifically designed to assist young people at risk of disengaging from learning
- good information and direction, and a key person who guides each student.

For the 2002 school year, \$2.5 million was allocated to the Youth Access program to support 1,101 students at risk of not completing secondary schooling. The Youth Access program aims to provide pathways involving elements of general school-based education and formal vocational training, support and guidance, which can include on-the-job training. With early intervention, it is anticipated that young people will develop the basic skills necessary to transition into employment or a school-based apprenticeship or traineeship.

Glendyne Farm and Youth Training Centre

TAFE Queensland has a cooperative arrangement with Glendyne Farm and Youth Training Centre to deliver personal development, literacy and numeracy and vocational programs to youth at risk. Glendyne Farm and Youth Training Centre is an alternative training program for youth who are at risk. The centre offers practical training in an effort to build self-esteem and provide skills for employment in the world of work or for continuing further education.

This program targets youth at risk between the ages of 12 and 16 (referrals from suspension or exclusion from schools, Department of Families, Juvenile Justice System, various counselling agencies, Department of Health).

Attachment A: Statistics

Table A1: VET certificates issued, all Queensland schools, 2001

Certificate Level	Certificates Issued	Students
Certificate I	9,801	7,506
Certificate II	7,485	5,895
Certificate III	176	173
Certificate IV	2	1
TOTAL	17,464	9,995

Source: Queensland Studies Authority.

Note: The total number of students is not the same as the total of each row, as some students attained more than one certificate.

Table A2: VET in Schools enrolment by industry, Queensland, Government and Catholic schools, 2001

ANTA Industry Group	VET enrolments, Years 11–12 %
General Education & Training	21
Business & Clerical	18
Tourism & Hospitality	15
Computing	14
Engineering & Mining	8
Textile, Clothing, Footwear & Furnishings	7
Building & Construction	4
Arts, Entertainment, Sport & Recreation	4
Community services, Health & Education	2
Primary Industry	2
Communications	2
Sales & Personal Services	1
Process Manufacturing	1
Science, Technical & Other	*
Automotive	*
Finance, Banking & Insurance	*
Food Processing	*
Transport & Storage	*
Utilities	*
Not Classified	2
TOTAL	100

Source: MCEETYA Transition from Schools Taskforce.

Notes:

Independent schools are not available from this source.

* less than 1%.

Table A3: VET qualifications awarded, Year 12, all Queensland schools, 2001

Course	Cert I	Cert 11	Cert III	Cert IV	Total
Information Technology *	2,470	1,935	3	1	4,409
Communication for the Workplace	1,245	2,993			4,238
Vocational Mathematics	1,571				1,571
Trade & Business Mathematics	629	667			1,296
Hospitality (Operations)	879	170			1,049
Engineering *	735				735
Business (Office Administration)		573	15		588
Construction	522				522
Hospitality (Kitchen Operations)	430				430
Recreation Practices	302				302
Furnishing *	289				289
Work Education	269				269
Agriculture	177	46			223
Tourism (Attractions & Theme Parks)		223			223
Systematic Theology		169			169
Tourism (Sales/Office Operations)		143			143
Retail Operations	1	113	3		117
Vocational Communication	117				117
Information Technology (Software Applications) *			88		88
Small Business Management Fundamentals		58			58
Horticulture	39	15			54
Information Technology (General) *			42		42
Workplace Education	10	27			37
Workplace Practices		34			34
Engineering (Production) *		33			33
Music Industry Skills *		32			32
Marine Industry *	31				31
Process Manufacturing *	27				27
Small Business Management		26			26
Foundation of Child Care & Education		23			23
Community Services (Children's Services)		19			19
Workplace First Aid (Senior First Aid)		19			19
Recreation	18				18
Communication	17				17
Senior First Aid		14			14
General Construction		12			12
Arts (Interactive Multimedia — Traineeship) *		11			11
Automotive	11				11
Hospitality (Food & Beverage)			10		10
Early Childhood Studies		9			9
Japanese Language & Culture (Situational Skills)		9			9
Outdoor Recreation		9			9
Animal Studies		8			8
Training Program in General Construction (Pre-Employment)	8				8
Agriculture (Beef Cattle Production)		6			6
Horticulture (Parks & Gardens)		6			6
Printing & Graphic Arts (General)		6			6
Retail Cosmetic Assistant		6			6
Sport & Recreation (Traineeship)		6			6

Course	Cert I	Cert 11	Cert III	Cert IV	Total
Furnishing (Furniture Production Worker)		5			5
Maritime Services Traineeship		5			5
Salon Practices		5			5
Arts		4			4
Community Services (Aged Care Work)			4		4
Racing (Thoroughbred) - Stablehand Level 1		4			4
Work Readiness	4				4
Workplace First Aid (Child Emergency Care)		4			4
Automotive Servicing (Traineeship)		3			3
Children's Services (Traineeship)			3		3
Clothing Production	3				3
Course in Job-Search Skills	3				3
Timber Fabricated Products (Traineeship)		3			3
Automotive (Sales – Replacement Parts and Accessories)		2			2
Community Services (Disability Work)			2		2
Engineering (Prevocational)	2				2
Forest Industries (Merchandising Traineeship)		2			2
Horticulture (Production)		2			2
Hospitality (Commercial Cookery)		2			2
Residential Aged Care (Traineeship)			2		2
Agriculture (Dairy)		1			1
Arts Administration		1			1
Australian Land Conservation & Restoration – Traineeship		1			1
Automotive (Mechanical – Diesel Fuel Specialist)			1		1
Automotive (Mechanical – Radiator Repairs)		1			1
Automotive (Sales - Service Station Operations)		1			1
Automotive (Vehicle Body – Paint/Panel Preparation)		1			1
Automotive Industrial Paint Services (Traineeship)		1			1
Automotive Replacement Parts (Traineeship)		1			1
Education (Traineeship)			1		1
Entertainment (Sound Operations)			1		1
Health Care Support Services		1			1
Horticulture (Arboriculture)			1		1
Horticulture (Nursery)		1			1
Horticulture (Turf Management)		1			1
Information Technology (Network Management) *				1	1
Marine (Services) *		1			1
Real Estate Agency Support		1			1
Retail (Community Pharmacy – Operations)		1			1
Service Station Operations		1			1
Small Business (Small Business Traineeship)		1			1
TOTAL	9,809	7,477	176	2	17,464

Source: Queensland Studies Authority

Note:

* refers to new and emerging industries. New and emerging industries have been identified in consultation with the Department of State Development.

Table A4: Distribution of ANTA VET in Schools funds by State and Territory, 2002

Jurisdiction	ANTA VET in Schools funds, 2002 \$	ANTA VET in Schools funds per VET enrolment in Years 11–12 \$	Funds as a proportion of the Queensland allocation per capita
Northern Territory	534,432	357	4.75
Tasmania	771,608	303	4.02
Victoria	4,557,583	203	2.70
Western Australia	2,162,443	167	2.22
Australian Capital Territory	647,876	163	2.16
Australia	20,000,000	118	1.57
New South Wales	5,959,101	107	1.43
South Australia	1,731,389	77	1.02
Queensland	3,635,569	75	1.00

Source: ANTA funds from ANTA MINCO papers; VET enrolments from MCEETYA Taskforce on Transition from School, *Report July 2002*.

Note: ANTA funds do not include indexation.

Attachment B: Acronyms and Glossary

ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
OP	Overall Position
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training

Terms used in the submission:

Employability skills are defined as 'skills required not only to gain employment but also to progress within an enterprise so as to achieve one's potential and contribute successfully to enterprise strategic directions' (Business Council of Australia and Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *The Employability Skills for the Future*, 2002).

Vocational Education and Training (VET) refers to accredited industry-specific training based on qualifications within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and competencies endorsed with the National Training Framework (NTF). In Queensland, students have the opportunity to access a nationally accredited AQF qualification through three pathways.

Vocational education is the term used to describe general learning that addresses the broad understandings of the world of work and develops in young people a range of knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes relevant to a wide range of work environments. Schools often teach many subjects with vocational goals that are not counted as VET. These subjects develop general employability skills or are foundations for university studies, e.g., Accounting or Graphics.

VET in Schools has a specific definition. It refers to programs that are undertaken by school students as part of their senior secondary studies and have the potential to lead to the award of a nationally-recognised VET qualification within the AQF. The training that students receive reflects specific industry competency standards and is delivered by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs).