

National Conference
for
TAFE Directors Australia

2011

Balancing the Big Issues

Occasional Paper Three 2011

Tenth in the series



TAFE DIRECTORS AUSTRALIA 2011 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

VET leaders walk a tightrope — VET leadership is an act of balance, requiring great skill and a deft touch

Sheraton on the Park, Sydney: 4–6 September



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and Workplace Relations**



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The TAFE Directors Australia 2011 National Conference, *Balancing the Big Issues* was held on 4–6 September at the Sheraton on the Park, Sydney.

The Conference was the most ambitious to date: seventy-three presenters including eleven international speakers. There were three hundred and fifty-three delegates, and thirty-five emerging leaders who participated in a professional development program over the three days of the Conference.

The title of this year's conference, *Balancing the Big Issues: TAFE 2011* challenged presenters and delegates to review the critical issues facing vocational education and training (VET) leadership in an uncertain environment: industry skills trends in a low carbon economy, a connected tertiary sector, internationalisation, the 'patchwork economy', contestable markets and the new regulatory framework.

Conference delegates heard our political leaders, the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations, Senator the Hon. Christopher Evans MP; the Federal Shadow Minister for Employment Participation, the Hon. Sussan Ley MP;

and the New South Wales Minister for Education, the Hon. Adrian Piccoli MP, outline how they thought the VET sector should be positioning itself to respond to the big issues.

Delegates were informed and, at times, provoked by presentations by experts from the United States of America (USA) on the implementation of the 'green' skills agenda, a topical issue for Australia and by colleagues from the United Kingdom, USA and Canada who provided important insights into the opportunities and challenges in the provision of higher education in further education.

The Conference Dinner, a highlight of TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) Conferences, was held this year at one of the world's iconic venues, the Sydney Opera House. This year delegates and guests were both entertained and informed by presentations from Thérèse Rein, Founder and Managing Director of Ingeus Limited and His Excellency Pedro Pablo Diaz, Ambassador of Chile.

Occasional Paper Three 2011 brings together papers and summaries of keynote addresses and panel presentations. We acknowledge with gratitude the valuable input of each of our presenters and facilitators.

We very much appreciate the generous support of our sponsors which, as always, is integral to the success of our conferences.

Next year our conference will be held in Perth and we look forward to your participation in what we are confident will be another stimulating event.

Pam Caven
Director Policy and Stakeholder Engagement
National Secretariat, TAFE Directors Australia
Conference Organiser

Conference ratings

96% rated the Conference as 'good', 'very good' or 'excellent'

95% agreed that 'The discussions contributed to my understanding of the issues'

90% agreed that 'The Conference delivered on its aims'

Some common messages

Excellent use of specific topics, panel presentations, and focused table discussions – much better than long speeches

... networking with TAFE sector leaders and emerging leaders; making new contacts and cementing current ones

The balance of national and international viewpoints

Insights into broader economic and social issues

Ministerial addresses – policy level insights – the big picture view!

The message of flexibility and the need to compete in a global market

TAFE in the tertiary sphere – higher education/degree discussions

Offshore TAFE – sound advice from experienced panellists

Dear Colleagues

On behalf of the Board of TAFE Directors Australia, we are delighted to extend a warm welcome to the 2011 TAFE Directors Australia Conference hosted this year by TAFE NSW.

The TDA National Conference 2011, Balancing the Big Issues: TAFE 2011 will review the critical issues facing vocational education and training (VET) leadership in an uncertain environment: industry skills trends in a low carbon economy, a connected tertiary sector, internationalisation, the 'patchwork economy', contestable markets and the new regulatory framework.

At last year's conference, Dame Jackie Fisher (Newcastle College, UK) challenged delegates to set ambitious aims and deliver on promises in the face of volatile circumstances. VET leaders must manage complex and competing demands, and changing industry and government priorities. VET leadership is an act of balance, requiring great skills and a deft touch.

TDA is the national peak body representing the interests of Australia's 59 publicly funded TAFE institutes. Every year, our members provide education and training to over 1.7 million Australians seeking new skills and training. The Alumni Gallery at the Conference is testimony to the great contribution TAFE graduates make to the Australian economy and society.



STEPHEN CONWAY Chair, TAFE Directors Australia

This year we welcome a number of international delegates. We are delighted that we have on the conference program colleagues from government and community organisations in the USA with expertise in the implementation of the 'green' skills agenda. Similarly, we welcome colleagues from the USA, UK and Canada who are able to provide invaluable insights into the lessons learned in their countries from the continuing expansion of higher education in further education. TAFE CEOs have nominated emerging leaders — our TAFE leaders of the future. You will get to know them during the course of the Conference.

Our thanks go to the Conference's official supporters: TAFE NSW - New South Wales Department of Education and Communities, and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR); CISCO as gold sponsor, and Fuji Xerox as a silver sponsor. We also thank our other TAFE sector commercial product and service bronze sponsors and exhibitors for supporting the 2011 Conference.

We look forward to your contribution to a stimulating, lively consideration of the big issues challenging VET leaders.



MARTIN RIORDAN CEO, TAFE Directors Australia

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Pre Conference session Sunday 4 September 2011

Emerging Leaders Forum

**Emerging Leaders Professional
Development Program**



TDA Chair, Stephen Conway



Minister for Tertiary Education, Jobs, Skills, and Workplace Relations, Senator the Hon Chris Evans, MP



TDA CEO, Martin Riordan, Shadow Minister for Employment Participation, the Hon Sussan Ley MP, and TDA Chair, Stephen Conway



Campus President, Broward College, Florida, Dr Barbara Bryan



Chair Mongolian TVET Agency, Mr Byambasuren, Minister Evans, and Chief Executive of Holmesglen Institute, Bruce Mackenzie



Chilean Ambassador, HE Pedro Pablo Diaz

Conference speakers and panellists

Monday 5 September 2011

Welcome by Stephen Conway, Chair, TAFE Directors Australia and Managing Director, TAFE SA — Adelaide South

Welcome to Country by Glenn Doyle

Welcome address by the Hon. Adrian Piccoli MP, NSW Minister for Education

MC: Ellen Fanning

TDA Gala Dinner Speakers: Thérèse Rein, Founder and Managing Director of Ingeus Limited and His Excellency Pedro Pablo Diaz, Ambassador of Chile

ROBIN SHREEVE

BOB PATON

DAVID WILLIAMS

SUE SLAVIN

THE HON. JOHN DAWKINS AO

KEITH SPENCE

MIRANDA TAYLOR

JOHN COYLE

DR PHILLIP TONER

ANDREW THOMSON

THE HON. SUSSAN LEY, MP

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DR V CELESTE CARTER

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WAYNE COLLYER

NICHOLAS HUNT

MARK HOWLAND

MARIE HILL

RICHARD CLIFFORD

DR DIANNE ORR

MARTIN RIORDAN

PAT FORWARD

Panel session: A balancing act...

MC: Ellen Fanning

**This session introduces
some of the big issues
faced by the Vocational
Education and Training
(VET) sector in the
next three years.**

- ROBIN SHREEVE
.....
- BOB PATON
.....
- DAVID WILLIAMS
.....
- SUE SLAVIN
.....

Strategic directions for VET: radical reform or business as usual?



Robin Shreeve

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Introduction

On the basis of their experience over the past two decades, many in the VET sector would argue that 'radical reform' **is** 'business as usual'. VET professionals have witnessed the end of TAFE's monopoly on public funding, the formation of sixty large institutes from hundreds of smaller colleges, the rise of competency-based training as well as government's insistence on industry leadership and greater efficiency and diversity in providers.

With an ageing workforce, reform fatigue is itself an issue for the sector.

I will argue that the Australian economy's need for more skills and the imperative to shift to a more sustainable economy provide great opportunities for the Tertiary Education Sector in general. However, for the VET sector, there are also significant threats. Whilst VET remains the principal supplier of post

compulsory foundation and trade skills, many intermediate, technical and managerial occupations previously the domain of VET are now being increasingly serviced by the university sector. The Bradley Review reforms mean that universities are well positioned to expand to meet this demand. Without reform, VET, in this growing but changing market, risks stagnation.

The need for more skills in the Australian economy

The scenario development and modelling undertaken by Skills Australia indicates that under current economic conditions we will have major skills shortfalls unless we increase supply (Skills Australia 2010, pp. 13–14). This is a significant national risk. Skills shortages produce wage inflation that leads to general inflation that is normally corrected by higher interest rates that limit economic growth. In current conditions, based on an 'Open Doors' high growth scenario, Skills Australia estimates that Australia will need an additional 2.3 million people qualified to Certificate III Level and above by 2015.¹ This does not mean there will simply be an additional 2.3 million new jobs in the workforce. Rather, it consists of new entrants with higher qualifications replacing those retiring as well as existing workers upgrading their skills (skills deepening) along with around 800,000 new jobs that require advanced qualifications.²

To satisfy this demand, Skills Australia has recommended that we increase tertiary education enrolments across VET and Higher Education (HE) by around 3% per annum (cumulating) over the next fifteen years (Skills Australia 2010, p. 9). A significant number of jobs will also require their skills to be deepened, including the 'green' skills necessary to move to a less carbon emitting

economy. We also believe that we need to increase workforce participation from the current 65% to 69% by 2025 (Skills Australia 2010, p. 9) – partially to offset the impact of ageing populations – what Bernard Salt has called the ‘baby bust’ that mirrors the post war ‘baby boom’.

The risks for TAFE institutes

Now, all this growth sounds good for TAFE institutes. It could be but there are significant risks that require urgent attention.

Tom Karmel has quantified what many long suspected – a VET qualification will not get you the job it got you twenty years ago. Degrees are increasingly the currency for many future jobs – not TAFE certificates and diplomas (Karmel 2011, p. 2).

More worryingly for VET, a recent study based on data from the Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth (LSAY) has concluded that in terms of pathways for school leavers,

...for males two paths stand out:
Year 12 followed by university study; and
Year 12 followed by an apprenticeship.
Apprenticeships and traineeships score well for ‘satisfaction with life’. For females, the best path is Year 12 followed by university study, and this is true for those with a relatively low academic orientation as well as those with a high academic orientation (Karmel & Liu 2011, p. 13).

One wonders what this means for all those other VET certificates that are not delivered to young male apprentices. Qualitative research by Barbara Pocock on low paid workers indicates that a VET credential helps older workers get and keep a job. These are positive attributes but do not necessarily lead to career progression (Pocock et al. 2011).

This questioning of the value of a VET qualification is taking place in an environment where the main competition – universities – has the uncapped funding and institutional autonomy to take on TAFE institutes.

So what can be done?

TAFE institutes need to build on the significant reforms of the past twenty years. They have to be seen to be open to change and not be defensive about what has yet to be done.

They will need a demand-led funding system to be able to compete with the universities, especially in higher level qualifications. This will require cultural acceptance of ‘income contingent loans’ to enable individuals as well as government and enterprises to help fund the expansion of the system. It will also mean that VET will have to become less opaque about performance at the individual provider level. If you give purchasing power to students rather than bureaucracies, all the evidence suggests students need good information to make informed choices – otherwise competition will be driven mainly by price. This could drive down quality – another issue in the system.

TAFE institutes need the autonomy to offer appropriate qualifications that match workforce needs and their own institutional capabilities. This will not be easy. They will have to accommodate the need of their owners – the State and Territory Governments – and come to a lasting settlement with their staff and staff unions to progress the new agenda.

Part of this settlement might include recognition of the need to invest more in the development of their existing staff. But this internal development should not preclude the recruitment of new staff

with new skills and attitudes to ensure they have the necessary capacity and capability. I suspect recruitment is a major issue for TAFE institutes. There is a suspicion that some institutes rely too much on converting existing casual staff into full time teachers. Many ex casuals become excellent full time teachers. Institutes who recruit only from this pool, however, risk missing out on highly skilled industry specialists and industry researchers with very up-to-date experience who have not got the time to teach part time

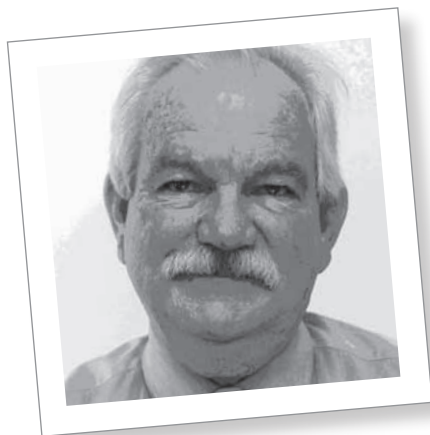
One thing is certain – TAFE has plenty of capability to draw on. How it does this, and how it creatively shapes its own future, are its main challenges.

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- Skills Australia 2010, *Australian workforce futures: a national workforce development strategy*, Canberra, ACT.

Notes

- ¹ Updated estimates based on Access Economics modelling for *Australian workforce futures*.
- ² Updated estimates based on Access Economics modelling for *Australian workforce futures*.



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Industry leadership in VET

Introduction

Industry leadership has been an underpinning tenet of our VET system for the last twenty years or more. This has been forever challenged and continues to be reinforced from time to time by both peak industry bodies as well as governments. However, recent changes are once more threatening the primacy of industry in determining the purpose and outcomes of Australia's VET system.

I am using the premise of the VET system being there to provide the skilled workers needed by industry to support our economy. The VET system also covers a range of other functions, and particularly those relating to equity in our society. And, yes, we continue to see moves to grow the VET system to accommodate aspects of education that could be better served by others.

VET as a service industry

The challenge for VET is whether it is a service industry or whether it is shaped for other things. The implication that VET institutions are service providers is anathema to some yet if the fundamental premise of support for industry is accepted, then service is what it's all about. The challenge faced by many VET providers is to maintain and continue to grow their establishment. Growth opportunities may not easily be found and, in fact, may only present through activities that go beyond core business.

If Australia's current and future workforce is to be sufficiently productive to ensure success and maintain our quality of life, the continuing need for growth and development of workers is absolutely essential. Although each enterprise carries a high responsibility for that growth, there is an expectation that they will be supported by government-funded services, such as education and training expertise, when needed.

VET outcomes – is it good for you and good for me?

We all know of the 'Yes Minister' hospital where the smooth functioning was really upset by having to deal with patients. VET providers have made many positive changes and improvements to how learners are treated and how their needs are met, yet I continue to hear stories of poor service provision by VET providers, both public and private institutions.

What needs to occur for the establishment of a culture and practice where a learner is provided with the best VET services possible for the particular learner's needs?

If my GP treated me in the same way as some of these stories I continue to hear, I'd probably not be around to write this.

VET outcomes – what’s best for industry?

The move to an industry-led VET system brought severe reaction when it was introduced. That reaction continues to roll through the VET system, at the provider level as well as in other bureaucracies. Despite the revolution of qualifications (whether module-based or Training Packages) with a very high degree of inherent variability, many options are never realised. It has been said that ‘industry’ often doesn’t know what it wants (where ‘industry’ = enterprise) and so a fairly standard training program is offered, mostly at the convenience of the provider. Although VET is a key part of our existence, most enterprises are more focused on business performance, their bottom line and other more pressing matters. If ‘industry’ isn’t offered choices, and extensive ones at that, then ‘industry’ won’t know what they want because they don’t know what’s available.

With trainee and apprenticeship programs, where the learner is also an employee, how much effort is made to engage an employer in some meaningful dialogue about how progress will be measured and determined in terms of workplace performance?

VET outcomes – who should determine the specifications?

Industry leadership is determining the outcomes on the basis of our VET system through Training Packages. It is acknowledged that accredited courses also sit in that space, but these are a minor part of the framework. The abuse of Training Package qualifications to meet different needs – ones that were not included in the fundamental purpose of those qualifications, continues to be a major concern of industry. Examples include the provision of a qualification designed to meet the needs of

a trade apprenticeship to full time learners (both domestic and international) and, in fact, granting qualifications to those learners. We are clearly ‘missing the boat’ on this. How can one of these learners ever be deemed competent when their only work experience may be some form of casual or occasional workplace engagement?



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Introduction

Last year at the TDA Conference, I addressed a panel session themed 'Competitive VET, a case study'. Twelve months on and the significant challenges of a reforming system are continuing with accelerating pace and new challenges on the horizon. Robin Shreeve has outlined the key challenges in the tertiary space from university providers and I concur with his views.

In the contestable funding market we are seeing significant national changes in purchasing arrangements through the National Workforce Development Fund, transformational change occurring in South Australia through the 'Skills for All' policy implementation, and in Queensland, through the 'Strategic Priorities' initiative underpinned by the Allen Consulting Report 'Queensland Post-Secondary Education and Training Review' and the associated government response.

In Victoria we are nine months into a fully contestable VET market under the Victorian Training Guarantee where policy levers determine eligibility for government supported places. We are noting significant growth in government funded training and shifting market share.

Uncapped higher education places

Within twelve months of an entitlement model being implemented in VET in Victoria, there will be an entitlement model in higher education. Many Victorian TAFE CEOs predict that the full implementation of uncapped higher education places will place the ongoing viability of TAFE diplomas and advanced diplomas at significant risk. As Robin Shreeve has highlighted today, the research of Tom Karmel, (NCVER) in relation to 'Skills Deepening' options¹ supports the views of many Victorian TAFE CEOs. They are of the view that 2012 will bring, potentially, very significant declines in AQF 5 and 6 level TAFE enrolments in favour of higher education enrolments in associate degrees, diplomas and bachelor offerings. This is, in part, due to the public perception of VET versus higher education qualifications, liberal access to government funds through Commonwealth Supported Places, universities' self-accrediting status and, in Victoria's case, policy levers that deny access to government VET funding if higher qualifications are held. The challenge will be to have competitively priced and attractive TAFE options for students through courses that are clearly distinguishable from higher education qualifications or articulate into higher education.

Contestable funding, entitlement criteria and provider requirements

Contestable funding cannot be looked at without

considering eligibility to government supported funding and provider requirements. At the moment we have a variety of models of entitlement or eligibility.

Skills Australia propose in the 'Skills for Prosperity'² roadmap a full public subsidy for those undertaking vocational courses up to and including Certificate III, and all foundation skills courses. For Certificate IV and above, co-funding between individuals and governments, supported through an income contingent loan is proposed.

Currently in three States, we have three variations on the entitlement model either introduced, in progress towards implementation, or proposed to be introduced.

In Victoria, the entitlement model through the Victorian Training Guarantee provides for a government-subsidised place for all people up to the age of 20, and for those over 20 provided the student is undertaking a course at a higher qualification level than currently held, with the exception of designated foundation courses and apprenticeships. Varying minimum and maximum fees apply to different categories as well as access to VET FEE-Help at diploma and above levels. Students undertaking a course at the same or lower level than currently held, other than foundation courses, do not attract government support and are required to be full fee paying except for some discrete exemptions available from a limited pool of funds.

In South Australia, 'Skills for All'³ proposes a training subsidy will be available at the higher level up to an advanced diploma. A subsidy at the same qualification level will be available twice at Certificate II and above. Bridging learning from a lower level qualification at the same time as doing a higher level course will be supported by a training

subsidy. Students will also be able to access a one-off training subsidy to undertake a course at a lower level than their existing qualification, including those with a degree or above.

Queensland through the 'Post-secondary Education and Training Review'⁴ has a different model. It proposes a closer alignment with the Victorian entitlement model with additional features such as capped funding for students with initial qualifications up to degree level, with higher fees to reflect higher individual returns and the capacity of the state to intervene in the market by not funding or capping specific qualifications in areas of oversupply or low priority.

Looking at the variations in these arrangements, it seems to me that dialogue should occur between the States and Commonwealth to bring about a better alignment through consistent application of entitlement/eligibility criteria and provider requirements to accessibility of government funds to provide the skills needed by industry.

The Victorian experience thus far

Victoria introduced contestability with diploma and above programs in July 2009 and expanded this to all programs in 2011. As at the end of June this year, we have noted very substantial changes in overall VET provision and market proportions as published in the Quarter 2, Quarterly Report.⁵

In overall terms, VET enrolments are 15% higher, hours are 20% higher, and student numbers are 13% higher in the first six months of 2011 when compared to the same time in 2010.

TAFE domestic fee for service has dropped by 8% in enrolments, 11% in hours and 9% in student numbers.

Private providers have increased their enrolments from 14% in 2008 to 35% in 2011 or 38% of government-funded student training share. This equates to a 112% increase in enrolments, 131% increase in hours and 91% increase in students. It is unmeasured as to how much of this growth may be prior fee for service activity in private registered training organisations (RTOs) transitioning to eligible government funding support. Adult Community Education student share is 10% and TAFE, across the eighteen public providers including the four dual sector universities, has provision of 52% of total enrolments which is a decline from 75% in 2008, a very substantial market shift.

Four TAFEs have reported more than 5% growth, eight much the same and six a decline of more than 5% when comparing the first half of 2011 to that of 2010.

In 2008, there were 18 public providers, 342 ACE and 201 private RTOs in receipt of government funds for VET.

In 2010, there was growth of 143 private RTOs and a decline in ACE providers of 26.

In 2011, we have experienced growth to 381 private RTOs or a 90% increase in private RTOs accessing government-supported training since 2008, and with ACE providers a total of 274, a decline of 64 or 20%.

In summary, when we analyse total provider numbers where the bulk of delivery occurs, that is, TAFE and private RTOs, TAFE provider numbers have remained constant at 18 delivering 52% of the enrolments down from 75%, while private RTOs have grown by 90% to 381 enrolling 35% of eligible students, up from 14% (2008 to 2011).

Challenges ahead

Last year at the TDA Conference, I stated in conclusion:

The challenges ahead are not insurmountable. The TAFE attitude is to again be at the forefront and strive for growth and to provide exceptional quality services and outcomes to their students, communities and the employers with which they interface.

My concluding remarks this year are much the same, the challenges are great but the policy logic of maintaining a strong and viable public VET provision will need to come to the fore. This will be essential if governments want to maintain a strong influence in the VET environment. Governments will, however, need to answer a key fundamental question.

What is the appropriate balance of public sector VET provision? Is it 70%, 50% 30% of market share, or what other proportion? This question must be answered and policy initiatives directed at the objective.

On Friday 19 August, the word 'including' developed a new level of critical importance in the TAFE sector when the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Communiqué⁶ was released which stated under the heading 'Revitalising the National Vocational Education and Training System': 'The key role of TAFE as the public provider in a competitive market was recognised and supported, including its delivery of high-cost technical training, encouraging participation of disadvantaged students and offering services in regional and remote areas'. What do the policy makers really believe is the future of public TAFE provision? Our role, identified in the COAG statement as a 'key role', has been defined in relation to high-cost technical training, participation of disadvantaged students and offered in regional and

remote areas. It would be good if our policy makers could be more specific about their expectations of the holistic role of public VET provision.

Notes

- ¹ Tom Karmel 2011, *The implications of skills deepening of vocational education and training in Australia*, National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), Adelaide, SA.
- ² Skills Australia 2011, *Skills for prosperity – a roadmap for vocational education and training*, 3 May, www.skillsaustralia.gov.au/PDFs_RTfS/SkillsProsperityRoadmap.pdf.
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- ⁴ *Queensland Government Response to Queensland Post-secondary Education and Training Review*, <http://training.qld.gov.au/resources/information/pdf/govt-response-qpet.pdf>.
- ⁵ *Victorian Training Market Quarterly Report, Q2 2011, Skills Victoria DEECD*, www.skills.vic.gov.au/skills-and-jobs-outlook/training-market-reports#victorian-training-guarantee-progress-reports.
- ⁶ Council of Australian Governments (COAG) 2011, Meeting Communiqué, 19 August, Canberra, p. 6.



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Welcome to the new normal

'It is increasingly clear that the current downturn is fundamentally different from recessions of recent decades. We are experiencing not merely another turn of the business cycle but a restructuring of the economic order', so writes Ian Davis (2009), worldwide Managing Director of McKinsey and Company.

As governments in Australia, along with those across the globe, looked down the barrel of the GFC, their nights of insomnia began. How to divest themselves of burgeoning financial commitments? How to increase the nation's productivity to compete in a global marketplace? How to capitalise on the Asian boom and our natural mineral wealth? How to achieve all this simultaneously, remain in government and be re-elected!?

We need skilled workers to keep the mineral boom engine turning — CCI projects 500,000 over the next decade for Western Australia alone (Mason 2010). Upskilling and reskilling existing workers, and enabling the participation of those at the margins won't be enough. We need overseas workers easily plucked from the depressed global supermarket, and we'll need to assess and fill the gaps in their skills too.

In the meantime, much of small business, approximately 96% of Australian business, has been reduced to a single focus — survival.

Manufacturing is dwindling as our dollar rises and industry productivity can't keep up. One manufacturer of steel farming equipment who refuses to import steel from China — which he sees as an inferior and unpatriotic product — is asked: 'And are you upskilling workers to assist you.' 'No', he replies, 'I'm deskilling them'. He has turned to semiskilled workers to manage the price differential (Anon. Caller 2011).

And some big firms are on the same page. Ramsay Health Care asks VET to enhance the skills of enrolled nurses because it intends to increase their proportion in the workforce from 5% to a massive 30%.

Organisations 'are peering through the fog of uncertainty, thinking about how to position themselves once the crisis has passed and things return to normal', Davis (2009) continues. But it is more a case of welcome to the 'New Normal'.

And the answer is — Reform of VET

For government, the ready answer is reform and it was perhaps no surprise when last month a Council of Australian Governments (COAG) communiqué called for 'Fundamental reform of the VET sector . . . to increase participation and ensure training is more

responsive to the needs of industry and individuals in a dynamic economy' noting 'the importance of strengthened pathways between sectors was also acknowledged' (COAG 2011, p. 6).

As Robin Shreeve has indicated, VET providers have existed in a Perfect Storm of Reform for years – and I would argue that VET institutes around the nation are already responding to the reviews of Training Packages, AQTF, Indigenous, Rural, Apprenticeship, Innovation, Youth Transitions and ESOS, and that we are taking on board the findings of the National Strategy for VET, the Productivity Commission's Education and Training Workforce report, Skills Australia's Skills for Prosperity and even the Bradley Review.

But TAFE (*and institutes formerly known as TAFE*) make up the service arm of government training policy and we will – we must – embrace whatever is required next.

Some of us have increased our high level qualifications only to see them slip away as we move on under an entitlement model. Told that the relevance of the diploma and advanced diploma is diminishing, many institutes embraced advice from the National Centre for Vocational Education Research's (NCVER) Tom Karmel (2011). Higher education programs will better position graduates facing the demands of qualification creep in a future global marketplace.

But, then, it was 'caps off' for universities in the hunt for more highly skilled workers. Never mind that TAFEs (*and institutes formerly known . . .*) are, according to Campus Review's John Ross (2011), already meeting these targets. Structural adjustment funds are offered in their millions to align university curricula to better engage low socio-economic status (low SES) students in programs leading to

employment, despite the fact that many are in arrangements, even co-located with TAFEs, (*and institutes formerly . . .*) doing just that. Around Australia institutes have mapped and mapped and mapped their curriculum to ensure good (if primarily linear) pathways for our graduates with universities. We're juggling the balance of competency based assessments with a demand to fit normative scales and we're filling the curriculum gaps. There are even successes – for a handful of students (Christie 2011).

But the good news is that some of these qualifications are also useful in the dilemma that TAFEs (*and institutes . . .*) face as our international markets are savaged by changes to visa regulations. They might as well be offered to overseas students, as HECS places won't be extended further to TAFEs (*and . . .*) offering degrees until the results of the 'caps off' approach are known (Evans 2011).

Stitching it all together

But we are TAFEs (*etc.*) and, because in the end we are all genuinely committed to our customers, our clients and our government stakeholders, we are prepared. We've been scanning the environment and talking to industry. Often, we deliver and assess in and alongside private enterprise. Hey, sometimes we even go to work daily at their workplaces!

We know that while we focus on gearing up for the mineral boom, we also need to focus on getting workers skilled up for less sexy but the no less gaping industry maws of community services, health and aged care; that we also need to maintain evolving high tech workers, to assist with developing green skills; and to become more innovative in time and place of delivery, and in engaging, keeping and enhancing the literacy of the now generation.

We'll do this in a competitive marketplace, becoming more transparent, benchmarking our outcomes, and striving for excellence in teaching and learning, while increasing our non-direct government revenue sources and managing an ageing workforce and uncompetitive industrial relations issues.

Like the complex adaptive systems we are, we will morph, evolve and emerge to support our industry and business partners and the individuals and communities we serve, to help them meet their goals. Sometimes, this will be within new policy guidelines, sometimes alongside them, and sometimes in spite of them.

Like one of the three Fates, as we peer ahead in the New Normal, we will spin the thread to patch up the patchwork economy, while dodging the odd vested interest who tries to find us a little short of the required measure or decision makers wielding their shears!

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National Skills Standards Council

MC: Ellen Fanning

The Hon. John Dawkins AO, National Skills Standards Council (NSSC) and Chair, Australian Qualifications Framework Council (AQFC)

The role of the new National Skills Standards Council as well as the restructuring of parts of the system into better alignment as we move towards a tertiary system in 2013.

Wealth of resources – or patchwork economy?

MC: Ellen Fanning

Chinese diplomat, Ouyang Cheng was recently reported as saying that:

“Australia’s dual-speed and patchwork economy would not only hurt its own economic development but also influence China’s and Australia’s long-term economic co-operation,” and

“Australia’s infrastructure bottleneck and shortage of skilled labour are hampering Australia’s economic and trade development, and also limiting China’s investment in Australia.”

Sydney Morning Herald, 7 July 2011

Keynote speaker:

Keith Spence, Chair, WA State Training Board;
Board Member, Skills Australia

Themes:

1. Patchwork economy – winners and losers?
2. Where must more be done to meet Australia’s skills needs?
3. 1,000 people a week are leaving Dublin – why do we need to train apprentices?
4. How can TAFE institutes best respond in the current climate?

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The size of the LNG industry

- Australia's upstream oil and gas industry is responsible for about 60% of Australia's primary energy consumption and this will probably grow strongly over the next 20 years, especially in the case of natural gas.
- The oil and gas industry is a major contributor to economic growth, employment, export and government revenue and is entering a major growth phase.
- In 2005, Western Australia's North West Shelf project was Australia's only liquefied natural gas (LNG) export project. Today there are two projects exporting, five under construction, AUD120 billion of LNG investment on the

drawing board, and we are on our way to becoming the world's second largest LNG exporter.

- The world's first fully floating LNG project is likely to be 'birthed/berthed' in the Browse Basin off the Kimberley coast in 2016 – an application of a radical new technology.
- Taking into account the East Coast's coal seam gas potential and conventional gas reserves, the gas story is one with the capacity to continue for centuries.
- Direct employment in the industry is around 20,000, with around 40,000 others dependent.

The growth of LNG

- With as many as 12 LNG projects under consideration representing over AUD200 billion of investment, LNG has triggered a revolution in the global gas market.
- In the past, natural gas was a regional commodity, consumed near where it was produced and transported by pipelines.
- Today, liquefaction technology enables natural gas to be reduced to 1/600th of its original volume and transported by LNG ships around the globe.

Some comments about the oil and gas industry

- The oil and gas industry is an exciting industry to work in – it is truly international, highly skilled and diverse.
- We work with often cutting edge technology across a wide range of offshore and onshore operations.
- But we also operate in remote locations, difficult climates and high risk environments.

- The industry's profile is changing – there is the emerging issue of unconventional gas – particularly coal seam gas.
- Gas has an undeniable role to play in assisting Australia and the world make the transition to a low carbon economy,
- We currently face, however, a turbulent landscape as Australia comes to grips with its response to climate change, renewable energy and energy policy broadly, as well as issues such as productivity decline, taxation, and the restructuring of the economy.
- The new profile of the industry requires much stronger community engagement and involvement, and the need to demonstrate how we can contribute to building the capacity and capabilities of local manufacturers, and contribute equitably to the development of skills.

Productivity

- Few would argue that Australia's productivity performance has deteriorated over the past decade, with the broadest measure of productivity growth going backwards over the past five years (Grattan Institute Report on Productivity).
- A highly skilled and educated population is a critical part of improving Australia's productivity, as is increasing participation in the workforce.
- The oil and gas industry, both in the design and construction and the operational phases, requires exactly this highly skilled and educated workforce.
- These high level education and skills require time to develop, and therefore longer term

and sustained commitment and partnership between governments and industry.

Participation

- Australia's workforce participation statistics compare poorly with similar Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries.
- There are many aspects to this, but the reality is that Australia's near full employment statistics and labour and skills shortages actually hide underemployment and under-utilisation across Australia, as well as pockets of unemployment.
- Improving workforce participation is an area that the oil and gas sector, indeed the resources sector broadly, has to take a major role in addressing for themselves, in partnership with governments.
- The oil and gas sector has specific challenges and opportunities in regard to improving workforce participation – including women being seriously under-represented, an ageing workforce and lack of clear pathways into the industry for young people. We also need to work hard to assist young people transition into our often high risk and difficult working environments.

Skills Australia Interim Report on Resources Sector Skills Needs

Construction of resource projects

- New short term construction jobs in the resources sector will experience very strong growth with medium projections of 191,300.
- High demand for professional and technical and trades level skills. These skills need time to develop.

- Also high demand for machinery operators, drivers and labourers — so a focus on foundation skills training in literacy and numeracy could assist with access to employment.

Oil and gas operations

- The oil and gas sector predicts a growth for occupations across the entire scope of operations and maintenance, as the sector rapidly expands and in new fields such as coal seam gas. An LNG train typically takes three years to build, so the operational workforce is expected to grow significantly from 2013 to 2015.

APPEA and its members want to support TAFEs/Training Providers to service industry better, and want to:

- > Provide clear and easily accessible information on our job requirements/expectations at entry level to facilitate transition from school/training institutions into workplaces ('Work Readiness' is one of APPEA's most pressing projects).
- > Create strong partnerships between industry, workplaces and training providers to facilitate as much 'on the job' learning experience for trainees as possible.
- > Identify career pathways and incentives for industry technical personnel to move into training careers, and provide training providers with opportunities to spend time in our workplaces.
- > Training/skills culture — invest heavily in training and skills for the new AND for the existing workforce, to expand and 'smarten' the pool of skilled labour, and require similar culture for our contractors.

For TAFE directors to ponder, perhaps...

Australia's economy is undergoing major structural change so it's critical that the training system is responsive. The resources sector, including oil and gas, is undergoing huge growth. The oil and gas industry is a truly international industry, and attracting the world's best and brightest from overseas will always play a part in developing the science and technology to optimise extraction and processing.

Training the local population will, however, also provide a critical proportion of the skills required to construct and operate the facilities planned. It is in the interests of our national economic and social wellbeing to use this unprecedented growth to train and educate as many Australians as possible to take advantage of the opportunity of skilled, well-paid, safe work in the sector. This workforce needs to be built on core and foundation skills for the Australian population (currently something like 46% of the population has low level literacy and numeracy — this is unacceptable for a modern economy and society). Without this focus on core and foundation skills, Australian's will face real barriers to entering the highly sought after resources sector careers.

For this to happen on the kind of scale needed, I would ask TAFE directors to think more realistically about the career paths, staffing model and skills necessary for success in their own workplaces. TAFE training needs to be professionalised, well rewarded and with built-in/mandatory return-to-industry programs the norm for all trainers and assessors. The days of a lecturing career for life within a TAFE institution cannot continue if the system is to effectively respond to a fast-paced, technologically dynamic and rapidly changing industry, with its specific culture and demands. People who haven't worked in industry for ten years, delivering training

to students in urban classrooms who want to work in remote locations, is not a model that will work for our industry for long.

TAFE directors could also think about strategies to significantly improve the basic literacy and numeracy skills of their graduates. This is perhaps the most common complaint heard from human resources managers and recruitment firms, and it is something that training organisations (public and private) must do something about prior to issuing a certificate for vocational competence.

Employment in the oil and gas industry is generally well paid and competitive, with a trades certificate the normal minimum entry level. Safety attributes are also essential – offshore facilities are hazardous and worksites are often remote and can be challenging. As a consequence, oil and gas industry employers prefer to take people with some demonstrated experience and maturity. Given there are only two operating LNG plants in Australia, this does present something of a challenge, but one that can only be addressed by TAFEs working closely with industry to develop some innovative solutions.

An outstanding example of an effective partnership between TAFE and industry is provided by the Australian Centre for Energy and Process Training in Western Australia (ACEPT). ACEPT works closely with industry to ensure a 'good fit' between students undertaking, in this case process operator training, and the needs of industry. Industry representatives sit on the Board of ACEPT, and provide direct input into the decision making process, including seconding industry trainers. The ACEPT facility is cutting edge in terms of simulated learning environments. Developed from collaboration between industry and state and federal governments, ACEPT features state-of-the-

art equipment and highly experienced training staff. ACEPT can customise training to meet the workforce development needs of individual companies worldwide.

Establishing local hubs close to industry centres, offering specialised workplace experience, working with employers, and other TAFEs and training providers would all help to rationalise and diversify expensive resources, rather than duplicate what is available.

Most worksites are in remote locations; send your lecturers there . . . or recruit them from there (with commensurate salaries – they are valuable resources). Put training hubs in the vicinity of where the work is. Don't continue to expect employers and students will come to TAFE as the best and only option for their training needs, especially if TAFEs don't move with the times and provide what is needed.

It's time to think strategically, act collaboratively

The industry is currently thinking about a 'Camp' concept as a strategic, industry-driven project, in the model of ACEPT but much expanded and built on collaborative partnerships and hubs. What about a National Oil and Gas Training Facility? Fully functioning as a 24/7 camp model, it would allow industry to achieve that 'work readiness' and to contribute to increasing trade training and the training of the ancillary and other skills needed to support an oil and gas plant (for example, marine, logistics, hospitality). It would be a world class facility created from a collaborative approach, and industry driven. Anyone interested?

If industry can float an entire LNG processing plant, 488m long and 74m wide in 250m of water, it can

no doubt come up with (or buy) its own training solutions. But it is an industry renowned for joint ventures, and TAFEs have so much to offer . . . they just need to commit . . . REALLY commit to working with the oil and gas (and other) industry to come up with skills development/training initiatives that will help it to get the employees it needs, guarantee their health and safety on the job, and maximise the many benefits that derive from these mega and not so mega projects.

This is an industry that has potential to last at least another 200 years. It provides rare opportunities, including one that can greatly improve the social and economic lives of so many who are currently and would otherwise not have the opportunity for training and education that this economic growth can provide. TAFE has a potentially significant role to play in this vision.

Wealth of resources – or patchwork economy?



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Where must more be done to meet Australia's skills needs?

Introduction

HunterNet is a co-operative in the formal sense and consists of a membership drawn from Hunter-based small and medium (SME) sized manufacturing, engineering and consulting companies. It was formed to assist Hunter Region engineering and manufacturing companies to solve industry problems and to provide the benefits of a collaborative approach to business solutions for its member base.

Industry in the Hunter underwent major changes from the mid-1990s as a result of a major decline in steel making in the area. This downturn, led by the closure of BHP in Newcastle, created other major plant shutdowns which impacted severely on local engineering companies.

Before the mid-1990s, the engineering and manufacturing SMEs in the Hunter had relied on the apprentice training programs administered by the larger companies, such as BHP, to educate tradespeople and as a result, had not usually taken on apprentices themselves.

The restructuring of the manufacturing industry in the Hunter created a void in terms of apprenticeship training and resulted in an urgent need to address this lack of training in the area. The increasing age of the existing workforce meant that SMEs were going to struggle to find local skilled labour in the medium to long term.

This issue has resurged in recent times and affects many different areas of engineering and manufacturing. Not only is a skill shortage noted in the trades of boilermaking, fitting and machining, electrical and sheetmetal trades but more recently, shortages in new and emerging technologies such as communications and information technologies have also occurred.

This paper addresses what the manufacturing and engineering community in Newcastle are currently doing to combat skills shortages, as well as what else can be done to further address the issue of meeting Australia's skills needs.

HunterNet Group Training Company

Given the shortages in skilled labour, HunterNet foreshadowed a need to develop a program to continue the drive for skills development, particularly at the trade level. This led to the formation of the HunterNet Group Training Company Pty Ltd (HNGTC) in 1996.

HNGTC, a wholly owned subsidiary of HunterNet Co-operative Ltd, was established purely with a view to employing and training apprentices on behalf

of member companies that would otherwise lack the resources to provide on-the-job training, and to administer formal training programs. HNGTC therefore became a company focused and dedicated to the recruitment, training and administration of the affairs of apprentices to the benefit of the host companies who train apprentices and Hunter engineering and manufacturing industry in general.

This approach allows the parent companies to concentrate on core business functions, without having to worry about the administrative issues associated with employing an apprentice. Currently, HNGTC supplies approximately 160 trainees and apprentices to 30 host companies. The development of HNGTC has, in part, filled some of the void left by the restructuring of the manufacturing industry in the Hunter.

What more can be done?

There are many areas that can be developed and improved on to further address the skills shortage in the manufacturing and engineering industries in the Hunter Region. Relationships with TAFE and government bodies need to be further strengthened and closer ties to the SMEs developed. This will ensure organisations have greater access to assistance such as government grants, and can support the process of developing courses and training programs that suit company needs.

SMEs need to become the 'Employer of Choice' in order to retain trainees and apprentices beyond their initial training period. This includes encouraging and providing the opportunities to take up additional training to further up-skill the trainees and apprentices. It also involves establishing a long-term career path for apprentices and trainees to keep them motivated and loyal to the host companies.

The ability to train and mentor apprentices and trainees effectively is a critical component to the future sustainability of organisations and, ultimately, industry as a whole. One of the most challenging aspects throughout industry is the ability of middle management and workplace supervisors to be able to 'bring out the best' in their employees. Obviously, there are many and varied approaches adopted by managers of young people with varying degrees of success.

A strong relationship with their supervisor is vital. This is due to the fact that in many SMEs, the supervisor may be the only resource the apprentice or trainee can call on for assistance and advice. However, in most cases supervisors and workshop foremen do not possess the necessary soft skills to provide effective communication and mentoring. This may be attributed to supervisors articulating from trade positions and not developing the skills in effective communication and mentoring, and the day-to-day output demands placed on supervisors by management conflicting with time spent on effective training of entry level personnel.

In the Hunter Region, this training is being addressed by State Training Services (Department of Education and Training).

Companies, in conjunction with the training providers and government bodies, need to be innovative in delivering processes that support the skill requirements arising from emerging technologies and innovation. This includes:

- ensuring that training adequately provides the core and practical skills required for trade-based, para-professional and professional personnel

- developing processes that will allow training facilities and programs to expose students to the newer technologies in their respective fields
- developing courses that deliver the skill requirements relevant to the technologies employed by tech-enabled companies
- developing programs and resources that support conservative companies to enhance their knowledge of new and emerging technologies and the adoption of those technologies
- developing complementary training programs for both trade and university graduates in:
 - > product costing
 - > production management
 - > business skills
 - > innovative manufacturing practices (for example, lean manufacturing and competitive manufacturing)
- ensuring that linkages between training organisations provide pathways for supplementary skills training, as required by Hunter Region SMEs.

HunterNet is confident, that through the strong bond that continues to develop with Hunter TAFE, these challenges can be met.

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Structural change or terminal decline?

Introduction

Respectable economic opinions, from the Reserve Bank, Treasury and financial market commentators, have observed with cool detachment the continuing decline of the manufacturing industry in Australia. It is, they argue, an example of inexorable 'structural change' by which productive inputs are re-allocated to the resource sector to achieve a higher return (Productivity Commission 2011). Such sanguine attitudes reflect a profound misunderstanding of modern manufacturing as a producer and user of advanced technologies and the possible adverse consequences for the Australian economy of its decline. This paper focuses on just three such consequences of accelerating de-industrialisation, first technological backwardness, second, trade and current account deficits, and finally, diminished food security due to the loss of the domestic food processing sector.

Winners and losers

There are three mechanisms in which the booming resource sector is accelerating the decline in Australian manufacturing. The first is high interest rates imposed by the Reserve Bank to contain inflation by slowing the non-resource part of the economy and thereby shifting labour and other inputs into the resource sector. The big miners are much less affected by domestic interest rates as they can raise money on international financial markets at very low rates; they can issue new shares and their profits are so large they can fund investments from retained earnings. By contrast, many manufacturers in Australia are SMEs that are reliant on local banks for credit.

Second, high Australian interest rates attract overseas 'hot' money which has pushed the Australian dollar to post-float highs. The dollar is also closely tied to commodity prices which are also at record levels. The value of the Australian dollar is grossly out of alignment with economic fundamentals. Australia runs large current account deficits, even with the resource boom we do not run persistent trade surpluses, and Australian productivity per worker is roughly 30% to 40% lower than in the United States of America (Treasury 2008). Given the bubble in the price of the Australian dollar, domestic manufacturing is simply uncompetitive.

Third, the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) (Karmel & Rice 2011) has shown that the mining sector does not adequately invest in the training of core trade skills which it uses intensively. The NCVER estimates the resource sector would need to increase its employment of apprentices two- to three-fold for the ratio of apprentices in engineering, electrical and building to match its share of total employee tradespeople.

Labour shortages in the skilled trades are making it difficult for the manufacturing sector to retain this labour, compounding the price disadvantage of the high Australian dollar.

Well, so what? Does it matter that manufacturing is declining both as a share of GDP and in absolute terms? Isn't this part of the natural process of structural change?

There are four reasons why this decline will have adverse consequences for the economy. First, without a solid manufacturing base, Australia faces the real prospect of losing scientific and engineering capacity that has taken generations to nurture. The manufacturing sector employs directly one in every five engineers and many more indirectly as consultants (Institution of Engineers Australia 2011). Local manufacturing undertakes one quarter of total private research and development (R&D), which employs scientists, engineers and skilled technicians directed mostly at developing and adapting technologies to particular local needs. The resource sector cannot substitute for this loss in technological capacity. The resource industry has recently increased its R&D spending dramatically to match that of manufacturing, and it does undertake important work. Australia is a world leader in software for the mining industry, in remote sensing exploration techniques and automation of mining equipment. However, the local high tech sector supplying goods and services to resource industries is very small. According to the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics, total sales of Australian mining technology services and equipment, which includes consulting, software and equipment accounts, is around AUD9 billion. This is only just over 2% of total manufacturing sales. Under current policy settings the resource sector is not going to save or substitute for a robust

manufacturing sector in terms of developing local technological capacity.

How long will the taxpayer want to support public and private education and research into solar energy, aerospace, micro-electronics, advanced materials, nanotechnology or biotechnology when industries that can use these high level knowledge and skills to make new products, have disappeared? The Productivity Commission persistently argues: what is the point of such taxpayer support for education and R&D in Australia when the benefits of the resulting knowledge accrue increasingly to other nations? The transfer of Australian solar panel technology to China, from whom we now mostly source these products, is a case in point. The knowledge and skills required to simply import and use these technologies, such as the installation of solar panels on a roof, are much less than that needed to design and manufacture them. Without a robust manufacturing base, Australia will have no capacity to participate in the design and production of goods and services for the renewable energy sector.

Second, the skills developed by the manufacturing industry are core infrastructure skills upon which every modern economy depends. Where are the engineers, technicians, welders, maintenance fitters, CAD designers, and machinists to come from to install and maintain our telecommunications, power stations, water plants and transport systems? The resource sector is also critically dependent on these skills. But, as shown by the NCVET, it does not itself train these skills, but as it euphemistically expressed it, rather it 'buys them in'.

Third, without a manufacturing base Australia will need to import even more consumer and capital goods, exacerbating the chronic inability

to run a positive trade balance. Even with a record high dollar (which makes imports cheap) and unprecedented resource prices and volumes, this is barely sufficient to pay for massive volumes of imported manufactures. Borrowing to buy imported manufactures and repatriation of resource profits offshore exposes the economy to large external risks. Respectable economic opinion before the GFC regarded large Current Account deficits, such as Australia runs, as irrelevant (Reserve Bank of Australia 2011). But after 2008, economic opinion has switched as financial markets have savaged those countries excessively dependent on foreign borrowings (International Monetary Fund 2011).

Finally, the processed food sector accounts for about 22% of local manufacturing, but it is rapidly losing market share to imported processed food and beverages. This has significant implications for national food security. Reducing the food processing industry will result in the economy becoming even more dependent on the export of unprocessed agricultural commodities.

All dynamic market economies are subject to structural change, but it is a profound mistake to assert that, in every instance, such market-induced change is always in the national interest.

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Global trends in Vocational Education and Training (VET)

**Andrew Thomson,
Director of Education
and Government
Strategy APAC, CISCO**

CISCO has recently commissioned research into global trends in VET, focusing on issues with the greatest relevance to the Australian market. Andrew Thomson will provide an overview of the findings underpinned by examples of global case studies to provide a snapshot of trends in practice.

Shadow Ministerial address

The Hon. Sussan Ley, MP

*Federal Shadow Minister for Employment
Participation*



The Hon. Sussan Ley, MP
*Federal Shadow Minister for Employment
Participation*

I am delighted to be here today to give the Opposition's address. Now, the theme for this year's conference as I understand it, is 'Balancing the Big Issues'. This is a particularly apt theme in my mind, as the skills crisis this country faces now and into the future, requires a big picture approach, and the skilled juggling of priorities.

All of us here in this room today recognise the importance of a good education. I am a firm believer in the role of TAFE in providing this education. TAFE underpins VET training in Australia as far and away the largest training provider of VET and it does a fabulous job. However, there is also a vital role for the private sector to play in this sphere. There are many high calibre providers in the private sector and they too deserve applause for the role they play.

We should consider the economic environment in which we are operating with respect to skills because, if we are to achieve high incomes for Australians of the future, we have to invest in their

skills, for the longer term.

On the demand side, our exchange rate is adding pressure on industries.

Demographic trends are influencing the volume and type of products produced, including in health and housing.

Consumer demands, such as sustainability and online purchasing are influencing production and skill needs.

Economic trends and conditions are the key here — we are defined by the mining boom and weak consumer spending.

We will continue to grow; real GDP growth is trending upwards. Of course, China's boost to our income is vital.

It is no secret that the mining sector is 'King' — it is interesting that output per worker in the mining sector is AUD700,000, output per worker in the farm sector is AUD80,000, and output per worker in the manufacturing sector is just over AUD100,000. This reflects the high level of capital investment in mining and the very high value of our raw materials.

In 2010–11 the farm sector went backwards by nearly 2% and the mining and construction sectors went ahead by 6% and 10% respectively, dwarfing everything else.

As economist Chris Richardson (2011) says:

... we happen to live in the blink of an eye in which half the world's population is having their industrial revolution — a moment in time when global demand for industrial commodities has leapt ahead of their supply — the price of what Australia sells to the world has gone through the roof.

Demand growth for skills is high and supply growth

is low — meaning there will be costs to corporates and the wider nation.

Wage growth will rise, putting more pressure on interest rates and exchange rates.

This adds up to more skilled migrants to help meet the short term squeeze.

I was pleased to see today's announcement that the Government is about to open the door to semi-skilled workers by inviting mining and infrastructure companies to bring in workers previously denied permission from coming to Australia to work. We have a huge demand for these workers, however, down the track I would hope to see a potential role for the TAFE sector in offering further training to these workers.

This, potentially, could go some way to addressing the significant decline in international students that has occurred over the last few years. Australian Education International data has recorded a decrease in overseas VET visas of more than 45% in 2010–11. In part, this can be attributed to some dubious practices by some private sector providers, however, it has been further exacerbated by visa changes made by Minister Evans. From 1 January 2010, students had to demonstrate or declare evidence of access to AUD18,000 a year to cover their living expenses. This was an increase of AUD6,000 from the previous year, which to many has proven too great a sum, particularly now given the high value of the Australian dollar and a worsening global outlook. In addition, providers have informed me of significant blow outs in the visa approval process and student concerns over changes to the approved migration occupations in demand list, which will prevent many current students from staying on in Australia to work in the industry in which they trained.

The Coalition has a proud record on Vocational Education and Training. We remain committed to helping young Australians undertake VET qualifications. The former Coalition Government enabled Income Contingent Loans to be extended to the VET sector in 2007, enabling provision of student loans for diploma, advanced diploma, graduate certificate and graduate diploma courses. This followed on from the provision of FEE-HELP to domestic students who chose to undertake non-Commonwealth funded courses at universities and approved private providers.

When we were in Government we were vocal in promoting the value of a trade qualification. Too many students (and their parents) view an apprenticeship pathway as second best to a university degree. Yet the reality is that the skills Australia really needs now and into the future are based on the trades.

In addition to promoting trades, we provided generous apprenticeship incentives, both to employers and also to apprentices, particularly in the form of Toolboxes for your Trade, which were incredibly popular, providing practical assistance to apprentices.

We also established the Australian Technical Colleges. These centres provided state-of-the-art facilities with vital industry links for school-age students. This enabled them to commence a trade qualification whilst also completing a year 12 certificate. I understand that many in the TAFE sector were critical of these Technical Colleges, but ultimately, they were part of a broader plan to help boost the status of VET in Australia and to provide a real gold class standard in training. Instead of these high end, targeted centres, we've now got Trade Training Centres in Schools. Unlike the Coalition's

Australian Technical Colleges which provided industry-led trades training, Trade Training Centres often struggle from lack of investment and ongoing funds. They may also create a two-tiered system within schools, with many students needing to catch the bus to Trade Training Centres, where they have been co-located with other schools. There is concern that some of these students may feel looked down on for choosing to do trade skills instead of more academic courses. We felt Australian Technical Colleges offered an environment where students all felt they were equal and were pursuing high level studies in the trades.

We do need to encourage more young people into the trades. It has been particularly difficult over the last couple of years, with many dropping out of their courses to pursue careers in the mining boom. Others, unfortunately, have become disenfranchised with how much their friends were earning elsewhere.

I recently had the opportunity to meet with a young Tasmanian apprentice who told me of fellow apprentices dropping out to work in a call centre — they were struggling to survive on apprenticeship wages and the money offered by the call centre seemed a far better short term option. Unfortunately, there are too many young Australians who aren't viewing an apprenticeship as a viable pathway to a career. Recently, in Melbourne, I met with a Group Training Provider who told me of apprenticeships being advertised for up to two years, with no suitable candidates found. These apprenticeships were in areas of very high youth unemployment and were with very reputable international companies, offering tremendous opportunities to the right young people.

Under the current Government we have seen some real policy blunders in the VET sphere.

We've seen a complete debacle with the delivery of the Productivity Places Programme by this Government — instead of really addressing areas of skills shortages, it provided a plethora of qualifications in retail and security, instead of the skills in construction and mining that the then Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd promised. The recent report indicating that funding was provided based on only one-third of students completing their qualifications highlighted that this was never going to be the skills saving flagship that the Government promoted. I do not wish to be dismissive of this training, however, the reality is that it was a complete administrative failure and did not go near achieving the stated objectives of addressing the skills crisis. It was not good value for 2.1 billion taxpayer dollars.

I also have a few concerns about the Trade Training Cadetships. The very name aside — which some have told me makes them think of the Army — they seem just another add-on in the piecemeal approach to training employed by this Government. I think that the system is becoming so overwhelmed with different training options — and some with little perceivable difference to other courses on offer. The prime example here is a School-based Apprenticeship. Many parents and students will wonder over the various merits of each pathway of study and become confused. We need to simplify the system to ensure that people have clear pathways presented to them and aren't overwhelmed by choice. This is where funding could be better directed to ensure students are getting quality careers advice before leaving school.

We need to focus on the real reasons why people are exiting their training early. In some instances, apprentices are deciding that the work on offer doesn't really meet their expectations. Often young people in particular are not quite certain what

path they want to follow when they leave school. We could ensure that young people get a real opportunity to 'try a trade' before leaving school. And there are others, as I mentioned earlier, who struggle to live on apprenticeship wages, particularly if they have left home.

There is a plethora of Government-funded incentives on offer for apprentices and employers. Yet despite these incentives, attrition rates are still very high. Apprenticeship incentives are an area where significant overhaul is necessary. 'A Shared Responsibility- Apprenticeships for the 21st Century' report, published in January of this year, did highlight a number of concerns with the existing incentive system. We do need to re-examine the 'one size fits all' model of incentives and ensure that incentives are most accurately targeted at those areas where the skills need is greatest and incentives will actually work. Given that the Australian Government invests somewhere in the vicinity of AUD1.2 billion a year to support Australian apprenticeships, it is critical to ensure these dollars are not being wasted. Despite existing incentives, retention rates for apprentices are poor and will only further exacerbate skills shortages into the future. The Housing Industry Association undertook research in January 2010 which indicated shortages of approximately 60,000 workers in residential construction alone. This is expected to blow out to 65,000 by 2012.

Predictions for Western Australia see a shortfall of around 170,000 workers by 2015 – yet government measures, such as demanding English proficiency, will make recruitment even more difficult. We do need to realistically consider whether there may be some positions where workplace fluency would be sufficient.

Another area I believe we do need to address is the often rampant duplicity between the Commonwealth and the States. Where there is clear wasteful expenditure on repetition of auditing, or programs that really could be consolidated, then this should occur. We need to step back and look at what is really working and what isn't and then identify the best way forward to address areas of need in VET training. Particular areas that stand out for me are within the apprenticeship sphere where often State training bodies overlap with the Australian Apprenticeship Centres and TAFE provided staff.

Reducing red tape is another strong commitment of the Coalition. So much time is spent by organisations just complying with bureaucratic trivia – this is time that could, in the case of training organisations, be spent mentoring students and spending more one-on-one time with those who are struggling.

Along with my colleagues, I have received numerous letters from many in your sector, regarding the COAG agreement on national training. Now, ultimately, I do support the concept of contestable funding and a more flexible training system. This being said, I do have concerns with the big stick approach of the Federal Government, which in essence is little more than an attempt to force the states on board with their plan, or risk losing funding. However, I suspect many of you have read the communiqué from the recent COAG meeting and probably like me, you are wondering whether there is any more to it than broad brush statements that ultimately give no detail.

Ultimately, the sector needs to ensure that it offers the courses that best suit the needs of the community. TAFE management has to be flexible and dynamic. I personally am in favour of more

autonomous TAFEs, with each TAFE in a position to determine which courses they offer and the mode of delivery best suited to their client base.

Flexibility will be critical in ensuring that we have the right courses to meet the needs of industry. The VET sector needs to work hand-in-hand with industry to best tailor the courses that will meet the demand and maximise productivity. I have observed local TAFEs with well established links with local industries delivering the training industry needs of today.

I cannot give specific undertakings of Coalition policy, however, I hope my remarks have given some of our core principles in the area. We do want to see close links with industry in particular.

We will encourage young Australians to take up a trade by ensuring that trade qualifications are held in the high regard they deserve and that employers are given the necessary assistance they require to support apprentice training.

We will develop policies to increase the number of apprentices completing their VET courses. We want a system that helps people into areas where they are meeting skills needs and also setting themselves up with a real career. We want a system that doesn't baffle with its complexity, but one that still offers genuine choice and flexibility of servicing.

Ultimately, skills ARE the key to unlocking long term prosperity because better skills mean higher productivity.

As economist Paul Krugman (1992) said: 'Productivity isn't everything but in the long run it is almost everything'.

Not only that, but a highly skilled workforce is a workforce with higher participation.

The more equipped with skills a person is, the more adaptable they are — and who knows what skills a person will need a few years from now. One thing we do know is that the range of skills is getting wider and more complex than we could ever have imagined.

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USA—Australia: Sustainability, engagement and ‘green’ skills training

Facilitator: Ian Colley, Director, Make Stuff Happen

“By transforming their curriculum, workforce development, community collaboration and campus operations, community colleges will generate the skills, values and behaviours that will prepare society and students to participate in a thriving green and sustainable economy. This green and sustainable economy will re-establish the balance between human activity and the earth’s life support systems, distributing resources to meet basic needs and support quality of life for all life, current and future generations.”

The American Association of Community Colleges Sustainability Taskforce of Presidents, June 2010.

International panel:

- MINDY FELDBAUM
- DR MARY SPILDE
- MARCY DRUMMOND
- DR MICHELLE FOX
- DR V CELESTE CARTER



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Introduction

With the emerging transition to a sustainable economy, many United States (US) community colleges and TAFE institutions are at the forefront of the growing momentum for action on climate change, sustainability, and ‘green’ education and workforce development. In both countries, community colleges and TAFE institutions are taking a leadership role in creating a sustainable future by promoting and embedding sustainability principles and practices into curricula, modifying existing courses, certificate and degree programs to integrate ‘green’ technical skills and competencies in a variety of sectors, creating new and expanded career pathways, using campuses as living laboratories, and building the capacity of faculty

through innovative professional development. More importantly, through these efforts, millions of TAFE and community college students will develop the necessary skills and knowledge to lead their country’s transition to a low-carbon future.

To support this critical and challenging work, a United States–Australia ‘Green’ Skills Learning Exchange and Network (Green Skills Network) has been proposed to facilitate the sharing of information, knowledge, and leading practices of both countries. The concept behind this Green Skills Network initially arose after attending a Green Jobs Roundtable in Washington, DC, hosted by the then Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard, and followed later by a meeting with Mr Martin Riordan (Chief Executive Officer TDA) during his Fulbright Fellowship to the US in 2010 that began to lay out the framework of the Network. In June 2011, Dr Garry McDonald, from Swinburne University of Technology’s National Centre for Sustainability, visited several US Federal agencies and Community Colleges to better understand the potential benefits of an Exchange. In August, I began undertaking an Executive Endeavour fellowship in order to further consolidate this proposal by visiting with numerous TAFE institutions, government agencies, and other key stakeholders. This short paper describes the proposed framework, purpose, broad themes/focus areas and activities, and outcomes of the Green Skills Network based on those discussions.

Why build a Green Skills Network?

As more and more TAFE and community college institutions take on a leadership role to teach the skills and competencies needed for workers and businesses to prosper in a sustainable, low-carbon economy, many will be faced with multiple challenges and issues as well as new opportunities.

These challenges are complex and interconnected in nature, provide for no common unified approach or strategy, require new knowledge, capabilities, and partnerships, and necessitate lateral and innovative thinking that knows no geographic bounds. With markedly different policy drivers stimulating innovation in the US and Australia, different TAFE and community college institutions across these countries have created reputations for leadership and creativity in sustainability and 'green' skills development and delivery. There are outstanding examples of 'green' curricula and methodologies for embedding sustainability in curriculum, professional development models, business and industry partnerships, community partnerships, communities of practice and networks, participation of existing workforce, and campus sustainability. Thus, a strategic action and learning community between Australia and the US could maximise impact by:

- tackling cutting-edge issues, needs, and innovative solutions related to sustainability and 'green' skills practices, policies, and programs in a collaborative and integrated way
- creating a dynamic, sustained exchange of ideas, knowledge, and experiences on best practices, key challenges and solutions, and lessons learned to gain valuable new perspectives, facilitate the building of strategic relationships and capabilities, and improve outcomes and efficiencies
- tapping into existing resources, networks, and tools as well as developing new resources, as needed, such as papers and case studies, to advance the field
- building the foundation for broadening the Network to other countries, particularly developing countries.

Who would participate in the Green Skills Network?

The targeted audience for the Green Skills Network would be TAFE institutions and US community colleges, and will focus on the tertiary or postsecondary level institutions that are at various phases of 'green' skills and sustainability. The institutions will be selected through a competitive process that clearly lays out defined criteria/guidelines, with an independent advisory council made up of representatives from both countries selecting the participants. Although there may be a select group of institutions chosen in the first round, it is expected that all learnings will be documented and disseminated to ensure wider impact and additional members will be selected as additional resources are acquired over time. The suggested team of participants from each institution would include:

- Administrator/Institutional Leadership
- Emerging Institutional Leaders
- Faculty members
- Students
- Business Representatives

What are the preliminary areas of focus or themes for the Green Skills Network being proposed?

Through multiple discussions with TAFE and community colleges' representatives, broad themes of interest have emerged for the initial scope of the Network. Example themes, including:

- Framework for holistic, integrated, and systems level learning in and across disciplines, competencies and trades

- Employer/workforce development engagement strategies and partnerships
- Embedding sustainability principles into curricula
- Upskilling and re-skilling the workforce in a variety of sectors
- Transitioning the workforce from carbon intense industries to clean energy industries
- Job creation/entrepreneurship, and innovation in small and medium enterprises
- Teacher professional development and pedagogical approach to sustainability
- Policies that help support a skilled workforce in a low carbon economy.

What types of Green Skills Network activities and approaches are possible?

There is a range of possible activities that could be undertaken although there was general agreement that a product, such as an action learning strategy and plan, would need to be established to ensure meaningful and enduring outcomes and facilitate a return on investment. Activities include:

- Face-to-face meetings or learning institutes, one set in the US and one in Australia
- Robust online/virtual learning community
- An action learning strategy and plan completed by each team, which will include defined learning outcomes for this initiative
- Site visits to relevant community colleges and TAFE institutes in each country
- Possible partnerships between institutions in each country.

Stakeholder suggestions

Trends emerged from suggestions of key stakeholders that could serve as the underlying principles for the Green Skills Network. These suggestions included:

- Ensuring the initiative was building off existing resources and networks, bringing in resources and practices from other leading nations such as Germany
- Using the Green Skills Network as a stepping stone/pilot to broaden the network inclusive of Europe, Canada, and developing economies
- Bringing a staged approach to broadening the network
- Creating access to the best-in-class programs and world thought leaders
- Ensuring that the Network is sustainable beyond initial funding
- Gaining funding from a diversity of sources
- Focusing on possibly three sectors to start: energy efficiency, renewable energy, and 'green' buildings/construction.

Conclusions

The concept of a bilateral Green Skills Network has been proposed and has been met with great enthusiasm from key stakeholders in both the US and Australia. The network could foster exchanging ideas and resources, lateral thinking, and sustaining a dialogue with peers and thought leaders with common interests and commitment. The concept could be quite powerful provided that the Network has a clear purpose, a structured environment, adequate resources, and ultimately, contributes to creating a sustainable future.

Developing the workforce for a sustainable and equitable future*



Marcy Drummond

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Skilled workers are the key to economic development but we must better equip them to succeed in an ever-changing, globalised, knowledge-based economy at the same time that it is shifting as a result of sustainability policies, strategies, and technologies. Our collective prospects for long-term economic and environmental success depend on ensuring everyone — especially low-income people and people of color — can participate in and benefit from the 21st century, 'green' economy.

However, our current educational and workforce systems are not effectively preparing youth and adults to attain skilled jobs — particularly those requiring 'green' skills. This is most evident in the United States (US) where overall high school graduation and adult literacy rates are abysmal and

even worse for low-income people and people of color. Such disparities are not only unacceptable by standards of fairness and equity; they are frightening for future prospects. Given demographic trends, groups that have the lowest rates of education and literacy will be a much larger proportion of the American workforce in 2030.

Workforce development strategies that connect people who have been isolated from real economic opportunities to good jobs and careers while helping employers access 'green-skilled' employees are essential for setting us on a brighter, sustainable, and equitable future.

To ensure this, the complex system of education, training, and workforce development institutions must focus on and undertake significant efforts — such as those outlined in this paper — to assist low-income, historically under-served residents to get the training they need to obtain jobs that pay family-supporting wages and offer opportunities for advancement and growth in an economy with an ever-increasing focus on sustainability.

Commitment to youth and under-served and disconnected populations. Establishing as a core principle of all sustainable economic and workforce development efforts, an incontrovertible commitment to serving youth and under-served and disconnected populations where they live, is paramount for ensuring prosperity and sustainability for all. This commitment is also paramount for: (1) mitigating the 'divides' that often occur during economic shifts or new or emerging economies such as the 'digital divide'; (2) guaranteeing that supportive services are an essential component of workforce and economic development strategies, programs, and activities; and (3) eradicating 'creaming' (for example, selecting populations that

are easiest to serve or are most likely to succeed with minimal effort) and ensuring that all residents benefit from sustainable economic and workforce development initiatives.

Establishing an overarching regional strategy. Bringing together key regional economic and workforce development organisations to develop an overarching, commonly shared strategy provides the framework for amassing focus and resources on collective workforce development activities aimed at fostering a sustainable, equitable economy. This strategy is essential for: (1) aligning and integrating workforce and education systems; (2) identifying and selecting broad-based sustainable economic and workforce initiatives; (3) identifying and organising organisations that have supportive roles; (4) leveraging county, city, and local and organisational resources; and (5) achieving measurable impact within a very short period of time.

Job training and summer employment programs that connect under-served youth to 'green' skills training and work opportunities. Too many youths are leaving the educational system without the skills needed to access good jobs with opportunities for advancement and growth, and even fewer opportunities for acquiring 'green skills'. Programs that provide disconnected youth with real work experiences, exposure to workplaces and careers, 'green' skills training, and on-the-job experiences can successfully transition youth into 'green' careers.

Mechanisms that link jobs and training opportunities associated with sustainable neighbourhood revitalisation strategies in place-based community development efforts. Local jobs that are created in part or

fully through public investments in sustainable infrastructure development are a critical target for supporting human capital development along with the physical development of sustainable neighbourhoods and regions. Integrating people- and place-focused strategies should also be a core principle for building communities of opportunity, and ensuring that current residents can stay and grow as their neighbourhoods improve. Equitable, sustainable development practitioners should implement mechanisms that ensure local residents have ample opportunities to access training and job opportunities associated with sustainable development and neighbourhood projects such as local hiring ordinances, community benefits agreements, home weatherisation programs, and brownfield restoration projects.

Adult basic education and literacy programs that provide 'bridges' to post secondary, sustainable education and training. Many adults lack the literacy skills necessary to secure educational and career opportunities that lead to jobs that pay family-sustaining wages, contributing to a growing 'skills gap' between our workforce capacity and growing needs for a 'green-skilled' labour force. Proven educational techniques can incorporate basic adult education, sustainability, and 'green' skills into longer term career training to help adults with low literacy levels attain better employment outcomes in industries being 'greened'.

Sectoral workforce partnerships and training strategies that prepare low-skilled workers for jobs in growing sustainable industries. A 'sectoral' strategy is where industry-specific regional partnerships of employers, training and education providers, community organisations, and other key stakeholders collectively organise with the aim of keeping the industry strong and providing

good jobs with advancement opportunities for workers — with a particular focus on workers from low-income, disadvantaged communities. Recognising regional industry clusters as drivers of economic growth in today's sustainable economy, economic development practitioners should focus sectoral strategies on the need for technical workers, from historically under-served communities, in key industry sectors that are rapidly being 'greened'

Career ladder programs that equip low-wage workers with the education and skills they need to advance in the workforce and sustainable economy. Career ladder strategies explicitly link training and skills development programs to new 'rungs' of higher-skilled and better paid jobs. Such programs can improve economic mobility, counteracting the likelihood of low-wage work lasting throughout a person's career. Incorporating 'green' skills training and strategies for recruiting and advancing historically under-served and under-prepared populations in career ladder programs are essential for equity in sustainability.

* This paper was largely based on a framing paper, *Connecting people to regional economic opportunity: supporting innovative workforce development strategies through federal policy*, written by PolicyLink and Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, to inform the White House Office of Urban Affairs Tour to Los Angeles, California.



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In 1992, the Congress of the United States (US) mandated the development of a program at the National Science Foundation (NSF) to support the education of technicians for the high technology industries that keep the US competitive in the global workplace. This mandate resulted in the development of the Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program, and the program has become the largest community college initiative in the NSF portfolio. The program emphasises the role of the community colleges, US public two-year institutions, as the main providers of technician education, and focuses on partnerships between education, industry, and economic development agencies to respond to established and emerging workforce needs. ATE has grown from a budget of USD13.5 million in 1994 to USD64 million in fiscal year 2011. The NSF current support of community

colleges is approximately USD350 million, and more than 80% of these funds support ATE projects and centres.

The ATE program has remained receptive to emerging technological areas, and in the past few years, increasing numbers of proposals in the areas of energy and 'green' skills have been submitted and supported. The program supports both national and regional centres on renewable energy as well as a regional centre on nuclear energy. Centres on automotive technology that focus on hybrid cars, and renewable energy sources for transportation are also supported. Additional information on the ATE Centres may be found at www.atecenters.org.

The portfolio of projects spans energy efficiency, renewable energy, and sustainable energy projects. The projects are responsive to the local industry needs, and include both certificate and associate degree programs at the community colleges. Where industry requires additional education for entry-level technicians, the community colleges have established programs that articulate with four-year institutions. Many community colleges have also reached into the secondary schools to build a pipeline of students to create articulated 2 (secondary) +2 (community college) +2 (four-year institution) programs. Where applicable, programs have included industry certifications as part of the program structure, and some community colleges have partnered with unions and industry to recognise and award college credit for apprenticeship programs.

With the growing interest nationally in these areas, the NSF asked the Advanced Technology Education Energy and Environmental Center (ATEEC) to host a series of seven regional conversations to examine the energy workforce trends within the US. A final

national conversation was held in Washington, DC in December 2010 as a capstone to the regional conversations. Reports were published on both the regional and national conversations and the reports can be downloaded from the ATEEC website (www.ateec.org). Briefly, both the regional and national conversations brought together key stakeholders from industry, education, federal agencies, and other organisations involved in energy fields. Both the regional and national conversations highlighted the need for community college programs to provide students with basic foundational workplace skills as well as industry identified specific skills and competencies. A large number of specific 'green' occupations were identified including jobs that would provide support for a primary area. For example, participants looked at the smart grid and commented that cybersecurity would be a growing need in that area.

Community colleges working in partnership with industries and economic development agencies identified energy efficiency as one of the largest growth areas across the US. This included both new and retrofit construction and the ensuing need for energy auditors. Some community college programs are providing access to current workers so that they may add a level of 'green' skills to their existing skill set to remain competitive in their field, while others are branching out to support new industries in their region. Wind turbine programs have been developed in Wyoming to support the growing industry in the region. Community colleges in the midwestern US are looking at biomass and the production of biofuels. In the southeast and southwest US, solar programs are being implemented at community colleges.

The ATE program has supported community colleges and technician education programs since 1994. Given the predicted growth in the green sector, one can expect that community colleges will continue to innovate and grow programs within this vital area with support, in part, from the ATE program at the NSF.

Stream 1

Why should TAFE offer higher education?

Chair: Bruce Mackenzie, PSM, CEO, Holmesglen Institute

The international marketplace is demanding degree qualifications. Universities, with their monopoly on Commonwealth Supported Places, are offering access to undergraduate education to students who would have normally undertaken diplomas. TAFE students aspire to quality educational outcomes and employment. By offering undergraduate education in TAFE institutions, their aspirations have a chance of being realised.

Themes:

1. Models of TAFE/HE provision in Australia and internationally
2. Cost benefit analysis
3. Is TAFE straying from its mission?
4. Will pressure to drive up qualifications leave some TAFE institutes with a reduced mission?

Panel:

Linda Brown, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Director TAFE, Swinburne University of Technology

Kevin Harris, Institute Director TAFE NSW – Northern Sydney; TDA Board Member

Wayne Collyer, Managing Director, Polytechnic West; TDA Board Member

Nicholas Hunt, CEO, William Angliss Institute; TDA Board Member

Stream 1: Why should TAFE offer higher education?



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The current push for TAFE institutes to deliver an increasing number of higher education programs, such as generic undergraduate degrees, is denying the fact that VET has its own mission for higher qualifications that is not being explored. TAFE should more fully explore the range of higher VET qualifications that fit within its own mission and use the learning pedagogies that work for skill development and knowledge. We are contributing to the confusion over what VET is; we are not exploiting our own uniqueness but wanting to be someone else.

Higher VET should include advanced trade qualifications such as master trade qualifications. The Master Tradesman in Europe is valued for high levels of skill and practical knowledge, not necessarily academic knowledge. My mechanic completed a post trade qualification in Automotive Development Engineering. He did this qualification

in Italy because he could not find a similar qualification in Melbourne. His qualification is based on a trade and although he wanted to develop his knowledge of engine performance and design in both theoretical and practical ways, he wanted to do so without leaving his trade. Thank goodness, because he is great at diagnosing and fixing engine performance problems! He recently told me a story of being invited to a large car manufacturer's design studio with a group of academically trained engineers to examine some engine problems the company was having. Everyone except him arrived in a suit; he arrived in his overalls. He was the only person who approached the engine problems from a hands-on perspective — there is no prize for guessing who resolved the problems because he could combine the practical with the theoretical.

The Master Builders Master Tradesman is another form of accreditation which provides some access to training but the individual gains no further qualifications. In Europe, the increased skills and knowledge developed by the Master Craftsman or Tradesman are recognised through qualifications. They also gain advanced standing and prestige while staying within skill-based education.

There are master trade qualifications in Australia — graduate certificates and a trade honours program (SkillsTech Australia in Queensland). Both of these qualifications support the tradesman to either build their craft or develop skills in broader areas of supervision and management, marketing and sales, etc. But all of the additional training is done in the context of their trade. Why doesn't VET use this model to extend the level of its qualifications rather than moving into degrees — applied or not?

The highest growth Swinburne University (TAFE) is experiencing at the moment is in graduate certificates and diplomas. These are practically based qualifications that students gain real benefits from. This is our current version of higher level VET.

Valuing skills and the development of competence are vital for VET. If it's an argument about funding and funding levels, we should have that with government, or if it's about training packages being inappropriate at some levels and not meeting the skill requirements of new jobs, we need to have that discussion and fix the problem. The solution is not to move into higher education.

If training packages are not meeting the key skills (core skills or generic skills) requirements for all levels, we need to fix it. There are models for doing this which work successfully in other countries. Students do two types of qualifications in parallel. The first qualification is to ensure the key skills which are required to do the job are built, and the second qualification is to ensure that the knowledge requirements of the job are also met. Students, up to PhD level, must maintain their key skills at the same level (or a minimum of one level below) as their knowledge development.

Undergraduate degrees are not appropriate for all jobs and all students. The pedagogy of VET is the best model for practical and applied skills development. Skills development is tied into two outcomes — economic development and knowledge development. If VET moves into higher education as its way of delivering higher qualifications, forgetting its mission, the economy will be the poorer and so will the level of practical knowledge in Australia. The economy will falter.

We must deal with the nexus from research to knowledge and skills. Without VET's engagement

in this process we will reduce the diffusion and implementation of innovation from research outcomes. In the recent NCVER paper on *VET diffusion and implementation of innovation in the mining, solar energy and computer games sector*, Robert Dalitz, Phillip Toner and Tim Turpin (NCVER Monograph Series 06/2011) say that the 'greatest contribution that formal VET can make is in establishing foundational knowledge and understanding, which build the capacity to learn'. I reject this; we have a much larger contribution to make but it requires significant change to what is considered in the scope of VET — higher VET is needed. The diffusion and implementation innovation will not occur through higher education alone.

VET must find its own way to value-add to Australia's educational needs and this is not through substituting higher education for a real and necessary path in higher VET. We need a planned approach to developing higher VET qualifications, accepting the value of higher levels of skill development, treasuring our own pedagogical approach to education, and accepting the challenges of innovation diffusion and our role in achieving it. Why don't we want to have a complementary approach to higher qualifications instead of a conflicting or competitive one?

Stream 1 : Why should TAFE offer higher education?



Kevin Harris

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Thank you Bruce (Chair) and it's a pleasure to be here although I have to say that the usual has happened in that it seemed like a light ask to respond to when I was invited to present and join this plenary. Easy topic and pretty straightforward and should take very little effort to prepare for. Wrong! I have considered ten different ways to present a point of view for participants to chew on and rejected them all. Why, because I kept on coming back to the same fundamental point. Why should TAFE offer higher education? Well, why not!!!?

There is nothing to justify here. There is no duplication of effort. There is no sub-optimisation in applying resources. Great outcomes will be achieved for economic growth. Community well-being will be improved. More aspiring individuals will have greater options to achieve their goals. So, why shouldn't TAFE offer higher education programs as Higher Education institutions?

I should probably sit down now and let someone else have a go but perhaps I haven't made my position clear enough!!? And besides, the organisers have given me five minutes!

Let's drill down a bit on the question by asking another. Are TAFE institutes as higher education institutions offering degree programs straying from their mission? To answer this, I ask you to consider the declared and extensively broadcast mission of my Institute, NSI. This well-known mission in the market place and community has never been challenged and rather has been received very positively by all.

NSI's mission is to provide **vocational skills** for individuals seeking to improve their vocational prospects *and* **workforce development** for enterprises endeavouring to improve their productivity. Is NSI straying from its mission in offering a degree program in ICT Network Engineering, in Hotel Management, in Accounting and Business Administration?

Certainly, if I asked are we straying from our mission if we offer a degree program in the philosophy of pet rocks or a degree program in advanced finger painting, the answer would be quite clear. Unless, of course, one can argue that these bodies of knowledge areas are applicable to vocational skills. Perhaps this comparison is a wee bit too blunt and I present it for a bit of fun, but I offer the comparison mainly to draw attention to what I think is behind the question of today's discussion, two questions in fact worth exploring.

First, what is different between the mission of a university and the mission of a TAFE institute? I believe there is a clear difference but that doesn't mean TAFE does not have an important role to play in higher education. Let's have a look at a few university declared missions.

University of Western Sydney: *'To be a University of international standing and outlook, achieving excellence through **scholarship, teaching, learning, research** and service to its regional, national and international communities, beginning with the people of Greater Western Sydney.'*

University of Sydney Business School: *'The mission of the University of Sydney Business School is to build and sustain the leading **learning** community in business and management education in Australia and its region.'*

Australian National University: *'to be one of the world's great **research** institutions, distinguished by outstanding **teaching**, guiding students to the frontiers of **knowledge** and the best standards of scholarship.'*

Queensland University: *'The mission of the University of Queensland is to create and transmit ideas and **knowledge** and to develop **cognitive** skills through teaching and research of the highest international standards.'*

The common thread of these declared university missions is emphasised by words used such as 'scholarship', 'research', 'learning', and 'knowledge'.

Now let's have a look at the mission statement of a few TAFE institutes.

Box Hill Victoria: *'... to provide training and education to meet the **workforce development** needs of the community we serve by developing the **skills** which enable students to participate and optimise opportunities in the employment market and which enable enterprises to be competitive, sustainable and successful in the market place.'*

Southbank Queensland: *for their students, '... provide educational development pathways and enhance **skills** for a global market'* and for industry,

*'... deliver **skilling solutions** that increase workforce participation and build organisational capability'.*

The common thread of these declared TAFE institute missions is emphasised by words used such as 'workforce development' and 'vocational skills'.

I think that most would not push back on the notion that the key words of common usage in the university mission statements are appropriate for higher education. And I certainly hope that most would also not push back on the notion that, similarly, the key words used in the TAFE mission statements are also appropriate for higher education. These key words used by universities and TAFE institutes in declaring their mission of scholarship, research, teaching, learning, vocational skills and workforce development all apply in the higher education space. The purpose and mission of TAFE institutes is in harmony with the purpose and mission of universities in the higher education space. But are TAFE institutes trying to be something they are not? Do they add value in the higher education space? Without wanting to be too provocative, imagine an orchestra full of only violin players.

What of process and outcomes in the higher education space? What is the core of the product provided by universities, and is this different to that of TAFE institutes? Is it too simple to say the university product is centred on 'knowledge' whereas the TAFE institute product is centred on 'skills'? Perhaps, and certainly a debate requiring far too much time than we have today. Is the product core of universities focused on the process of knowledge (research, teaching and learning) whereas the focus of the TAFE institute product is outcomes (skills and productive workforce)? For example, my Institute's the focus of our product for yet to be employed students, is for them to get a job. Certainly TAFE

institutes are required to achieve revenue by providing outcomes and not just by providing access and a learning experience. The important point here is whether the key product focus on outcomes by TAFE institutes is not appropriate in higher education. Again, I think most would agree that the universities focus of process (research, teaching and learning) and that TAFE institutes on outcomes (skills and productive workforce) are both in harmony with higher education.

So, back to the big question! Why should TAFE offer higher education? Well, why not!!!!? Imagine an orchestra with the richness of many different instruments rather than just violins.

Stream 1 : Why should TAFE offer higher education?



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Positioning Polytechnic West in the tertiary education and training landscape

Introduction

Polytechnic West has positioned itself as a tertiary education provider in the emerging tertiary education landscape in Australia. As such, it is seeking to deliver on its strategic vision of offering applied vocational qualifications at Levels 1 to 8 of the AQF, expanding its current delivery of VET qualifications to include higher education diplomas, associate degrees, graduate certificates and graduate diplomas.

Polytechnic West has a well respected position with industry in Western Australia through developing and nurturing sound business relationships with key industry groups, professional bodies and

educational stakeholders to optimise opportunities for our students and graduates. This foray into higher education is seen as positioning the organisation as a point of difference from other tertiary providers.

At the cutting edge

The Strategic Vision for Higher Education at Polytechnic West 2010–2013 sets out the vision, mission, values and objectives for the development of higher education at the polytechnic. This paper sets out our plan with respect to ensuring the objectives are achieved in a way that stays true to the values of the organisation and makes a distinctive contribution to the education and training environment in Western Australia.

The prime focus of Polytechnic West is to provide meaningful pathways for people to reach their potential in specialised fields through applied, practical learning experiences, and in doing so, meet the current and future needs of industry. Additionally, Polytechnic West is responding to a niche requirement in the market: one that Industry tells us is not being met. The niche is the gap between the 'professional tertiary qualified' individual and the tradesperson.

The Polytechnic has identified five areas of focus in developing our higher education portfolio and delivery culture. These areas of focus are aspirational in nature and described as the 'Five Pillars of Excellence', namely:

1. A unique and enriched higher education experience

- Students can learn and accomplish in an educational environment which successfully blends theory with practice to produce work ready graduates.

2. Strong governance

- > Polytechnic West will build on its strong governance framework to ensure that systems, processes and structural arrangements support the delivery of quality higher education qualifications. The Governing Council has approved a single integrated Academic Board with respect to the governance of all academic matters (with VET and higher education).

3. A diverse student base

- > Polytechnic West seeks to increase the number and diversity of students studying higher education qualifications.

4. Applied courses to meet the needs of industry

- > In partnership with industry Polytechnic West will source and develop practically focused higher education qualifications in both our iconic delivery areas and other areas in high demand in the labour market.

5. Quality delivery and academic excellence

- > Polytechnic West recognises that quality is at the heart of higher education and builds on this perspective through an approach to pedagogy where scholarship and intellectual rigour are paramount.

Opportunities

The external education environment is changing with the move to a focus on tertiary education that provides seamless pathways from VET to higher education and these changes are being supported by changes in policy, quality assurance and funding.

It is likely that further development of higher education courses and qualifications will become a priority for TAFE providers in light of Commonwealth and State policy direction.

There is the opportunity to develop both depth and breadth of higher education courses in Polytechnic West's iconic delivery areas.

Industry is keen to support the development of relevant higher education courses in some areas, particularly in the fashion business, engineering, computing and mining. There are emerging opportunities to partner with industry including the provision of additional funding from some of these industries.

Operationalising the strategic vision

To ensure Polytechnic West is successful in achieving this strategic vision over the next five years, there are a number of strategic issues that need to be addressed. These include:

- Developing a quality assured course and program portfolio that delivers learners meaningful qualifications that are valued by industry and provides a pathway to further study.
- Developing and maintaining supportive relationships with other higher education providers that ensure articulation to further learning is available to graduates and that assist the Polytechnic benchmark itself against similar organisations.
- Building a culture of higher education across the Polytechnic that ensures sound academic governance, supports scholarship and research, builds a critical mass of suitably qualified expertise around key disciplines and encourages academic debate, academic

freedom and academic responsibility.

- Developing a strong reputation as a high quality higher education provider through providing pathways for students from VET to progress to higher education, achieving excellent results for students and strong relationships with the industries and professions we work with.

Summary

For Polytechnic West to be successful, the organisation will have a portfolio of courses and programs of sufficient depth and breadth which lead to industry-relevant qualifications and articulation to further study. The programs and courses offered facilitate VET and school students to progress their studies without having to undertake unnecessary duplication of learning. Programs are endorsed by industry, lead to professional recognition where appropriate and are quality assured.

In addition, our position in this market will be measured by our student success through providing a high quality teaching and learning environment, well designed learning resources and assessments, and industry standard facilities and equipment that support the mix of theory and practice required to produce work-ready graduates. This will include having sufficient industry placements to provide externships, internships, cadetships and/or workplace-based assignments where required.

The major challenge for our staff will be knowledge creation, scholarship and technology transfer through creating an environment that supports academic enquiry, applied research and technology transfer that contributes to the ongoing development of the Polytechnic and the enterprises, industries and professions we work with.

Finally, enhancing the Polytechnic West brand as a quality provider of industry-relevant higher education courses and qualifications is of major importance. This will include building on our strengths and promoting our areas of excellence, growing strategic and high quality governance that is responsive and accountable to stakeholder demands, and leveraging key strategic partnerships with industry and other higher education providers.

Stream 1: Why should TAFE offer higher education?



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The world is changing, technology is driving change within vocational areas, expectations of individuals and enterprises are changing, so it is really only logical that we find ourselves discussing one of the elements of change.

Higher education is a label. University is a label. TAFE is a label. At a given point in time, these labels mean and have meant different things to people of their time. What is of concern in this debate is that it appears to be centred only on who can and cannot, who should and who should not rather than why or why not or even more simply, what is involved, and why is there value in considering this proposition?

In thinking about why or why not, it seems with Vocational Education and Training (VET) everybody can and is encouraged to deliver it; schools, technical centres, community and adult learning, private RTOs and of course universities. I am not talking

about next year's influx into the diploma realm, I am talking about their traditional programs.

Universities have been longstanding providers of vocational training. Let's take a look at a couple. What is pharmacy – high end retail these days, or are the mortar and pestle still active in that back room? Three questions: Are you on any medication? Have you had this before? Credit or savings? These seem to be the extent of what is essentially a very vocational program. Beyond pharmacy there is medicine, and then there is law – which also has a one-year traineeship, branded as 'articles', there is also veterinary science, dentistry, engineering and, of course, commerce for vocationally training accountants.

In this debate, the issue seems to be that 'TAFE' is not qualified to issue these sorts of qualifications. I note an article from last year, written by the then Vice Chancellor of Swinburne University Ian Young. He says:

TAFE degrees risk devaluing out tertiary qualifications

Giving TAFEs the authority to offer bachelors, masters and PhDs, and receive government funding to do so, are significant proposals being put forward by TAFE Directors Australia.

As a vice-chancellor of a dual-sector university, I naturally welcome the chance to seriously reconsider TAFE's role in the tertiary education sector. However, the suggestions being put forward by the TAFE Directors ring alarm bells for me.

Allowing TAFEs to hand out masters and PhDs must raise red flags, as these are known the world over as degrees earned only as a result of significant study in universities.

Deeply worried as I am about this suggestion, it is actually the expansion of bachelor programs in TAFE and the extension of government funding to support this that concerns me most.

Such a move should be considered carefully and not implemented until the quality of these degrees can be guaranteed and there has been time to understand how the newly expanded higher education system is functioning. To do otherwise is a high-risk strategy with the potential to damage the entire sector (*The Australian*, 4 August 2010).

Unfortunately, this inflammatory language is not about the content or the programs; it does not add to the debate about how TAFEs may bring a new or additional element to higher education. What is worse is that someone might think it is considered, well researched and credible because the individual comes from a university.

We all have challenges to ensure the best standard of teaching and learning is applied in our programs. From a public sector perspective we are committed to a range of values which seek to advance our students, our programs, support industry areas and continue to raise the standard in line with community expectations.

As an industry specialist, William Angliss Institute offers two degrees and we are looking to offer more. Since commencing in 2007, we currently have 455 higher education students. These students select our programs because they are what they are looking for and our students like the fact that they are not business degrees with a 'veneer' of industry specialisation.

The journey has been positive for the Institute, it has been good for many of our staff in both degree

and diploma areas. Our Enter Score still sits at 63+ which in the current market is as good as any from the traditional universities. Industry is recognising the programs and our students are gaining great roles in industry.

We have worked through external mid-term program reviews and external review on re-registration (one every five years).

We are not straying from our mission. In 2011, it is not uncommon to find a chef is running a kitchen with a AUD10m budget and a huge kitchen brigade, working with very technically advanced equipment and cooking methods which have been around for only five to eight years.

We are seeking to provide the right skills to individuals for our industry to enable them to achieve their own goals and aspirations.

Forty years ago, a diploma qualification in our industry was created and deemed appropriate. At the time, I am led to believe, this took a lot of negotiating, lobbying and reviews to have it established. It has served the industry exceptionally well. Looking forward, we can see the same coming from vocationally grounded higher education degrees, graduate certificates and other programs on offer from TAFE.

Thank you.

Stream 2

Offshore TAFE

Chair: Dianne Murray, Deputy Chair, TDA Board; Chair, Australian TAFE International Network

Based on a recent report, there are over 73,000 students studying for an Australian VET qualification offshore; almost 90% with a VET public provider. Already identified by many TAFE institutes as an area for even further growth, what are the risks, how can we ensure quality, and how could this type of provision enhance regional cooperation and recognition?

Themes:

1. Benefits for VET in trading offshore
2. Quality assurance/regulation of offshore programs
3. Recognition of regional qualifications
4. Australian Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) – rampant opportunists or global citizens?
5. Transnational qualifications framework

Panel:

Mark Howland, CEO, DEC International & TAFE NSW National Business

Marie Hill, Senior Education Manager, Austrade

Richard Clifford, Executive Manager, Quality – Corporate Governance, Box Hill Institute



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Australian RTOs – rampant opportunists or global citizens?

In a global market place, perception is king and there is little place to hide with deeds speaking louder than words.

For many years, Australia has been extremely proud of the quality of our education and training provision and our interplay with both individuals and foreign government representatives. In more recent times, the tenor of the discussion seems to have moved dramatically away from the more altruistic ideals behind education and training to the baser element of commercial return.

The client, whether government or individual, is media attuned and savvy, and is paying close attention.

Our acknowledgement of this and actions to remedy this perception will have a marked impact of what legacy we leave on this landscape. Is the future dialogue to be about collaboration and cooperation or commercial returns and opportunism?

To underline this question, I would like to relate two recent experiences.

China

In August of this year, I had the pleasure of participating in the Australia-China Trade 2.0 Mission, headed by the Minister for Trade, Dr Craig Emerson MP.

The mission focused on the next phase of the economic partnership between Australia and China, as China moves from an export-led growth model to the growth of its middle class and the commensurate demand for consumer products and services.

The mission's geographic focus was on China's second-tier cities including Guangzhou, Changsha, Wuhan, Chengdu and Chongqing.

Of the more than 100 delegates, there was a strong education presence with higher education, vocational education and school providers in attendance.

During an education and training breakout in Hubei Province, there was a significant interaction with Chinese government counterparts and a presentation by Professor Li Xiangkun, Dean International School, Hubei University. Professor Li gave a strongly worded presentation, one I would suggest was supported by Chinese government officials, recommending Australian education and

training organisations move away from continuing commercialism and instead focus on a sustainable, two-way partnership model.

To quote, 'Australian government's mention of AUD18.6 billion industry is listened to in China and is not appreciated'.

Abu Dhabi

For those of you who haven't been to the United Arab Emirates, Abu Dhabi is described in a travel brochure as having:

... year-round sunshine, pristine beaches, spectacular sand dunes and a pulsating cosmopolitan lifestyle combined with distinctive Arabian hospitality and world-class infrastructure.

While the above may be true, what about its greatest resource – its people?

Abu Dhabi is the largest and most populated of the seven Emirates that make up the United Arab Emirates (UAE). While the population is referenced as 1.6 million, only 20% of these are Emirati citizens, with 52% under the age of 20. Unemployment and under-employment are regarded as high among the Emirati population.

While the fallout of the 2007–11 GFC only brushed the Emirate, it has had a lasting effect. The early days of the GFC saw thousands of highly paid expatriates heading for the exits, many leaving behind large financial responsibilities. This expedient expatriate behaviour reinforced the image of westerners as being more interested in commercial gain than in being interested in the Emirate or its people. This in turn led to a heightened distrust.

While the above is an example of a negative insight, I would also like to touch on a positive.

From 2008 to early 2010, I had the pleasure of spending time in the UAE as Director of Abu Dhabi Vocational Education & Training Institute (ADVETI), a partnership between the Abu Dhabi government and TAFE NSW.

The primary aim of ADVETI is to assist in up-skilling Emiratis in vocational areas and preparing them for the work environment.

The ADVETI experience can be broken down into the student and staff experience, curriculum and recognition, and the provider.

For students, benefits can be observed as greater cultural awareness and cultural exchange, language acquisition, greater cultural comfort and support by undertaking in-country training, and the potential of being awarded a nationally and internationally recognised qualification. These perceived and observable benefits were highlighted in the inaugural 2011 graduation ceremony for 150 graduands.

From a staffing viewpoint, different angles can be examined. For expatriate staff members, the opportunity to serve overseas is of immeasurable benefit which facilitates greater cultural awareness and appreciation of different student backgrounds, aspirations and learning environments. For local staff, the ability to work alongside talented international professionals and to be exposed to different educational paradigms is in itself an enormous opportunity.

The Abu Dhabi Economic Vision 2030 emphasises the Emirate's drive for a more sustainable and diversified economy. This drive for diversification, as well as the challenge of a burgeoning population, delivers a greater need for Abu Dhabi to upgrade the quality of its education system, and to equip its youth to

enter the labour market. To this end, ADVETI selected and tailored 25 TAFE NSW diplomas to meet their specific local requirements. Through industry buy-in, these proven programs were contextualised and enriched.

Conclusions

China and Abu Dhabi have been very different experiences but they both bring us back to the question of what underpins our relationship in the global marketplace: is the future dialogue to be about collaboration and cooperation or commercial returns and opportunism?

Yes, from a provider's point of view, there is no denying that there is a commercial return but raised profile, international collaboration and cooperation and the ideals behind education and training are also the main drivers.

The challenge for us all is in finding the balance.



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Offshore opportunities for Australian providers of VET

Based on a recent report, there are over 73,000 students studying for an Australian VET qualification offshore; almost 90% with a VET public provider. Already identified by many TAFE institutes as an area for even further growth, what are the risks, how can we ensure quality, and how could this type of provision enhance regional cooperation and recognition? (National Quality Council/TVET Australia Report).

Austrade observes the same increasing level of interest in offshore delivery opportunities cited in the National Quality Council/TVET Australia Report, referred to in the preamble to this session above. This rising interest in transnational education is occurring not only in the public VET sector but in the private VET and higher education sectors

too. The opportunities for offshore delivery, as most would know, can take many forms, from articulation agreements to joint programs, the sale or licensing of curriculum, consultancy including in the context of international development projects, corporate training including that associated with Australian investments and business in other sectors, and offshore campuses. In many respects, Austrade is uniquely placed to support this activity, with a global network of more than 100 offices in 55 countries, including approximately 80 FTE staff dedicated to education, coverage of other business sectors in which Australian capability is well regarded internationally, a greater emphasis on growth and emerging markets and a more opportunity-driven approach to its three corporate responsibilities – trade, investment and education.

Austrade can assist institutions and organisations seeking to pursue offshore delivery opportunities in a number of ways. It can help identify and assess opportunities in various markets. It can provide market intelligence and advice about business practices to inform international strategies. It can make introductions, contribute to the selection of suitable partners, and support the development of relationships. Equally, Austrade can help institutions and organisations to apprise themselves of the challenges of pursuing offshore delivery, including the financial realities in some markets, practical advice about establishing a business presence, and in cooperation with AEI, providing information about education-related regulatory obligations, accreditation and matters related to qualifications recognition.

With the NQC/TVET Australia Report indicating that the vast majority of students (64,819 or 69%) in offshore Australian VET programs are in China, interest in China is particularly high. Other markets

making up the top ten are Vietnam, Fiji, Kuwait, PNG, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Malaysia, South Korea and Singapore. The percentage of the student cohort falls away sharply after China with Vietnam just 4%, and the total of the top 10 countries being over 80% of the total of all students undertaking an Australian VET qualification offshore.

While not presently featuring among the top ten markets, India too is attracting particular interest, due probably to the sheer scale of anticipated opportunities. The Australian Government has committed to contribute to the Indian National Skill Development Corporation's efforts to meet its target of up-skilling 500 million people by the year 2022. Interest in India may also be due to the much anticipated liberalisation of laws relating to the establishment of foreign university campuses there.

The sheer number and socio-economic demographic of those requiring relevant skills or up-skilling at the VET level in many markets means that to be viable in an economic sense, education and training must be delivered in-market. This is both an opportunity and a challenge for Australian VET providers.

Overseas governments and industry, particularly in the near region, have identified the supply of skilled labour as critical to economic development and competitiveness and are moving towards demand-driven competency-based training. Examples include:

- Malaysia: Master Plan: Malaysian Occupational Skills Development and Training 2008-2020 which aims to develop the human resources necessary for Malaysia to be a fully developed country, with a knowledge-based economy by 2020.

- China: National Plan Outline for Medium and Long Term Education Reform and Development (2010-2020). Already skills shortages are impacting on the industry with rapid technological change requiring companies having to bring graduates of state-run VET colleges up to speed before they can be set to work. Enhancing the overall quality of VET and developing VET in rural areas have been given priority by the Chinese Government till 2020.
- The Indian Government, as mentioned above, wishes to skill up 500 million (this is not a typo!) people by 2022. Under the Skill Development Initiative and the National Skill Development Mission: approximately \$5 billion is being invested to set up 1,600 new industrial training institutes (ITIs) and polytechnics, 10,000 new vocational schools and 50,000 new Skill Development Centres.
- Papua New Guinea: where industry, the resources sector, and the building and construction industry require skilled workers now, and into the future.
- Vietnam has critical skill shortages impeding economic growth. The government sees harnessing the 'youth bulge' as an opportunity to shift the country from an agriculture-based economy to an industrial, or even, post-industrial one.
- Thailand: work has already commenced on the development of competency-based skills standards with 39 industrial sectors as well as the tourism and services sectors.

Australia has been working with governments in the region to develop their VET sectors along the Australian model of providing industry-driven, competency-based training relevant to the needs

of industry and the economy. There is widespread recognition of the quality of the Australian VET system and the training it provides.

Further, as the countries of ASEAN move closer to the stated goal of economic integration, even more opportunities are emerging for Australian providers. Moves are afoot to harmonise qualifications frameworks to enable greater labour mobility and, by implication, provider mobility. We understand priority areas for harmonisation are quality assurance, provider registration and accreditation, qualifications recognition, program content and delivery and data collection. This will present further opportunities for Australian providers to deliver VET offshore.

What has Austrade been doing to assist Australian providers to take advantage of the burgeoning opportunities for offshore VET delivery, particularly in the wider Asian region? A few examples:

- In 2008, TAFE NSW won the bid to develop the Workforce Training Master Plan for the Shanghai World Expo 2010, providing the blueprint for managing the delivery of training to the entire organisational workforce – 180,000 paid, volunteer and contractor staff – across all Expo events and activities. TAFE NSW engaged Austrade in the bidding process and following up procedures, and Austrade played a key role as a bridge between TAFE NSW and Shanghai World Expo.
- North Melbourne Institute of TAFE recently signed an MOU with Wuhan Commercial College to deliver a joint program of equine training. Austrade discovered and sought suitable partners for the opportunity when Wuhan won approval from the country's top sports authority to run weekly horseracing

competitions. It is anticipated that the project will begin this September.

- Some of the other work Austrade has done in China is the identification of opportunities for VET in the agribusiness area with a focus on viticulture and wine technology, horticulture, animal husbandry and equine. A transnational education report is also being commissioned to understand business aspects of collaboration (including around fee setting, among other things.). And we have been cooperating with TDA on organising the China-Australia Green Skills conference.
- When the Singaporean Workforce Development Agency (WDA) issued public tenders to consultants in English speaking countries, particularly the United Kingdom, United States of America, Europe and Australia on projects meant to help formulate qualification framework across 9-10 industry sectors such as Precision Engineering, Tourism & Hospitality, Public Health, etc., Austrade helped to enable Australian TAFE institutions to win 6-7 of these projects, including Box Hill TAFE. Over the years, Box Hill TAFE continued to build a relationship with WDA and in 2009, it became the first Australian TAFE institution to be supported and funded by WDA to set up Box Hill TAFE Singapore to offer programs that adhered to the Singapore Workskills Qualification Framework.

These are but a few recent initiatives. Austrade also has contracted TDA to create a report of member' capabilities, experience and interest in offshore delivery. The results will be used to help focus the global Austrade education network to seek market intelligence and opportunities aligned to the strengths of the Australian VET sector and

individual providers. We plan to share the results across Austrade to further promote the generation of education and training-related opportunities in other industry sectors. We invite you to contact us to provide further insights and advice about the kind of information and opportunities you would like our offshore network to generate, where possible, and we look forward to working with you to identify, assess and capture offshore opportunities.



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Quality assurance – a planned approach

Introduction

Recent press headlines have identified some of the big issues that have affected our onshore delivery, and these are also matters we need to be well aware of as we look to expand our delivery of technical and further education internationally. We need to have carefully considered the big issues, particularly the balance between opportunities and risks, before taking action that could put our own organisation, our industry, or Australian education more generally at risk on the global stage.

A quality approach

Quality is defined by the customer or stakeholder and as we expand internationally, we will have very

many different stakeholders with very different requirements from our TAFE institutions locally. We need to be aware of these various stakeholders, and their varying requirements, and our ability to meet these. In a global contestable environment we need to not only be good at what we do, but also able to demonstrate this to our stakeholders.

Along with representatives from many other TAFE institutions nationally, I was involved with Moira Shulze and Sue Foster in the development of the 'Good Practice Guide for VET Offshore Delivery',¹ and I commend this document to you. It also recognises and builds on the work done by other groups including Victorian TAFE International² and their 2009 'Quality Assurance in Transnational Vocational Education Programs' document. The challenges, risks and quality assurance for offshore delivery are set out in the Good Practice Guide in a diagram that aligns with the ADRI (Approach Deployment Results and Improvement³) continuous improvement cycle utilised by the Australian Universities Quality Agency, and many universities and TAFE institutes, including my own organisation, Box Hill Institute.

The ADRI Model is a way of looking at the different needs of different groups and making sure that we have considered key activities and requirements as part of a continuous improvement cycle, and that we have the capacity and commitment to deliver quality training and assessment that meets the needs of these disparate groups.

Onshore or offshore – quality counts

In his presentation to the International Education Symposium⁴ in April this year, Michael Gallagher, Executive Director of the Group of 8 Universities, showed examples demonstrating the growth in inbound international students in VET growing consistently from a base of around 20,000 in 1994

to around 60,000 over the following ten years, then exploding massively to over 230,000 in the next four years, before dropping to around 210,000 in 2010. And for many TAFE providers, the decline in inbound international student enrolments continues.

In parallel with the decline in inbound international students, there tends to be a very real reduction in the 'flexible' funding income available to our TAFE institutes, not to mention the impact on Teaching and Service Centres that had been established and grown to meet the needs of these inbound international students.

The importance of planning

In their paper, 'The regrettable and unnecessary decline of Australia's third largest export',⁵ the Hospitality Training Association notes the significant downturn in international education, which was worth around AUD19 billion to the Australian economy, and Australia's third largest export industry, and states that 'Australia needs to decide whether it is in the business of international education, and in so doing provide a genuine and tangible way to increase the wealth and prosperity of our country'. A key focus of the paper is the importance of strong planning at all stages, and understanding the critical drivers to achieve success.

As noted by Moira Schulze and Sue Foster in their presentation on behalf of the National Quality Council (NQC), offshore VET is growing for both public and private providers, and while it provides commercial opportunities, it comes with significant financial and reputational risks.

In developing offshore delivery all participants need to protect and build both the reputation of and confidence in the Australian VET system.

The Good Practice Guide recognises not only the importance of appropriate planning and due diligence as part of our approach to offshore delivery, but also the importance of having both a cyclical review process, and making sure that the data or evidence on which past decisions have been made is still accurate. And it also recognises that sometimes the best decision may be to not proceed, so includes both the 'go/no-go' and 'exit' strategies.

Ensuring full value

As has been the case previously under the AQTF and is now in line with the requirements of the new VET Quality Framework,⁶ and the Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations, we are required to recognise AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by any other RTO.

I often refer to the AQF Qualifications and VET Units of Competency as a currency, and as such we need to know that when we are recognising a AUD5 bill or 'qualification,' from another RTO, we can be confident that it will be the full AUD5 – comprising 500 cents, not a 'discounted' qualification where only 400 cents can be evidenced.

With the decline of inbound international students, we are seeing a growth in the number of public and private providers who are venturing offshore, and it is important to ensure that the required standards are maintained by all participants.

The importance of understanding the international delivery

In December 2010 the NQC released their 'Policy on Internationalising VET Qualifications'⁷ which notes that in regard to Quality Assurance registration and audit processes, a Registering Body should:

1. ensure that auditors understand the risks and challenges of delivering Australian VET in, and for international contexts and locations; and
2. develop a nationally consistent approach to quality assuring the delivery of VET in and for international contexts and locations.

Unfortunately, history has shown that 'dodgy' providers to inbound international students have affected us all, including both private providers and many TAFE colleges and institutes with strong quality assurance practices and high standards.

With the current and expected growth of offshore delivery, not only do we need to have confidence in our own quality assurance practices, but also that government and regulatory bodies have appropriate safeguards in place to ensure that there will be international recognition of the consistently high quality of Australia's vocational education and training, regardless of where, or by which Registered Training Organisation it is delivered.

Conclusions

For those with good processes in place, there are real educational and commercial opportunities in VET offshore delivery: for those who do not, there are real risks, for them, and for the Australian VET industry both nationally and internationally, and so it is important that we all get the balance right.

Notes

- ¹ 'Good Practice Guide for Offshore VET Delivery', National Quality Council, January 2011, www.nqc.tvetaustralia.com.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0008/55349/Good_Practice_Guide_for_Offshore_VET_Delivery.pdf.
- ² 'Quality Assurance in Transnational Vocational Education Programs', Victorian TAFE International, November 2009, www.vti.edu.au/.
- ³ www.auqa.edu.au/aboutauqa/; <http://www.auqa.edu.au/qualityenhancement/glossary/index.php?id=56>.
- ⁴ Michael Gallagher, Executive Director, Group of Eight Universities, presentation to the International Education Symposium, LH Martin Institute/CSHE, The University of Melbourne, 8 April 2011, www.lhmartininstitute.edu.au/conferences-and-events/48-aei-international-education-research-policy-symposium.
- ⁵ The regrettable and unnecessary decline of Australia's Third Largest Export', Hospitality Training Association Inc., Brisbane, Queensland, 30 June 2011, www.hta.org.au.
- ⁶ The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), www.asqa.gov.au/about-asqa/national-vet-regulation/vet-quality-framework.html.
- ⁷ www.nqc.tvetaustralia.com.au/___data/assets/pdf_file/0007/54682/NQC_Policy_on_Internationalising_VET_Qualifications.pdf.

Stream 3

The new regulatory policy landscape

Chair: Kaylene Harth, Institute Director, Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE; TDA Board Member

TAFE institutes have always enjoyed a special relationship with their state authorities and VET regulators. How will this change under the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)?

Topic speaker:

Dr Dianne Orr, Acting Commissioner, Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)

Themes:

1. How will the new regulatory arrangements improve quality?
2. Regulation for a minimum standard?
3. Two sides of the coin – growth in the tertiary sector vs regulation/quality
4. How will ASQA manage quality and approval processes for TAFE institutes?

Panel:

Martin Riordan, CEO, TAFE Directors Australia

Pat Forward, Federal TAFE Secretary, Australian Education Union

Stream 3: The new regulatory policy landscape



Dr Dianne Orr

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Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)*

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Introduction

The new regulatory arrangements for vocational education and training established on 1 July 2011 are the result of a decision taken by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in December 2009. COAG's vision is for effective regulation of the VET sector as a key quality assurance mechanism for the skills base of Australia's workforce that will, in turn, facilitate labour mobility.

COAG agreed to establish a national regulator for the VET sector that would be responsible for the registration and audit of registered training providers, and accreditation of courses, under Commonwealth legislation. A national VET regulator was seen as critical in improving quality in skills. Long before this momentous decision by COAG, there had been other attempts through previous reforms to achieve national regulation but these fell somewhat short of truly national regulation. Model

clauses in each state's and territory's legislation and national standards brought the nation closer to this objective but it was COAG's December 2009 decision that fundamentally defined a new regulatory landscape.

Governance

The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is a statutory authority accountable to the Commonwealth Minister. It applies standards approved by the Standing Committee on Tertiary Education Skills and Employment (the Ministers). ASQA has three Commissioners in its governance structure with regulatory powers and functions — a Chief who is also the CEO — and two other Commissioners each with specific areas of responsibility.

Also part of COAG's vision was the creation of a National Standards Body, to provide advice to the Ministerial Council on national standards for regulation and so, 1 July 2011 also saw the establishment of the National Skills Standards Council (NSSC) which met for the first time in late August 2011. The NSSC is a committee of the Standing Council for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment (SCOTESE), which is one of a number of Standing Councils that report to COAG. SCOTESE has replaced the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE). The NSSC's functions include developing national standards for approval by the Standing Committee; providing information to the sector on the standards; a watchdog role over the regulators of VET; and endorsing Training Packages.

The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) has been established and from January 2012, will administer the framework, registering and evaluating the performance of higher education

providers against the new Higher Education Standards Framework. Towards the vision of an integrated tertiary sector, ASQA is working with TEQSA, particularly on the compliance auditing of dual sector providers.

Improving quality

The landscape explained, let's move to the question of how the new regulatory arrangements improve quality. Perhaps this is not a question for ASQA to answer as ASQA is not responsible for the legislation (this is the responsibility of the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations [DEEWR]), nor for approving the standards (this is the NSSC) — the two key features of the VET regulatory arrangements. ASQA's role is in the application of the regulatory framework.

In the application of the regulatory framework, ASQA will ensure the risks to quality are managed so that students, employers and governments can have full confidence in the quality of vocational education and training outcomes. 'Improving quality' is the outcome of ASQA's risk-based regulation. The new legislation gives a wider range of regulator powers to ASQA. There is a range of sanctions including administrative sanctions for the less serious cases as well as civil and criminal penalties. The standards have been strengthened and are now legislative instruments under the Act.

ASQA will target its compliance auditing towards areas of highest risk. The enforcement strategy includes a range of escalating sanctions which will be applied when standards and legislative obligations are not met.

The regulatory model promotes innovation and flexibility in vocational education and training and

supports the development of direct relationships between Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and industry groups to further drive the quality of products and services. Rigour in regulation is not an impediment to innovation and flexibility by RTOs. Auditors recognise that there are different forms of evidence to demonstrate compliance dependent on the context for delivery and assessment.

Is this regulation for a minimum standard?

Or, is it regulation for a higher standard of excellence? We would argue that regulation is about measuring compliance with the standards set as **the benchmark** for the industry. ASQA is very clear about its role as a regulator and its expectation of compliance. That role is to assess training organisations against the benchmark standards as a basis for their registration. ASQA does not provide a consultancy or professional development service assisting training organisations to get over the line. Endless opportunities to rectify non-compliances will not be given. ASQA does not see regulation as oppositional to growth in the tertiary sector, but rather as absolutely necessary in periods of high growth. Australia's international reputation depends on quality. While the exchange rate is an important factor, reputation is even more important.

Risk-based approach to regulation

There will be no 'special' relationships between ASQA and any particular provider. ASQA will manage the quality and approval process for all RTOs, including TAFE institutes, with a balanced and responsive approach to the management of risk. Risk management is the centrepiece of the new regulatory approach.

This type of approach is not unfamiliar in the world of regulation. Malcolm Sparrow, professor at Harvard's John F Kennedy School of Government and who specialises in enforcement strategy, regulatory policy and intelligence analysis, says that 'risk control lies at the heart of the regulatory mission'. He goes on to say that 'risk management can provide a structured way of being flexible'. It allows regulators to 'organise resources around the problem' (Sparrow 2000).

We don't need to look far to see this approach to regulation in action. The Therapeutic Goods Administration adopts a risk management approach, as does the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA). The Australian Tax Office (ATO) also adopts this approach. The ATO doesn't audit everyone, but every year targets areas of high risk. Controlling risks is the modern approach to regulation.

ASQA's risk management will operate at three levels. First, each application received will undergo a risk assessment to determine whether the applicant organisation requires an audit and if so, the type, scope and depth of the audit. Application risk assessments may consider factors such as proposed delivery contexts, modes or venues, the length of time elapsed since the most recent full scope compliance audit, industry risk factors identified through analysis of risk data or gathered from other reliable sources, and the RTO's risk rating.

Second, each RTO is risk-rated using risk indicators when it has conducted sufficient delivery activity to enable a valid assessment of its performance. The three categories of risk indicators used are RTO Performance, RTO Governance and RTO Profile. The indicators are listed in the table at Attachment A.

These indicators may change over time, influenced by trends in the market. ASQA plans to assign risk ratings to all its RTOs by July 2012. The risk ratings will not be made public. Remember, the risk rating is part of the process of determining whether the applicant organisation requires an audit and if so, the type, scope and depth of the audit. It is about targeting the areas of highest risk. Where the risk is considered low, there will be no audit and applications will be approved.

Third, ASQA will be continuously scanning the environment. ASQA will identify and manage system-wide risks to the quality of training and assessment services and outcomes, collecting and analysing quantitative and qualitative data from industry, governments, research centres and consumers to identify and target these risks and to monitor trends that may present risks to the VET system and its users.

The risks may be specific to training and assessment for a particular industry or industry sector, to a particular client group or to systemic issues evident in provider practice or particular VET delivery contexts. The identification of these risks may lead to strategic industry audits, investigations, or targeted audits of particular groups of providers. If applicable, systemic risk exposures will also contribute to the risk rating of RTOs that operate in relevant industries or contexts.

Where appropriate, advice to the training market will be provided by ASQA. Where risks indicate a need for amendment to the Standards, or a change in policy, ASQA will make recommendations through the Commonwealth Minister to the Standing Committee on Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment to the National Skills Standards Council.

For the RTO, risk assessment is not a process to be feared, nor is it 'the end game'. A high risk outcome will lead to an audit which may identify areas of non-compliance to be corrected. Compliance with the standards should be the RTO's primary focus.

Some TAFE institutes have a delegation to approve extensions to their own scope of registration. These delegations from the state regulators existed prior to ASQA's commencement on 1 July 2011. ASQA has given similar delegations, continuing similar arrangements as under the previous regulator, however, for a fixed period of six or twelve months during which time it will undertake a review. No further delegations will be considered during this period.

Other key features of the regulatory approach

To ensure that industry can have confidence in the outcomes of RTOs, a key feature of the regulatory approach is ASQA's active engagement with industry. ASQA has an industry engagement team and will be working with Industry Skills Councils and other industry stakeholders to ensure it receives intelligence about quality issues and risks, but will also deploy a range of strategies to involve industry in its regulation of RTOs.

Students and employers, when acting as informed consumers, can drive quality in the system. ASQA recognises this and will implement a range of strategies to ensure that consumers of training services can have a positive influence. ASQA will encourage the lodgment of complaints about quality of training and assessment and use data about complaints in the risk assessment process. Further, ASQA is exploring the publishing of audit outcomes. ASQA will publish on its website the RTOs

and the names of their high managerial agents that have had their registration cancelled or suspended and the reasons for that.

Conclusions

The regulatory landscape has changed. Within six months it is anticipated that Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania will have adopted the referral legislation and ASQA's offices will be open for business in those states too. Very soon we will have operational offices in each of the capital cities. Specialist functions like accreditation, risk analysis, industry engagement, legal and investigations, and complaints will be in one location only, while compliance operations will be located in every office. Risk assessment of applications will be performed in three locations. A panel of contracted auditors will conduct audits together with the full-time audit staff in each location.

Looking to the future, once TEQSA is operational as a regulator, ASQA will work closely with it to monitor risks associated with dual sector organisations as we move to a more integrated tertiary sector.

In closing, I emphasise that responsiveness is at the core of ASQA's regulation — *responsiveness to risk*. This responsiveness will see a wide variety of regulatory actions. For the responsive regulator, there are no optimal or best regulatory solutions, just solutions that respond better than others to the plural configuration of a marketplace at a particular moment in time (Braithwaite 2005).

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Attachment A

Risk Indicators

RTO Performance

- Levels, trends and areas of non-compliance at recent audits (AQTF and/or ESOS)
- Trends and areas of recent substantiated complaint investigations
- Performance feedback from other valid sources (e.g. industry advice)

RTO Governance

- Financial viability risk assessment
- Recent fundamental changes to the RTO's scope of operations or influential personnel
- Reliance on other organisations to train and/or assess on the RTO's behalf
- VET skills and experience of senior management personnel
- Transparency of legal ownership
- Rigour of business planning and reliance on core assumptions outside the RTO's control

RTO Profile

- Scope of registration – range of industry training areas and/or AQF levels delivered
- Proportion of delivery of training that leads to licensed or regulated outcomes
- Proportion of delivery to overseas students in Australia
- Proportion and range of delivery at offshore locations
- Proportion of delivery conducted by RPL and/or without any RTO face-to-face component.



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Quality in VET

In the recently released Mid-term Review of the Productivity Places Program (PPP), the question of the quality of delivery of the program is dealt with in the following way:

It is assumed that the training delivered under the NP PPP is meeting minimum quality standards, as all training is delivered by accredited RTOs, all of which are subject to ongoing quality audit processes (p. 59).

Subsequently, *The Australian* observed:

The PPP was linked with the 2008 and 2009 closures of at least nine colleges, many which also trained overseas students.

While the link between the PPP program and provider failure is important, because it raises questions about the ease with which newly

established private organisations gained access to large quantities of government training funding, the glib response in the Mid-term Review to questions about the standard of training being delivered under the PPP should be very concerning.

The reality is that the government does not know what quality of training was delivered under the PPP, and this is related to the lack of certainty about what is meant by quality in the VET sector.

The concerns raised by the Australian Education Union (AEU) about the legislation which underpinned the establishment of the national VET regulator (NVR) go to this question. We supported the establishment of national regulation for the sector because we saw this as an opportunity to improve practices around regulation and auditing which would genuinely contribute to improved quality in the sector. We saw it also as an opportunity to have a debate about the issue of quality.

Instead, in the shift to national regulation, what occurred was a preoccupation with legalistic questions around the states' willingness to hand over their powers, rather than an attempt to reconceive and rebuild 'quality' in vocational education. The current preoccupation with enforcing adherence to minimalist standards as a proxy measure for 'quality' confirms the concerns that we raised, and the dangers of this approach are evidenced in that single comment from the Mid-term Review about quality in the PPP.

The standards enshrined in the NVR legislation were meant to raise the standards of VET. However, we have been told that these standards are pretty much the same as the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). Yet, it is the AQTF and the

philosophy it is based on that has contributed to problems with quality.

We currently find ourselves in a ludicrous situation in the VET sector in Australia where the obsession with quality assurance has led to the most narrow and reductionist definition or understanding of quality – it has been reduced to the skill standard designated in units of competence. From this standards-based notion of quality comes the statement from the Mid-term Review above – if the quality (standard) of the product is assured, then it must be – quality.

Most of us are familiar with the euphemistically described ‘crisis’ in international education. This crisis is generally lamented in VET not because of the personal tragedy that it represented to many affected students, but because of the reputational damage to Australian vocational education. In reality, it was about the failure of a regulatory model focused solely on the operation of a market, rather than on the operation of high quality educational institutions.

The vocational education sector faces unprecedented challenges. The challenges are created in large part by the preoccupation with competitive markets as the only policy setting being offered by governments. The poverty of this approach plays out most poignantly in the regulatory environment.

In criticising the legislation being offered as the basis for the shift to a national approach, we argued that amongst other things, vocational education institutions should have, as is the case in high education, as a primary or significant purpose, the education and training of students and that they should be required to act in the best interests of their students rather than the best interest of shareholders or the company or the purchaser of the training per se.

Our proposals were an attempt to approach the question of quality in vocational education in a different way.

VET provision evolved in Australia in domestic science colleges, technical colleges, schools of mines, etc. They had various forms of sponsorship – unions, employers, industry associations, professional associations, and government. Pretty much all of these forms of sponsorship were collective. Much of the provision was occupationally based, and as such this provision involved a lot more than the delivery of occupational skills. It included an induction into the cultures and the behavioural standards of the occupation.

As a consequence, training institutions gained reputations for quality not just on the skills standards of its graduates, but on the basis of the integrity and consistency of the institution – the standards that it demanded, the behaviour of the management and the staff, the quality of its delivery; the reputation of its graduates; and perceptions of its contribution to the community.

There is a great deal to be learnt in examining the history of contemporary vocational education institutions in Australia, but for the purposes of today’s discussion, it is sufficient to say that the rational need for the state’s entry into VET delivery was twofold: market failure and the expansion of social policy.

The current dilemma is that if social and economic goals can’t be delivered by a central agency, as governments have been asserting for almost twenty years, neither can they be delivered by student choice, within a market. And neither can these goals be constituted solely on the basis of a narrow concept of standards: if we go back to the history of vocational education, quality had a much broader

constitution: processes, standing, behaviours, etc. The fragmentation of these concepts into abstraction is a major problem.

If this is accepted, it requires a wider concept of quality. To an extent, this is preserved in occupational, professional and industry associations. But it also should be preserved in the provider institutions — that is, we will seriously weaken the whole idea of occupational standards if we abandon the idea of institutional standards and standing.

The current hiatus in tertiary sector regulation — and the newly established regulatory and standards bodies in particular — offers a unique opportunity to rebuild and re-establish the reputation of vocational and tertiary education. The failure of the existing paradigm is in evidence every time we see advertisements for five-day, government-funded diplomas, and cut price sales of qualifications. It is evidenced every time a private RTO fails, and every time a young person chooses a dodgy provider over a TAFE institution.

Conference Gala Dinner 7.00pm

Opera Point Marquee at the Sydney Opera House

Dinner speaker:

**Thérèse Rein, Managing Director
and Founder, Ingeus Limited**



You are invited to join Thérèse Rein, HE Pedro Pablo Diaz, Ambassador of Chile, international invited guests, National Conference delegates, corporate sponsors and affiliates for a very special evening.

Thérèse Rein is the Founder and Managing Director of Ingeus (www.ingeus.com), an Australian company operating from more than 100 locations across the UK, France, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, South Korea and Poland. Ingeus has provided employment services since 1989 and today assists more than a hundred thousand socially and financially excluded people into independence every year through finding suitable sustained employment.

Ingeus is now the largest provider of employment services in the UK following the introduction of the Work Programme, and employs more than 1,200 people worldwide. In a number of countries, Ingeus has successfully partnered with purchasing government departments to test the cost effectiveness of individualised case management in assisting long-term unemployed people to (re)enter the workforce in a sustainable way.

Thérèse studied psychology and holds a Bachelor of Arts and Masters Qualifying (Psych) from ANU Canberra. She is a former Director of the National Employment Services Association Board (Australia) and former President of the Australian Society of Rehabilitation Counsellors (Qld).

Thérèse also plays an active role in her patronages of a number of organisations who support people with a disability and their carers, Indigenous literacy, homelessness and maternal health. She was awarded the prestigious Australian Human Rights Medal in December 2010.



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Conference speakers and panellists

Tuesday 6 September 2011

Welcome Day 2

Early morning news – how the media conveys
issues of skills and training.

MC: Ellen Fanning

Julie Hare, Higher Education Editor,
The Australian

Annette Blackwell, Editor-in-Chief,
Campus Review

Peter Mares, Journalist, ABC Radio National

DR BARBARA BRYAN

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR LEESA WHEELAHAN

MARTIN DOEL OBE

DR MALCOLM GROTHE

DR DAVID ROSS

DR DAN PATTERSON

JAMES KNIGHT

PETER MARES

BRUCE MACKENZIE PSM

GARY COBBLEDICK

HELEN ZIMMERMAN

ROD ARTHUR

SUSAN HARTIGAN

DR JOHN BUCHANAN

SUZY McKENNA

ALLAN BALLAGH

ROD COOKE

DR GARRY McDONALD

ELIZABETH McGREGOR

ALICIA BALES

DR MICHELLE FOX

ALLAN ASHER

COLIN WALTERS

DIANE SEATH

WESA CHAU

MARTIN RIORDAN

Community Colleges' Baccalaureate Degrees – trends in the United States of America and a practical model for change

MC: Ellen Fanning

Dr Bryan led academic teams of faculty, staff and administrators who successfully created State of Florida proposals for the development and implementation of baccalaureate degrees: Broward College's first Bachelors of Applied Science degrees. Dr Bryan will speak on transforming their institution in the area of baccalaureate degree development, implementation and expansion, using an academic and business model for success.

DR BARBARA BRYAN

.....



Dr Barbara J Bryan

*Campus President Broward College,
Ft Lauderdale Florida, USA*

*Affiliations: Community College
Baccalaureate Association
American Association of Community Colleges*

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Trends in the United States of America and a practical (successful) model for change

Introduction: philosophical underpinning

The most critically important aspect of meeting the demands of emerging global markets is linked to successful organisational transformation. Nations must be willing to embrace the restructuring of their current higher education system to meet the workforce demands of the new economies. Today's major change efforts are riddled with natural ambiguity and fierce competition for scarce resources. As competition for scarce resources in

public higher education grows and as the already inadequate funding decreases, colleges will continue to be called upon to bring about needed change quickly and effectively, and will be criticised, among other things, when they are not successful trends in the United States of America and a practical (successful) model for change

at doing so (Altbach, Gumport & Johnsonsone 2001). Educational organisations must contend with both the 'what' and 'how' of major change efforts (Fullan 2001; Kotter 1996; Marshak 1994; Nadler 1997). Ackerman (1997), makes the same argument as Fullan, identifying the need to clarify the nature of change, which he contends is as essential as developing the leadership skills to lead organisations through major change initiatives (Bryan 2005). Colleges in the United States of America are approaching transformation in many ways, but this author purports that successful efforts to create change must be orchestrated. Educational change efforts are successful when marked by a clearly-shared vision, guiding coalitions with an abundance of emotional intelligence, inclusive teams, quick wins, unrushed steps, frequent communication, and finally, anchoring of the change into the fabric of the institution (Kotter 2003); Broward College followed this formula and successfully transformed in the area of Baccalaureate Degree offerings.

Background information

Meeting the needs of the community is part of Broward College's mission and a major aspect of the College's decision to pursue workforce degrees. In 2001, legislation enacted in Florida authorised community colleges to provide site-determined baccalaureate degrees. The authorisation applied to identifiable critical job shortage areas in high-demand, high wage, employment fields. Further,

in the United States trend data indicated that at least 23 states authorised community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees. In addition, the cost of attaining a four-year degree at universities can be as much as six times higher than it is at community colleges. With many universities not focusing on workforce education programs, the community colleges are filling the educational gaps in our current system.

Analysis of the workforce need for the baccalaureate program

With 17.9 million residents in 2005, Florida is the fourth largest state in the country. Before 2030, Florida could surpass New York to become the third most populous state, trailing only California and Texas (Florida Office of Economic and Demographic Research, U.S. Census Bureau). Broward County ranks as the fifteenth largest county in the United States and is Florida's second most populous county with an estimated population of over 1,700,000 according to the updated Census Report for Broward County (updated 31 August 2007). Between 2000 and 2010, the county is projected to show a larger increase (28%) in the 15 to 24 age group. The Florida Department of Education projects that the number of high school graduates in Broward County will increase by 3,763 students between 2000 and 2009, an average annual increase of 376 graduates. The Broward County Population Forecasting Model projections show an increase in population from 1.6 million in 2000 to 2.5 million in 2030 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1920–2000, BCPFM, 2000–2030).

Of utmost importance across the United States are promoting high wages and high-skilled job growth, diversifying the county's industrial mix, expanding the local tax bases, recruiting new industry, supporting existing industries, and creating

new value-added employment opportunities for residents.

Conclusions

While informal discussions regarding the need for additional baccalaureate options have been under way for several years, community colleges began their transformations with formal planning beginning at some colleges as early as 1997. With the release of the Pappas Report, which encouraged state legislators and State Boards of Education for Community Colleges to enter the baccalaureate degree-granting arena, more community colleges, such as Broward College, began their work in earnest. For some colleges, the initial planning process took place over the past several years through effective institutional planning. For this author's college, following *strategic imperatives*, Broward College's program developments resulted in an academic and business model that assures seamless articulation, maximum access, increased quantity and quality options; assures a skilled workforce for economic development; and ultimately aligns workforce education programs with skill requirements of the new economy.

Our data-driven decisions based on the results of a student interest survey, workforce demand research, and an examination of the interest of stakeholders, proved to be a successful approach. Ultimately, all of our collaborative efforts and research confirmed the need for new baccalaureate programs (Bryan 2008). Careful consideration of our intended outcomes rests on data driven decisions, long and short term planning, guiding coalitions, removal of barriers, and teams marked by an abundance of emotional intelligence; these elements are some of the critically important ingredients of successful higher education transformation. Having seriously accepted the

challenges evoked by rapid organisational change, this author offers guidance to those involved in transforming in the area of baccalaureate degrees.

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Higher education outside of universities

In the USA, Canada and England there is increasing interest and ongoing growth in the provision of associate and foundation degrees and, in many cases, full three- and four-year degrees by Further Education and Community Colleges. Why is this so?

Facilitator: Associate Professor Leesa Wheelahan, LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Management, Melbourne University

Themes:

Controversies around:

- Quality of teaching and learning
- Parity of esteem
- Industry relevance

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Introduction

I was the LH Martin Institute component of the joint TDA/LH Martin Institute Mission to the United States of America (USA) in April 2011 to study community colleges that offer four-year bachelor degrees and, along with Pam Caven (Director, Policy and Stakeholder Engagement, TDA), undertook an extended visit in June 2011 to the United Kingdom (UK) to study higher education in further education (FE) colleges. I've learnt a lot about both systems, and in particular, have been able to contrast direct engagement with practitioners and policy makers with the research literature that discusses higher education in community colleges and FE colleges. Overall, the research literature effectively outlines and analyses the benefits and difficulties of this sort

of provision, and the dilemmas and opportunities that colleges face in both systems. I find this quite encouraging as a researcher. However, the literature can only go so far in providing insights into other systems and in understanding their complexity and the issues practitioners face. These two trips have been very helpful in deepening my understanding of the two systems and their differences and similarities to Australia. Rather than outline the specifics of each trip (as this has been done in other contributions to this *Occasional Paper*), this paper compares and contrasts the United States (US), UK and Australian systems, and identifies issues we need to think about in Australia.

Comparing the systems

On first blush, the Australian system seems to be quite different to the other countries because Australia has a much more differentiated tertiary education system than either the US or the UK. Until recently, our tertiary education sectors were differentiated by type of institution and type of program that they offered: TAFE institutes offered competency-based VET qualifications; and universities offered degrees and postgraduate qualifications. In the US, community colleges have always been regarded as *higher education* institutions, and they have been differentiated from universities because the latter offer four-year bachelor degrees, whereas community colleges offer two-year short cycle higher education qualifications. In contrast, FE colleges in England and Scotland are not regarded as part of the higher education sector (and in this way they are similar to Australia), but they have always offered a broader range of qualifications than we do in Australia that includes FE qualifications, competency-based qualifications and higher education qualifications. They also have a much wider remit in teaching senior school qualifications to students aged 16–19 years than

does TAFE in Australia (although TAFE is increasingly taking on this role). Australia's system is perhaps most similar to that in the UK.

While big and important differences remain, the systems are starting to converge because they are responding to similar economic and social pressures, and this means Australia's system is starting to look more like that in the UK and US (although there is a long way to go). TAFEs are still mainly identified as VET institutions and associated with VET qualifications, and universities with higher education institutions and higher education qualifications, but this is starting to change as institutions in each sector increasingly offer qualifications associated with the other sector.

The changes that are affecting Australia are having a similar impact on the UK, US, Canada and New Zealand because all are Anglophone countries that have similar liberal market economies. Each country is trying to increase the percentage of its population that has higher level qualifications to respond to economic demands for a higher skilled workforce. Each country sees tertiary education as crucial to social inclusion because without higher level qualifications, people are more or less excluded from the labour market and from broader participation in society. Each country is using its more vocationally orientated tier of tertiary education to increase access to higher education.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, which was when the last big expansion of higher education took place, Australia and the UK grew their higher education systems through expanding their university systems, while the US just expanded all its higher education institutions, including community colleges. Now, FE colleges in England have a 'special mission' to increase access to higher education through foundation degrees, which are two-year short cycle vocationally orientated higher education

qualifications, and they deliver about 10% of undergraduate higher education. Scotland's FE colleges deliver around 20% of higher education through higher national certificates and higher national diplomas which are respectively one-year and two-year short cycle vocationally orientated higher education qualifications. New Zealand's polytechnics are offering degrees, three provinces (out of 10 provinces and three territories) in Canada have authorised their community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees, and 15 of the US's 50 states have authorised their community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees. Eleven TAFEs (which includes all of NSW TAFE) in five states and territories have been registered to offer associate degrees and degrees.

Rationale for the provision

Each country has a similar two-fold rationale for expanding access to higher education through its vocationally orientated tier of tertiary education. The first is to expand access to higher education through more work-focused, applied degrees. In each country, the institutions claim that their provision is more vocationally focused than universities, can produce graduates who are more work-ready and can meet skill needs and shortages more effectively (and often more cheaply). They argue this is because of their closer links to industry.

The second rationale is they argue that their provision is more student-centred and can help expand access to higher education for under-represented students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This is because they have more emphasis on preparing students who are academically 'under-prepared' and can offer a more individualised learning experience through smaller classes and more supportive pedagogy. In all cases, these institutions emphasise their orientation to

their local communities, their capacity to welcome adults to higher education (as well as young people), and their understanding of the needs of local employers.

Relationships with universities

The position of all these institutions in the vocational tier of tertiary education places them in similar relationships to universities. The tertiary education systems in each country are hierarchically structured so that universities have more funding and status. The US system arguably provides more access to universities for students from community colleges than either the UK or Australia, because some states legislate to specify the percentage of community college students that universities must admit and also mandate the amount of credit they will be given in some programs, but this is not always as straightforward as it appears. Credit arrangements are only specified for some programs, and credit is less available for vocational and technical programs than it is for academic programs. Community college leaders told us that one reason they were offering degrees was because community college students couldn't get access to universities — demand for places at universities increased as a consequence of the global financial crisis and community college students have had less success in gaining access to universities than other categories of applicants. Even so, one lesson we can learn from this is that universities that don't usually admit TAFE students can be forced to increase access for TAFE students and provide appropriate credit, and not just be bribed to do so.

In Florida, community colleges must demonstrate that there are skills shortages in the area of their proposed degree and apply to their state accrediting body for permission to offer a degree. However, universities are able to submit alternative proposals if they object to particular community college

proposals. While in practice this has not been an issue, it does not give community colleges the same scope to offer degrees as universities.

In England, FE colleges must get their foundation degrees accredited (or validated) by a university, and generally speaking, funding for the foundation degree is routed through the university. This means that students studying at the FE college are students of the university, even if the FE college has developed the program. It also means that the university can withdraw places for their own use, as has happened in some cases recently because the English government has placed a cap on higher education places and universities are seeking to maximise their places. Foundation degrees are designed in collaboration with employers and must articulate to a three-year bachelor degree (which the English call an 'honours degree'). In theory, this gives students access to full degrees, and this often happens in practice, but in some cases students have to compete for places in the degree. Since 2008, FE colleges have been able to apply to the Privy Council to accredit their own foundation degrees. No FE college has been granted this right as yet, but it is expected that a couple of FE colleges with a large amount of higher education provision will soon complete this process.

There are some very good examples of strong partnerships between universities and FE colleges (and there are some very bad ones). The partnership between the University of Plymouth and its partner colleges provides a potential model for Australia to explore. The University of Plymouth College Faculty provides representation of all FE partners on the faculty board, and separate governance arrangements exist between each FE college and the University. FE teachers who teach University of Plymouth awards are associate members of the university and have access to the university's

library and professional development activities. Other arrangements are in place to support the development of subject areas, academic standards, consistent assessment practices, staff professional development and engagement of students in higher education life.

In Scotland, FE colleges get their higher national certificates and diplomas accredited by the Scottish Qualifications Authority and so have more autonomy in developing their qualifications, but FE students don't necessarily have guaranteed access to universities or guaranteed levels of credit for previous studies. Degrees in Scotland are four years, unlike the three-year degrees in England. FE colleges are directly funded by government for their higher education provision. The Scottish government is investing in 'articulation hubs' to improve student articulation and to deepen partnerships between FE colleges and universities. Some FE colleges are considering partnership or franchise arrangements with English universities where they deliver two-year higher national diplomas or foundation degrees that then articulate into the third and final year of a degree, but this seemed to be a controversial proposal among some colleges. An impediment to this may be that English universities will charge significant amounts of money for degrees (around GBP7500 on average, but up to GBP9000), whereas Scottish universities do not charge fees for Scottish students.

Similar challenges

There are similar challenges facing FE colleges in the UK, community colleges in the US and TAFEs in Australia. A problem for both England and Australia is that FE colleges and TAFEs feel that the accreditation process forces them into a 'university' mould of higher education qualifications. In England, this is because universities are the

validating body for their qualifications, and in Australia, it is because the accreditation process includes university academics who are competitors on the accrediting bodies but also may have more traditional ideas about what degrees should look like. The requirements for accrediting degrees in non-self-accrediting higher education institutions also specify that degrees should be comparable with degrees offered at universities, and this is often interpreted (so it is argued) that degrees should be like those offered in universities.

Another common challenge is the need to build capacity within institutions to offer higher education qualifications. This includes strong academic governance arrangements, but also teachers' capacity for scholarship, and the creation of cultures of scholarship within institutions. The literature identifies this as a problem in the UK, US and Australia: teachers report that they need lighter teaching loads to engage in scholarship to teach at the 'higher' level (including in the US), that they need to engage with their professional and disciplinary bodies, and that they need better library and other resources for teaching. Senior managers we spoke to in the US didn't seem to think this was a problem, and we didn't really speak to teachers. The US community colleges didn't seem to consider scholarship as an issue for them because they identified it with research (whereas we try to distinguish between scholarship and research in Australia, at least some of the time). It may be that they do engage in activities that would be regarded as scholarship, but it certainly is not an institutional imperative to develop 'scholarly cultures'. It is in the UK and in Australia where the notion of scholarship is hotly debated. We didn't speak to teachers in all of the six colleges that we visited in England and Scotland, but we did in some, and they reported difficulties in engaging in scholarship, particularly

when they were also undertaking higher level qualifications. TAFE teachers also reported this in Australia when colleagues and I undertook the NCVET-funded HE in TAFE project in 2008–09.

All countries have challenges in supporting students moving into higher education. The literature, institutional leaders and teachers generally agree that students need to recognise that they are taking a 'step up' and that more demands will be made of them. The US has a vast literature on 'transition shock' which refers to the difficulties articulating students experience when they move to four-year degrees or four-year colleges (universities). This is because of the higher level demands that are being made on them in new, more impersonal, learning environments, combined with managing the demands of study with the demands of their personal lives. Given that community college students are often from older and/or from disadvantaged backgrounds (as in the UK and Australia), they are likely to have more complex lives and less academic support they can draw on at home. The US places emphasis on 'remedial support' (an unfortunate term) to a much greater extent than in Australia, and invests in preparing students for studying higher education. England and Scotland also do this through incorporating 'personal development' subjects in their qualifications, which help students acquire the skills they need to study at a higher level. Australia does not do this as effectively, partly because only competency-based programs are publicly funded in TAFE, and training package qualifications generally don't have the development of study skills to study at a higher level in associated qualifications. The new Australian Qualifications Framework now specifies this as an outcome for all qualifications, and hopefully this will be reflected in the design of VET qualifications in future.

Institutions in the UK, US and Australia also face

challenges because they will always be under scrutiny and have to defend the quality of their qualifications against those who regard them as second class higher education qualifications. This is because their students are more likely to be academically under-prepared; their staff have higher teaching loads, are less likely to engage in research and probably won't consistently be as highly qualified (usually interpreted as having a PhD); and, because they have tighter ties to industry which raises questions about their academic independence and overly 'applied' qualifications (such as applied degrees). This may be unfair and unjust, but it is the way it is and institutions need to ensure they can demonstrate the quality of their provision to allay these concerns. Government policies, accreditation and quality assurance processes, and support for capacity building are crucial in supporting institutions to offer high quality qualifications, and to be demonstrably doing so.

Some key lessons for Australia

A key difference between Australia and the UK and US is that higher education in FE colleges and community colleges is publicly funded, whereas it isn't in Australia (with a small number of exceptions). Higher education provision in these institutions in the UK and US has been mapped into public policy and is being used to support government objectives to increase the skills of the workforce, tackle skills shortages, increase the percentage of the population with higher level qualifications, and widen access to higher education. It is also cheaper. Community colleges are funded by government at a lower rate than universities and have lower fees. The US doesn't have income contingent loans and charges real rates of interest on student loans, and this has been a big incentive for students to undertake community

college baccalaureate degrees. England is about to embark on high fees for higher education, and FE colleges will not charge as much as universities in their emerging marketised system. The Australian government could consider funding higher education places in TAFE at a somewhat lower rate because they will not be funded to undertake research (as universities are). It is inequitable to withhold public funding for higher education in TAFE in Australia, given that students who undertake degrees in TAFE are more likely to come from disadvantaged backgrounds compared to those in universities. State governments are increasingly mapping TAFE into their policies to increase access to higher education (particularly in the regions) and increase the skills of the workforce, but this will be hampered as long as TAFE does not have access to public funding for higher education qualifications.

Another key lesson, particularly from the UK, is the importance of developing policies to help ensure the quality of provision of higher education in TAFE. The Quality Assurance Agency in England has worked with FE colleges to ensure the quality of their provision (even if that's not how the FE colleges necessarily perceive it), and institutions such as the Higher Education Academy (the English analogue of the Australian Learning and Teaching Council) have had dedicated programs to build capacity for higher education in FE colleges. Government has, in the past, funded a range of programs to develop consortia between universities and FE colleges to build institutional capacity for higher education delivery, and the research funding bodies have provided extensive funding to research higher education in FE colleges (by our standards at least).

Another key lesson – from all countries, including Australia – is that it takes institutional effort to build capacity to offer higher education programs. It is necessary to invest in staff development,

scholarly cultures, a higher education experience for students, and academic governance. There also needs to be greater investment in academic support (all institutions in all countries report that students find essay writing and referencing to be agonising) and in resources such as libraries. Partnerships with supportive universities may be one way of contributing to this capacity building, but institutions will need to dedicate sufficient time and resources to develop their higher education provision. This may be difficult when higher education is still only a small part of what they do and the main funding and institutional effort goes to their 'traditional' programs.

Finally, and in conclusion, while there are important differences between each country, there are sufficient similarities and common interests to support the development of an international community of practice of institutions that offer higher education in community colleges in the US and Canada, FE colleges in the UK, polytechnics in New Zealand and TAFEs in Australia. Such a community of practice would support institutional and policy learning in all countries, support the development of networks, and facilitate exchanges of staff and students. There is much we can learn (and have learnt) from these other countries, just as there is much they can learn from us.



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Introduction

With the release of its White Paper ‘Higher education: students at the heart of the system’ in June 2011, the United Kingdom (UK) Coalition Government signalled the direction of its policy for higher education in England.¹ The White Paper was preceded by the Browne Review² into the financing of higher education and much of the subsequent media commentary has concentrated upon the increase in tuition fees up to a ceiling of GBP9,000, supported by a revised system of student loans.

The White Paper was, however, also notable for an increased emphasis upon diversity of supply within higher education, inviting greater involvement by private for profit universities and further education (FE) colleges. This diversity of supply was linked philosophically to a greater emphasis upon student choice with students being seen as empowered consumers

The White Paper was, though, launched against a backdrop of severely constrained public finances, and whilst the Coalition Government has maintained the same number of student places as the outgoing Labour administration, it felt unable to facilitate a true free market in higher education. A student numbers control system therefore remains in place, albeit with a ‘core and margin’ for growth for those suppliers of places to either high achieving applicants,³ or to those institutions charging below a threshold of GBP7,500.⁴

As explained below, the prospect of FE colleges playing an expanded role in the delivery of higher education is threatened by the control that Universities have over existing provision and the fact that the revised policy foreshadowed by the White Paper will not be fully in place until the academic year commencing 2013. The mantra that best sums up the position for English FE colleges is therefore ‘Protect and Grow’ encapsulating the need to preserve existing provision ahead of the opportunities to grow under the new system.

Existing pattern of higher education in FE colleges

Notwithstanding the implied prospect of increased competition between FE colleges and universities, the existing pattern of delivery of higher education in FE colleges is largely complementary to that provided within universities. Whilst the overall number of higher education students in FE colleges has increased over the past 10 years, this has been within the context of an overall increase in student places in all institutions and the college share of those places has remained at about 10%.

The greatest proportion of that 10% is delivered in higher education ‘cold spots’. These ‘cold spots’ are either geographical where there is no nearby

university (for example, Taunton in Devon) to serve students who do not wish to live and study away from their home or workplace or where the courses offered by the local college are not available in the local university which is often focused on traditional three-year honours degree courses in academic subjects.

The 'signature' college courses are vocational in the form of foundation degrees (a two-year course similar to the United States of America's associate degree) that may be topped up to become a full honours degree, and Higher National Certificates and Diplomas which are industry-specific vocational qualifications.⁵ College students are also more likely to be studying part-time whilst in employment and be living at home, coming from a 'non-traditional' higher education background; their average age at entry at age 21 is also higher than in the university sector.

In all but two FE colleges, which have recently been granted Foundation Degree Awarding Powers (FDAP), all foundation degree and honours degree level provision is validated by a partner university. The cost of validation services provided by a university can be up to 30% of the fees levied by a college. Additionally, whilst some colleges benefit from a direct funding agreement from the Higher Education Funding Council, a majority deliver higher education under a franchised arrangement from a university. In the latter case, the colleges are effectively delivering university numbers which is significant in relation to any need to ration higher education places.

The quality of the higher education delivered by colleges is further vouchsafed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), a university-owned but independent inspection body.

Short-term threats

Whilst the prospect of increased competition to attract students paying elevated student fees offers little threat to elite universities in England, it is a more worrying development for many so-called 'new universities'. These former polytechnics have grown rapidly over the past 15 years, often by franchising provision through FE colleges. As in many cases of expansion, however, many of the new universities have failed to control their cost base, not least in an effort to improve their standing in the university league tables which are largely dependent upon research activity. As a consequence, many have felt unable to offer student fees much below the GBP9,000 cap charged by the elite research universities.

In this context, FE colleges, whose cost model is buttressed by their wider delivery to adults and to 16–18 year olds, and by their concentration on teaching, could be seen as a threat by their partner universities. Left to their own devices, most colleges will charge well below GBP7,500 for their provision of higher education. In such circumstance, it would be understandable for reasons of institutional self-interest if some universities were to withdraw their franchised numbers from colleges or to pressure colleges to charge similar fees to themselves. Additionally, some validating universities may choose to withdraw validating services from partner colleges who have a direct funding agreement with the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

Although not yet widespread, we are seeing examples of both forms of behaviour by universities. Though understandable at the level of institutional self-interest, such actions threaten to derail Government intentions before the revised

arrangements for a 'core and margin' model are enacted, and colleges are granted the greater freedom to deliver the vocational, employer-led, flexible and cost effective higher education that Government is seeking.

Such action by universities also flies in the face of the establishment and maintenance of long-term partnerships between colleges and universities that deliver to the differentiated needs of students, businesses and communities.

Medium term opportunities

In the midst of addressing short term threats, colleges are focusing on medium term opportunities for growth in their higher education provision. In doing so they are seeking to build upon their distinctive strengths:

- A vocational focus and a long history of working with industry and commerce at the precursor level in apprenticeships and other qualifications.
- The ability to work at the local and regional level with a range of employers from large national players to small and medium enterprises.
- Concentration upon a direct and supportive teaching model which addresses the needs of non-traditional entrants and those seeking more flexible modes of delivery.
- Working within a highly competitive environment with an emphasis upon consistent and externally verified quality assurance.

The White Paper with its immediate prospect of 20,000 additional directly funded places in 2012 under the core and margin model seems likely to be but the first step to colleges accessing student places under a more market-driven system. The

White Paper also premises a review of foundation degrees and the prospect of reducing the university stranglehold on full degree awarding powers. In both cases the predominant market advantage enjoyed by universities by virtue of status will be reduced with a concomitant opportunity for college growth.

Such growth could be entirely independent of universities or could be in a new more equal partnership model in which each party delivers to its strengths and provides integrated progression pathways. These pathways could involve the evolution of wider credit accumulation and transfer agreements between colleges and universities on a '2+1' or '2+2' model. We are working with our equivalent organisation in the university sector to promote such models.

A more equal partnership between FE colleges and universities also requires a more shared approach to quality assurance measures. To this end, we have recently agreed the principle that colleges will become full partners in the Quality Assurance Agency, moving from the position of supplicant in the application of quality to becoming a co-owner in the process.

Conclusions

The challenge to FE colleges in realising the medium-term opportunities that may arise from the 2011 White Paper is to think strategically, to build upon their existing strengths and to meet the responsibilities of being a full, rather than junior partner in the delivery of higher education. But, in the meantime, there is a need to protect current provision against short-term institutional interests.

Notes

- ¹ Education policy, including Higher Education, is devolved to each of the Home nations and the 2011 White Paper applies only to English Universities and Colleges.
- ² Led by Lord Browne, former Chairman BP.
- ³ Those students achieving AAB grades at A level.
- ⁴ Further qualifying criteria have yet to be released.
- ⁵ A number of further education colleges do also offer full honours degrees and Masters degrees, most notably in specialist areas such as land-based studies.



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This is a brief synopsis of the evolution of degree granting colleges in British Columbia with a discussion on the successes, opportunities and challenges after two decades of change.

Evolution of degree granting colleges in British Columbia

Until the 1960s, the higher education system in British Columbia (BC) was a traditional effort consisting of the University of British Columbia (and affiliates) and a vocational system primarily focused on trades training. It was not until 1965 that the first two colleges with a broader program mandate were established in BC, with twelve more to follow over the next ten years. A primary objective of college development was to provide access to post-secondary education in regions not previously

served. Programs included developmental, career, vocational and the first two years of university studies. The latter was targeted to provide transfer opportunities for degree completion at BC's universities located in the large urban centres of Vancouver and Victoria.

During the 1970s and 1980s, there was dramatic growth in post-secondary enrolments in the province. By 1985 the regions were very active in advocating for baccalaureate degree completion opportunities closer to home. As a result, between 1989 and 1995, five colleges' mandates were increased to include undergraduate degrees. Most involved a mentoring relationship with one of the universities in the province. There was a variety of models used with the five colleges in relation to timing, access and programs. All were renamed University Colleges and within ten years they had granted over 6,000 baccalaureate degrees.

From the mid-1990s until the early part of this century, the remaining colleges and two technical institutes were also provided applied degree granting status as well as the opportunity to partner with universities to offer collaborative degrees. The university colleges were further expanded in the early part of the last decade to include applied masters degrees where appropriate.

In 2004 one university college became Thompson Rivers University, while another was split into two institutions. The split saw the establishment of another campus of the University of British Columbia and a new regional college with degree granting capacity. In 2008 the remaining three university colleges, one of the degree granting technical institutions and one of the colleges were all made teaching-focused universities.

Overall, more than 175 undergraduate and several applied graduate degree programs have been developed and implemented through this process, with now thousands of graduates annually. From this change has come some significant opportunities and evolving challenges. The following is not an exhaustive list but instead attempts to provide some examples in the sector.

Opportunities

Increased access and participation in post-secondary education

There has been improved social, physical and economic access to post-secondary education in BC as a result of the development of college degrees. This has allowed more learners to participate in a widening spectrum of higher education programming which is vital preparation to better participate in an ever-changing economy. Historically, under-represented groups also saw increased involvement as programs developed (although this is still an area of substantial concern). There was also improved economic access for students through lower tuitions and the generally more cost effective model of studying closer to home.

More responsive to regional and sectoral needs

Colleges have gained significant experience developing and implementing degree programs. This is increasingly being leveraged to become more regionally and sector responsive and nimble, allowing for timelier development.

Development of a transfer system across all HE sectors

Of critical importance was the early establishment of a transfer system helping students move from college to university. That has continued to evolve to a point where colleges are also receiving institutions, with students coming to colleges after or during university for skill development, availability and other learning opportunities. The value of a robust transfer system also provides an opportunity for better use of limited resources with fuller classes and timelier credential completion.

Emergence of an applied research mandate at colleges

With the development of upper division curriculum and evolution of faculties to deliver those programs, colleges have been increasingly motivated to undertake applied research. This has been further supported by the provincial and federal governments with the added objective of advancing the innovation agenda in the region. This has meant new resources coming to colleges, while providing an avenue for improved connections with communities and business.

Challenges

Resource availability

In the BC case, even with all the program changes that have taken place, there has been very little change in funding colleges versus universities. Bureaucratic structures still reflect to a large degree the two solitudes model from 50 years ago. Recognition of the resources required to properly support degree initiatives has been very limited. This includes technology, faculty development and the facilities required to deliver the programs. For example, the support for faculty is critical. Delivering

upper division curriculum requires professional development, library resources and other needs in addition to the traditional two-year model.

Institutional mandate confusion

University Colleges, Colleges, Teaching Universities, Research Universities, Institutes and Polytechnic Universities are all officially and unofficially, commonly used institutional names in BC. This has often left the education consumer with a confusing process to navigate and engage.

Not all program areas have participated

There have been some programs such as business, health, arts and science that have seen more degree development and implementation than others. This is in part due to sector requirements and program size, but also in part to the inability to break tradition and develop the necessary ladders and connections to be more inclusive.

Acceptance of the college degree

The acceptance of an applied/college degree continues to be a work in progress. The confidence in these credentials has also been at times influenced by the perception of system changes being a political manoeuvre and not part of a broader post-secondary vision. However, as the number of graduates grows, a track record is being established with graduate programs and employers. This academic and career success is placing our graduates in increasingly senior and more influential positions.

Conclusions

As economies continue to evolve, degree completion is increasingly required as the ticket to career advancement and a centrepiece to maintaining quality of life. Over the first 20-plus years of the college degree initiative in BC, more learners than ever before have access to baccalaureate opportunities and moreover, increasing numbers are choosing the college degree option for a variety of benefits not available in more traditional settings.

The challenges are also clear. In the vast majority of cases the resources required to fully support this increased access are chasing the development of the programs ... not leading them. Instead, change is mandated for shorter term political solutions and low cost expectations. We now have enough of a track record to know that the establishment of the necessary resource base at the start of new programs better supports learners, provides long-term stability and often attracts other resources.

Although many jurisdictions outside of BC do not participate in the college degree process, the numbers are increasing. With this, the rapidly growing numbers of graduates from college degrees are clearly establishing themselves in graduate programs, as entrepreneurs, as business leaders and perhaps most importantly, as community leaders that influence public policy. Although still not etched in stone, the building of this base, especially over the past ten years, has moved BC to a point where it would be very difficult to regress to a former detached system.

Broadening the degree granting power of colleges to meet the needs of the new economy



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Introduction

This paper is about broadening degree granting power given to colleges in order to meet the needs of the new economy.

It argues that the themes of industry relevance and the quality of teaching and learning in colleges are critical elements that will compel government decision makers to expand degree opportunities which are currently limited in Ontario colleges. The single biggest predictor of success will be to what extent we are able to link our degree offerings to the economic needs for a highly skilled workforce.

The paper examines lessons learned from 10 years of degree granting experience and what the future holds for Ontario colleges.

Origin of degree granting in Ontario

The Ontario publicly funded postsecondary education system consists of colleges and universities, each with a distinct mandate. Historically, the 24 Ontario colleges have been vocationally focused offering diplomas and apprenticeship training, while the 17 universities focus more on research and undergraduate and graduate degrees. In 2000, Ontario colleges received authorisation to grant four-year degrees in applied fields of study, subject to a number of restrictions, one of which limited college degrees to defined applied areas of study in order to avoid overlapping mandates with the university sector.

Each college degree application is rigorously reviewed by the Postsecondary Education Quality Assessment Board (PEQAB), an arm's length agency appointed by the government, using detailed degree standards that are similar to those used by the university sector for their baccalaureate programs.

There are approximately 80 degree programs in Ontario, delivered by 15 of the 24 colleges, representing 4% of the system's total full-time enrolment and approximately 1.5% of Ontario's baccalaureate students. In addition to eight semesters of academic study, college degree programs include 14 weeks of paid work experience.

In 2009, the Ontario college system recommended broadening the scope of colleges' degree granting authority, allowing colleges more flexibility to offer degree programs that meet the needs of the Ontario labour market, including in areas that have traditionally been the purview of universities. Another issue facing colleges is the delivery of degree programs within the existing college funding model. While the cost of delivering college degree

programs is similar to university degrees, colleges receive less funding per student than their university counterparts. The college system is advocating to government that the funding parameters for college degree programs reflect actual delivery costs.

Lessons learned

With more than a decade of experience managing the evolution of our expanded mandate, Ontario colleges are well positioned to reflect on some of the lessons learned.

Persistence

In a word, persistence was one of the most important ingredients that led to Ontario colleges' success in obtaining degree granting status. Moving from a regulatory regime in which universities had a monopoly on the power to grant degrees required a relentless persistence and a defensible business case, supported by a unified and sustained strategy. In making our case, colleges were able to demonstrate the added value of a college degree, with a different mix of theory and application than the universities were able to offer. The government of the day embraced the notion that greater competition in postsecondary education would be a stimulus to increased efficiency, innovation and quality.

While securing degree granting status was a tremendous accomplishment, it is only the first major step in having college degrees accepted. For example, colleges currently must negotiate on an individual basis for their graduates to qualify for masters level studies. Continued advocacy is key to expanding degree opportunities and raising the profile of college baccalaureate degrees with employers, universities, prospective students and government decision makers.

System design and accountability

As mentioned earlier, when the Ontario Government expanded degree granting authority to colleges it established certain restrictions and implemented a rigorous approval and quality framework. In part, this process helps to address some of the concerns around duplication with the university sector and the credibility of college degrees. This has led to college degrees being quite narrowly focused, which is counter to what employers are seeking in degree candidates, and makes it difficult for colleges to develop the critical mass of degree students needed to be competitive. College degrees must contain sufficient general education and generic skills content, to ensure that graduates are able to demonstrate the broad knowledge and critical thinking skills expected of a degree graduate.

The second issue has been the approval process itself, which can take up to three years to bring a concept to market. One of the distinct strengths of the college sector has been its relationship with industry and its ability to respond quickly to labour market needs, yet the approval process is more onerous than that applied to universities. While a rigorous approval system is necessary to ensure quality and credibility of college degrees by both the public and employers, this must be balanced with the need for flexibility and responsiveness in a competitive labour market.

Branding the college credential

Colleges have a huge opportunity but they also face a challenge in convincing employers and prospective students that a college degree is not only as good as but better than a university degree. The challenge is in branding and marketing the credential itself within the broader economic context. Employers need to see that in hiring a graduate with a college

degree, they are not only hiring an employee with the problem solving and critical thinking skills of a university education, but also with the contextual knowledge and highly developed applied skills of their field. Prospective students need to see that far from limiting their options, a college degree opens opportunities, not possible with a four-year university degree. College degrees should be branded and promoted as an 'undergraduate degree +', a credential that combines all the theoretical knowledge plus an applied focus that allows graduates to hit the ground running when entering the workforce. This requires a coordinated, system-wide approach to promoting and branding college degrees, as well as full recognition by universities that will allow graduates to continue into graduate studies.

Creating the right culture

The introduction of degree programs can have unintended consequences if college leaders do not recognise the potential risks. Given the prestige often associated with degree programming, colleges need to celebrate their unique ability to embrace their access mandate while at the same time opening pathways into higher levels of education. Colleges are proud of their reputation for taking students from where they are today and providing them the opportunity to realise their goals, whether at the apprenticeship, diploma or degree level. Without this constant reinforcement, there is a tendency toward institutional drift as well as creating a two-tiered culture, with those not associated with degree programs feeling undervalued. A culture of mutual respect among faculty and staff of both degree and traditional college programs is crucial in avoiding internal division and ensuring the success of expanded degree programming within colleges.

Conclusions

As we look to the future, there are a number of positive trends that build support for our case. Ontario demographics and labour market projections point to increased student demand for degree programs that lead to a career. The provincial government has pronounced a target of a 70% postsecondary attainment rate (from the current 62%), putting substantial pressure to create additional postsecondary spaces. A continued tight fiscal climate makes the cost effective delivery model offered by colleges an attractive alternative to meeting the increase in demand.

Within this environment, the potential for expansion of college degrees in Ontario is very promising, but it is not guaranteed. We must build on the momentum created to date; continue to be tenacious and unified in our advocacy and building the brand reputation of our graduates. The next major milestone will be to achieve brand awareness and full recognition by employers, prospective students, universities, governments and the public at large of the value of a college degree.

Invitation to the 2012 World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics (WFCP) World Congress, Halifax, Canada

James Knight, President, Association
of Canadian Community Colleges and
2012 Congress Chair

Internationalisation and a Big Australia: debates on migration, education, population

Australia's skilled migration program is changing in ways that are largely overlooked in public debates. Firstly, temporary migration now rivals permanent migration as a source of skilled labour. Secondly, Australia has increasingly moved to a two-step migration process where migrants live and work in Australia on temporary visas before seeking permanent residence. Thirdly, there has been a shift away from independent migration to employer sponsorship. Fourthly, migration processing has been prioritised so that applications are no longer processed in the order in which they are lodged but in line with Australia's perceived economic interests. The implications of these changes are far reaching but little discussed.

Facilitator: Laura Tingle, Political Editor, Australian Financial Review

Keynote speaker:

Peter Mares, Journalist, ABC Radio National, Fellow at the Institute for Social Research, Swinburne University

Respondent:

Bruce Mackenzie, PSM, CEO, Holmesglen Institute

Themes:

1. Is migration the solution to our skills needs? The Irish solution?
2. Do guest workers make sense in an Australian context?
3. Are 457 visas a sustainable solution?
4. What is the role of educational providers in this debate?



Peter Mares

Journalist, *'The National Interest'*, ABC Radio National

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Abstract

Australia's skilled migration program is changing in ways that are largely overlooked in public debates. Firstly, temporary migration now rivals permanent migration as a source of skilled labour. Secondly, Australia has increasingly moved to a two-step migration process where migrants live and work in Australia on temporary visas before seeking permanent residence. Thirdly, there has been a shift away from independent migration to employer sponsorship. Fourthly, migration processing has been prioritised so that applications are no longer processed in the order in which they are lodged but in line with Australia's perceived economic interests. These processes will be further entrenched through the planned introduction in 2012–13 of a new migrant application and selection process called

SkillSelect. The implications of these changes are far-reaching but little discussed.

Introduction

Media attention in the Immigration portfolio has been focused almost entirely on asylum seekers arriving by boat — a politically fraught issue but one which is of relatively small import in terms of the future size of Australia's population, its demographic make-up or the productivity of our economy. Meanwhile, there has been a major revamp of our systems for selecting and approving skilled migrants that will arguably have a much greater impact on the future shape of Australian society. More changes are in the works.

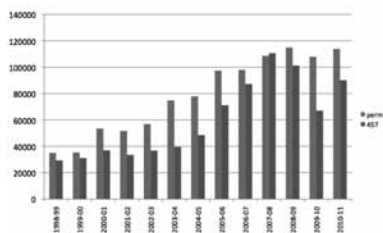
Overall, the changes to skilled migration are evolutionary rather than revolutionary in the sense that they build on existing trends in Australia's migration program apparent since at least the Hawke-Keating era. That is, an increasing focus on skilled migration (rather than migration for family reasons) and an emphasis on more accurately targeting the migration program to address specific needs of business and the economy. The key word here is 'flexibility', so that the migration program stays in sync with the changing needs of the labour market. The changes also aim to ensure that migrants are employed in positions that maximise the use of their skills and qualifications (rather the scenario in which accountants end up driving taxis). Some changes have been a response to problems generated by past policy settings, particularly in relation to the international education market.

My aim in the next twenty minutes is to give an overview of these changes and to foreshadow some of their implications, without getting tangled up in the bewildering detail of specific visa subclasses.

1. The rise of temporary migration

The first point to note is the continued rise of temporary as opposed to permanent migration. The annual intake of skilled workers on temporary 457 visas now approaches the annual intake of permanent skilled migrants (see Chart 1).

Chart 1: Permanent skilled migration vs temporary skill 457 visas 1999–2011¹



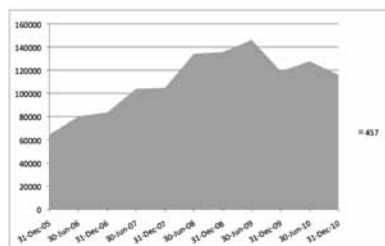
Indeed, in one recent year (2007–08), temporary skilled migration outstripped permanent skilled migration. This could happen again in future, since permanent migration is subject to an annual cap and temporary migration is not.

The 457 visa sub-class was conceived under the Keating government and implemented under John Howard after the Coalition came to power in 1996. It was intended as a transitional measure to help meet short term skills gaps in the Australian labour market while the training and education system caught up with the demand for domestic skilled workers. But use of the 457 visa has grown steadily and it is now a permanent feature of the labour market.

Despite a sharp short term fall in the number of new visas issued during the global financial crisis, the stock of temporary skilled workers present in

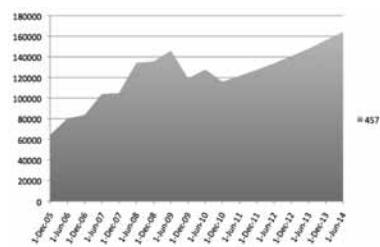
Australia is almost double what it was five years ago (up from 64,340 to 116,012) (see Chart 2).

Chart 2: 457 visa holders (stock) 2005–2010²



Numbers are anticipated to keep rising. By 2014 the number of temporary 457 workers present in Australia is likely to be 40% higher than today (see Chart 3).

Chart 3: Projected stock of 457 visa holders to 2014³



The priority given to temporary migration, and its centrality as a mechanism for meeting skills shortages in the economy was evident in the 2011–12 federal budget, when the government committed an extra AUD10 million in the administration of the 457 program, with the aim of halving visa processing times from an already speedy 22 calendar days.⁴

The government has also introduced a new form of temporary migration specifically designed to address spikes in demand for labour flowing from the resources boom, especially during the construction phase of major projects. This new mechanism is called an Enterprise Migration Agreement or EMA.

EMAs will be 'available to resources projects with capital expenditure of more than two billion dollars and a peak workforce of more than 1500 workers'.⁵ EMAs can encompass not only skilled but also semi-skilled labour – that is, not just occupations with an ANZCO skill level of 1, 2 or 3 (professions like engineering, for example, or skilled trades) but also ANZCO skill levels 3 and 4 (certificate level qualifications).

The government maintains that this will not displace domestic skills formation, since to be approved for an EMA, projects will need to develop a comprehensive training plan and:

- commit to training in occupations of known or anticipated shortage
- commit to reducing reliance on overseas labour over time, with particular focus on semi-skilled labour
- demonstrate that training strategies are commensurate with the size of the overseas workforce used on a project
- demonstrate how training targets will be measured and monitored and enforced with contractors.

In addition, companies using EMAs are subject to the same requirement as employers using the 457 visa program, that is, they must either:

- contribute two per cent of payroll to a relevant industry training fund

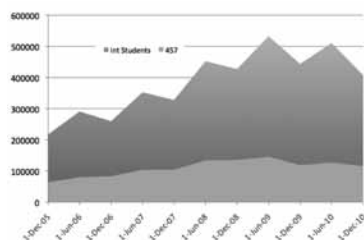
or

- spend one per cent of payroll on training their Australian employees.

The policy question that this poses for the TAFE sector – and one to which I have not found an adequate answer – is whether or not these policy measures result in increased training and skills formation for the *domestic* population. In other words, does the increased entry of temporary workers enhance training opportunities for Australians, particularly for those hard to reach groups currently outside the labour market? Or, are they at risk of being displaced, because it is easier to recruit skilled labour offshore than to train locals?

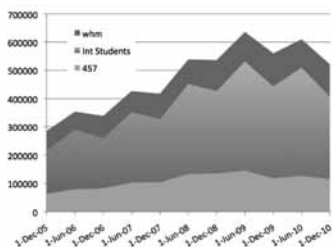
In this context, we should remember that 457 visa holders are not the only long term but temporary residents in Australia with work rights. There are also international students (see Chart 4).

Chart 4: 457 visas + international students (stock) 2005–2010



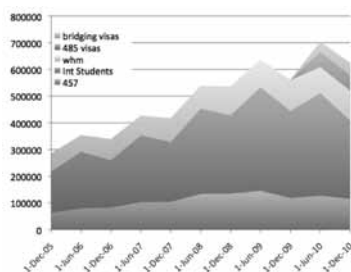
And working holiday makers (see Chart 5).

Chart 5: 457 visas, international students + working holiday makers (whm) (stock) 2005–2010



There is one other group that we must add to the mix: international student graduates seeking permanent residency who remain in Australia either on bridging visas while their applications are in the processing pipeline, or on 18-month long 485 skilled graduate temporary visas that are designed to give them an opportunity to gain skilled work experience or improve their English language skills (see Chart 6).

Chart 6: 457 visas, international students, whm + 485 + bridging visas (stock) 2005–2010



Together these five categories of temporary long-stay migrants now constitute around 5% of the Australian labour force. Since their age profile is

generally much younger than that of the general population, this group now makes up around *one-fifth* of the total labour force aged between 20 and 24.⁶

While 457 visa holders generally occupy skilled and relatively well-paid positions, international students and working holiday makers (whm) mostly enter the job market at lower wage rates and their profile in the labour force is 'clearly biased towards lesser-skilled jobs'.⁷ There is strong evidence that the net employment effect of international students and working travellers is positive overall – that their spending and other activities generate more jobs than they take up – but this, nevertheless, raises another policy question: to what extent are they displacing 'those in direct competition for the same kinds of work'?⁸ The two groups most at risk of being displaced would be of direct concern to TAFE Directors: Australian students and the low skilled, particularly school leavers exiting the education system and entering the workforce for the first time. It is worth remembering that despite Australia's strong economy, the unemployment rate for 15–19 year olds in July 2011 was 15.6 (and for 15–24 year olds it was 10.2%).⁹

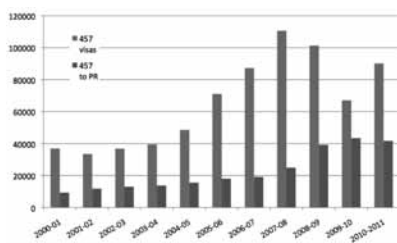
2. Two-step migration

The rise of temporary migration brings us to the second major change in Australia's skilled migration and that is the intensifying trend towards two-step migration.

A significant proportion of the temporary long-stay migrants identified above does not leave Australia when the visas expire, but change their status. So, for example, a working holiday maker at the end of their travels might seek to stay working in Australia on a 457 visa, a graduating student might also move on to a 457 visa or directly to permanent

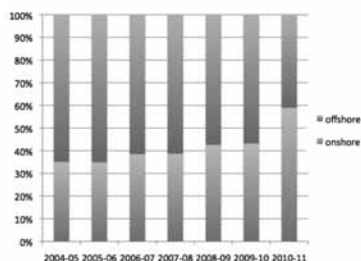
residency, and a considerable proportion of 457 visa holders will eventually be sponsored for permanent residency by their employers (see Chart 7).

Chart 7: Ratio of new 457 visas to 457s converting to Permanent Residency (PR) 2001–11



The proportion of 'new' permanent migrants who are actually 'old' temporary migrants has been steadily increasing. In the skilled migration program in 2010–11, 59 per cent of permanent residence visas in were issued onshore (see Chart 8).

Chart 8: Growing proportion of permanent skilled migration PR visas issued onshore



The potential advantages of a two-step or try-before-you-buy migration process are obvious. As a recent departmental discussion paper notes, it allows employers to test a visa applicant's 'work skills before sponsoring them for permanent

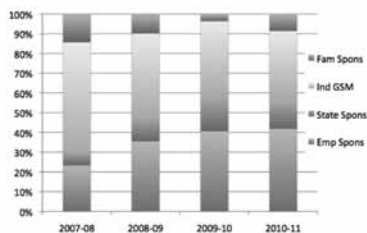
residence' while the temporary migrants 'have an opportunity to assess their employers and Australia before applying for permanent residence'.¹⁰ There is a potential downside however, as identified by industrial relations commissioner, Barbara Deegan, in her review of the integrity of the 457 visa program. She noted that temporary migrants who 'have aspirations towards permanent residency' are particularly 'vulnerable to exploitation as a consequence of their temporary status'.¹¹ They may put up with 'substandard living conditions, illegal or unfair deductions from wages, and other similar forms of exploitation' in order not to jeopardise potential employer sponsorship for permanent residency. Deegan goes on to say that the situation is 'exacerbated where the visa holder is unable to meet the requirements for permanent residency via an independent application'.¹²

This is important because it relates directly to the third major trend in Australia's skilled migration program: the marked shift away from independent migration to employer sponsorship. In other words, rather than migrants applying to come to Australia based on their qualifications, skills and experience, they are increasingly being sponsored by employers, or nominated by state and territory governments

3. The shift to sponsorship

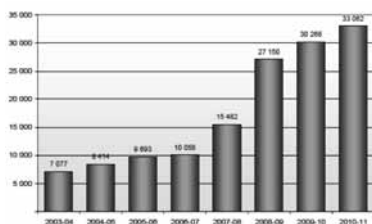
Employer sponsorship is now a major component of skilled migration, a deliberate government policy designed to shift Australia from a 'supply-driven' to a 'demand-driven' migration program. State and Territory nomination also makes up an increasing segment of skilled migration, while the number of independent skilled migrants (including those sponsored by Australian relatives) is declining (see Chart 9).

Chart 9: Growth of sponsorship as a proportion of permanent skilled migration



There are two components of employer-sponsored permanent migration. The first is the **Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS)** (see Chart 10), which allows employers anywhere in Australia to sponsor skilled foreign workers for permanent residence in a broad range of occupations, provided they offer an annual salary of at least AUD49,330 (or AUD67,556 for certain information technology positions).¹³

Chart 10: Growth of the Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS)¹⁴

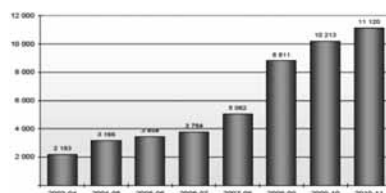


The second main component of employer-sponsored migration is the **Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS)** (see Chart 11), which allows employers 'in regional, remote and low population growth areas of Australia' to sponsor applications for permanent residence. The definition

of regional is fairly generous — Perth has just been added to the list of eligible areas, so regional sponsorship now incorporates all of Australia except 'Sydney, Wollongong, Newcastle, Melbourne, Brisbane and the Gold Coast'.

The selection criteria are also more generous: any skilled occupation can be considered, as long as the nominated position offers an annual salary that 'meets any applicable Australia award or relevant legislation' and the visa applicant 'holds an appropriate Australian diploma-level or higher qualification'. In exceptional or compelling circumstances employers can nominate semi-skilled workers or workers without diploma level qualifications.¹⁵

Chart 11: Growth of the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS)¹⁶



The changes were originally conceived under former Immigration Minister Senator Chris Evans who said the shift from a supply-driven to a demand-driven migration program was designed to ensure that Australia gets 'the skills that are actually in demand in the economy, not just the skills that applicants present with'.¹⁷ Or, putting it more bluntly, he said, 'we don't want people coming in and adding to the unemployed queue'. Rather 'employers and state governments and the Commonwealth pick the people who we need'.¹⁸

To ensure the bias to a demand-driven rather than a supply-driven system, the federal government has also significantly raised the bar for independent skilled migration through the introduction of a revised 'points test' for skilled migration, which:

- draws on a narrower list of skilled occupations (SOL [Skilled Occupation List], replaces MODL [Migration Occupations in Demand List])
- lifts the threshold for English language competency to a minimum benchmark of level 6 under the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) with extra points for Level 7 (+10 points) or Level 8 English (+20 points)
- weakens the link between study in Australia and permanent residence.¹⁹

The new points test took effect on 1 July 2011, so it is too early to assess its impact, but the foreseeable result will be an acceleration in the shift towards employer-sponsored and to a lesser extent, state- and territory-sponsored migration, and a further decline in independent migration.

However, whether this actually equates to Australia attracting higher quality migrants is contested. Remember that skilled migrants nominated by their employer (through the ENS and RSMS) are not subject to the points test. Bob Birrell and his colleagues at Monash University argue that 'policies for assessing credentials and testing English-language abilities' in this employer-sponsored migration 'are weak' and 'far less stringent' than under the points test.²⁰ For example, applicants for permanent residency under the employer nomination scheme only require 'vocational' rather than 'competent' English (that is, IELTS level 5 rather than IELTS level 6).²¹

In the case of the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme, the government can cancel this 'permanent' residency visa if the visa holder does not remain with the sponsoring employer for two years. Although it has not been much used, this power could put pressure on workers to stay with abusive employers and reduce their bargaining power in negotiations over wages and conditions. As Birrell and his colleagues point out, it could have perverse impacts in terms of the efficient allocation of labour in that, for example, 'those working outside the resources states of Western Australia and Queensland are effectively prevented for two years from moving to skilled jobs in Western Australia and Queensland'.²²

Birrell and his colleagues also question whether state and territory sponsored migration will deliver quality outcomes given 'the lack of rigour in the methods' used to identify occupations and skills required. Employer sponsored and state and territory sponsored migration are both open to a much longer list of skilled occupations than independent migration.²³

4. Priority processing

The changes to independent skilled migration were developed, in large part, in response to an emerging backlog of valid applications for permanent residency in the processing pipeline. By 2009, the Department had 137,500 applications for independent general skilled migration on hand. That is more than two years supply of migrants in that stream of the program, with new applications coming in every month. The blow out in processing was driven by the link between study and migration, established under the Howard government. As has been well documented, this link created perverse incentives and unintended outcomes and

resulted in an explosion of private training colleges providing vocational courses of sometimes dubious quality that offered the shortest possible route to permanent residency.

As well as revising the points test to raise the bar for independent skilled migration, the government also implemented a policy of priority processing. Introduced from the beginning of 2009 and amended several times since, priority processing fundamentally changes the way in which applications for permanent residency are dealt with. Instead of applications being considered in the order in which they are lodged, as in the past, they are now sorted into five different categories in line with Australia's perceived economic needs. In descending order of priority these categories are:

1. Applicants under the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme or applying for a skilled – Regional visa
2. Applications under the Employer Nomination Scheme
3. Applicants nominated by a state or territory government
4. Applicants with have an occupation on the Skilled Occupation List
5. All other applicants.²⁴

When he introduced priority processing, Senator Evans said the 'old system served everyone in order, just like pulling a ticket number from the dispenser at the supermarket deli counter'.²⁵ He said, 'it didn't make any sense' that Australia was 'taking hairdressers from overseas in front of doctors and nurses'.²⁶ This may be true from a national interest perspective, but from the perspective of procedural fairness, it has had distressing outcomes for individual applicants. The changes were applied

to visa applications that had already been lodged, with the result that tens of thousands of (mostly) international student graduates who are facing an indefinite limbo. They are stuck in 'Category 5' – the lowest priority group – and any new higher-priority application entering the system is processed ahead of them. In effect, it is like being stuck at the back of the queue and never moving forward because others constantly join the queue higher up. There are more than ten thousand applicants who have been in the situation for more than two years and who were recently warned in a letter from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship that 'many priority group 5 applicants will still have a long wait for visa processing'.²⁷

5. SkillSelect – from queue to pool

Further changes to Australia's skilled migration program are in the works. The most significant is the planned implementation of *SkillSelect*, which is intended to take effect progressively from 1 July 2012. This is an innovation as novel as the points test, first introduced by Australia in 1979, and subsequently copied in many other countries. Under *SkillSelect*, prospective applicants first lodge an 'expression of interest' in migrating to Australia. They may then be 'invited' to make a formal visa application. This is a significant change because it gives the department the capacity to prevent a build up of valid but unprocessed visa applications within the system by only 'inviting' as many applications as it has capacity to process in any given year.

Employer-sponsored applications (including those under the RSMS) would not need to go through the Expression of Interest process – those applications can still be made directly. However, the *SkillSelect* system is designed to create a pool of applications which employers can view and

from which they can select prospective staff. In a similar manner, *SkillSelect* will enable state and territory governments to access 'a central database of prospective skilled migrants' which should help them to 'maximise the benefit derived from their ... Migration Plans'.²⁸

SkillSelect will also fundamentally change the operation of the independent skilled migration program because it essentially embeds a system of priority processing into the system at a much earlier stage in the application process. It will do this by first allocating places to those prospective migrants 'who score highest on the points test, in each eligible occupational group'. In other words, rather than the points test acting as a simple threshold point, beyond which all applications for permanent residence become valid, the points test will now also serve as a ranking mechanism, giving advantage to those applicants who score the highest marks.²⁹

Again, this innovation was conceived under former Immigration Minister Chris Evans, who described *SkillSelect* as 'the job matching agency for the nation'. He said that Australia should aim for a skilled immigration that operated much like the system for university entrance: 'What do universities do when admitting students?', he asked. 'They work out ways of selecting the best from those putting themselves forward'. *SkillSelect* is intended to function in a similar manner.

6. Conclusions

What do these changes mean for the TAFE sector and Vocational Education and Training? I think several issues emerge.

Firstly, as flagged earlier, there is a need to further investigate the impact of increasing temporary skilled migration under the 457 visa scheme on

the training system. Is it encouraging or inhibiting business investment in local skills development? Does it enhance training capacity and skills development for domestic workers, or does it displace that investment?

Secondly, there is a need for further research on the impact of other forms of temporary migration on low-skilled local workers. Are international students and working holiday makers out-competing young Australian workers for entry level jobs? If so, how does the training system build the skills of these Australian workers to better participate in the labour market?

Thirdly, temporary skilled migration will continue to grow and two-step migration and employer sponsorship will become the dominant pathway towards permanent residency. This may potentially open up opportunities for education providers like TAFE to team up with major employers to offer courses of study that will supply international students with the qualifications that they need to gain work as temporary skilled migrants under 457 visa schemes or on the new Enterprise Migration Agreements. There could be, potentially, project-specific training opportunities, for example, in the resources sector.

Finally, it is also clear that the brief period in which permanent residence was directly linked to particular courses of study, including specific vocational certificates, is well and truly over and unlikely to return. The introduction of *SkillSelect* and ranking via the points test will make it harder than ever to predict which qualifications might lead to a migration outcome. This means that education providers will have to compete on other measures if they are to lure larger numbers of international students to Australia.

Notes

- ¹ Data used in this chart was assembled from two sources accessed on the Department of Immigration and Citizenship website: annual reports, www.immi.gov.au/about/reports/annual/, and the Sub-class visa 457 Business (Long-Stay) Visa Statistics, www.immi.gov.au/media/statistics/statistical-info/temp-entrants/subclass-457.htm.
- ² Data source: Department of Immigration and Citizenship Immigration Updates 2005–2010, viewed 28 July 2011, www.immi.gov.au.
- ³ Figures to 31 December 2010 are actual stock sourced from Department of Immigration and Citizenship 'Immigration Updates' 2005–2010, viewed 28 July 2011, www.immi.gov.au. Figures from 31 December to 30 June 2014 are projections based on estimates of the contribution of 457 visas to net overseas migration as contained in 'The Outlook for Net Overseas Migration May 2011', viewed 22 August 2011, www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/statistics/immigration-update/nom-may11.pdf, but discounted by 50% to take account for 457 visa holders transitioning to PR.
- ⁴ Department of Immigration and Citizenship 'Employer Sponsored Workers – additional funding for 457 visa processing', viewed 9 August 2011, www.immi.gov.au/skilled/457-additional-funding.htm.
- ⁵ Department of Immigration and Citizenship Fact Sheet 48a Enterprise Migration Agreements, viewed 22 August 2011, www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/48a-enterprise.htm.
- ⁶ Mark Cully, 'Migrant labour supply: its dimensions and character', paper presented to the Australian Labour Market Research Workshop, University of Sydney, 15–16 February 2010. The figure varies between 4.2% and 6.4% of the overall labour force and between 17.9% and 22.3% of the labour force in the 20–24 year old age bracket, according to the assumptions made about how active these temporary long stay migrants are in the workforce.
- ⁷ Mark Cully, Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 'Migrant labour supply: its dimensions and character', paper presented to the Australian Labour Market Research Workshop, University of Sydney, 15–16 February 2010.
- ⁸ See Note 7.
- ⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force (catalogue number 6202.0), July 2011, Tables 13 and 17.
- ¹⁰ Department of Immigration and Citizenship 'Discussion Paper: review of the permanent sponsored visa categories', August 2011, viewed 27 August 2011, www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/discussion-papers/_pdf/discussion-ens.pdf.
- ¹¹ Barbara Deegan 2008, 'Visa subclass 457 integrity review final report', Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Australian Government, October, www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/media-releases/2008/457-integrity-review-report.pdf, p. 23.
- ¹² Deegan 2008, p. 49.
- ¹³ Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2011, 'Discussion paper: review of the permanent sponsored visa categories', August, viewed 27 August 2011, www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/discussion-papers/_pdf/discussion-ens.pdf.

- ¹⁴ Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 'Report on the migration program 2010–11', Figure 7: Employer nomination scheme outcome 2003–04 to 2010–11 – visa grants, www.immi.gov.au/media/statistics/pdf/report-on-migration-program-2010-11.pdf.
- ¹⁵ Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2011, 'Discussion paper: review of the permanent sponsored visa categories', August, viewed 27 August 2011, http://www.immi.gov.au/media/publications/discussion-papers/_pdf/discussion-ens.pdf.
- ¹⁶ Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 'Report on the migration program 2010–11', Figure 8: RSMs outcome 2003–04 to 2010–11 – visa grants, www.immi.gov.au/media/statistics/pdf/report-on-migration-program-2010-11.pdf.
- ¹⁷ Senator the Hon. Christopher Evans MP, speech at Australian National University, 8 February 2010, viewed 27 August 2011, www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/speeches/2010/ce100208.htm.
- ¹⁸ Senator the Hon. Christopher Evans MP, doorstep interview, 8 February 2010, viewed 27 August 2011, www.minister.immi.gov.au/media/speeches/2010/ce100208a.htm.
- ¹⁹ Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2011, '1 July 2011 – points test for certain skilled migration visas', June, viewed 27 August 2011, www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/pdf/points-test.pdf.
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- ²¹ Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 'Employer-sponsored workers eligibility requirements', viewed 27 August 2011, www.immi.gov.au/skilled/skilled-workers/ens/eligibility-employee.htm.
- ²² Birrell et al. 2011, p. 37.
- ²³ There are three applicable lists: the Skilled Occupation List (Schedule 1) for independent skilled migrants; the Skilled Occupation List (Schedules 1 and 2) for state and territory sponsored migrants and the Employer Nominated Skilled Occupation List (ENSOL). See DIAC Skilled Occupation Lists, viewed 27 August 2011, www.immi.gov.au/skilled/sol/.
- ²⁴ Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 'Fact Sheet 24a – Priority processing for skilled migration visas', viewed 9 August 2011, www.immi.gov.au/media/fact-sheets/24apriority_skilled.htm.
- ²⁵ Senator the Hon. Christopher Evans MP, speech at the Australian National University, 8 February 2010, (See Note 18).
- ²⁶ Senator the Hon. Christopher Evans MP, doorstep interview 8 February 2010, (see Note 19).
- ²⁷ Department of Immigration and Citizenship 2011, 'Information regarding your application for a Subclass 885 Skilled – Independent Visa', 13 July. Copy supplied to the author by an informant.
- ²⁸ Department of Immigration and Citizenship, 'Proposed skilled migrant selection register (SkillSelect)', viewed 27 August 2011, www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/skillselect.htm.
- ²⁹ See Note 28.

High performing institutions: competitors and collaborators

MC: Ellen Fanning

Themes:

How do we balance business imperatives with
quality educational programs?

- 1. Culture
- 2. Governance
- 3. Product differentiation
- 4. Proximity to stakeholders
- 5. Workforce roles

GARY COBBLEDICK

HELEN ZIMMERMAN

ROD ARTHUR

SUSAN HARTIGAN

Surviving and thriving in a tough market – perspectives of a small private provider



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Introduction

The topic for this session can be read to imply a tension between 'quality educational programs' on the one hand, and 'business imperatives' on the other. The implication is that this is a tension that needs to be 'balanced'. I disagree with this view and believe instead that business imperatives over the long term are best served by the provision of high quality educational programs.

In our businesses, the quality of our overall package of services is the attribute that gives us the ability to charge a premium and that wins us repeat and referral business. My central challenge is not to balance quality and business drivers but rather to spread our company culture, and thereby to ensure that every employee is fully engaged, every day, in the quest to deliver excellence. For us, the drive to deliver quality is all about people and culture.

Caveats

A few caveats are in order.

First, I am new to the industry and my companies are very small relative to TAFEs.

Second, we work in fairly narrowly defined niche areas, making quality control easier to manage than in large organisations with a much larger scope.

Third, we source almost all of our students through corporate clients (in the case of workplace traineeships) or education agents (in the case of international students). We tend to do repeat business with almost all of our clients, so relationships matter, quality is remembered, and a premium can be charged for service excellence. Our business model is therefore quite different from those providers who market and sell their services directly to the student in a one-off transaction where brand alone can justify a premium.

About us

We have two businesses, both of which are relatively young.

1. One is a small international college, based in Melbourne, which teaches English to international students. At full capacity, we will teach about 1,000 foreign students per annum. We source almost all of our students through a small number of reputable education agents to whom we provide outstanding, personalised service. We have a small team of carefully selected English teachers, a vibrant college atmosphere, and a wide range of additional student services to enhance the overall student experience at our college. Our fees are amongst the highest in the industry, and our student numbers have been rising steadily since we

obtained CRICOS (Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students) registration six months ago.

2. The other business is a private registered training organisation (RTO), focused on the domestic corporate market, with 4,000 current trainees and 100 employees. We focus on Certificate III, Certificate IV and Diploma level qualifications, mainly in the manufacturing, warehousing and transport sectors, and with a growing business in the services sector. We have a hard-working team and a company culture that is energising. This business is growing rapidly, principally due to some major client wins over the past 12 months.

Business strategy

Our competitive advantage is that we are business people, with experience gained across a wide range of industries. We believe that we have a better understanding of the needs of the business sector than many of our competitors.

Common feedback from clients has been that the TAFE system is often too inflexible to meet their needs, while private sector providers are often not trusted to deliver consistent, quality outcomes.

Strategically, we have endeavoured to position ourselves as a group that can be trusted, and which provides solutions that are both flexible and of high quality. Our aspiration is to be recognised as an innovative, customer-focused, quality leader in our field. Our mantra is that we need to 'add value' with everything we do, so compromising on quality is not an option.

Implementing this strategy has involved many actions, but time permits me to give only two examples.

Governance and people

We have established an Advisory Board of the highest calibre, to which I report on a regular basis. The Advisory Board includes a former Premier of Victoria, the Dean of Monash University's Business Faculty, a former Dean of the NAB Learning Academy and the Executive Chairman of a billion dollar manufacturing company.

We also have established an Educational Advisory Board to focus exclusively on educational performance and quality.

These governance arrangements, and the flow-on positive implications that they have had on our business, have definitely helped to differentiate us from most other private providers. They have also been instrumental in helping us to attract high quality staff from leading private providers and also from the TAFE sector, Industry Skills Councils and Apprenticeship Centres. As a result, we now have an experienced senior team to execute our business plan.

Culture

One of our greatest competitive advantages as a relatively small company has been our ability to cultivate a company culture that is aligned with our values and business plan. All recruitment, review and reward decisions are heavily influenced by cultural fit and contribution to company culture. We place a very heavy emphasis on staff engagement, and all managers in the business have staff engagement as one of their KPIs.

Conclusions

To recap, we reject the notion that there is necessarily a conflict between business and quality imperatives. We acknowledge that this conflict exists

at the budget end of the private provider market, but not at the premium end where we operate. We hold the view that our business fundamentals are strengthened by our commitment to quality. It is this focus on quality and service that underpins our ability to charge a premium for our services, which in turn drives our profitability. And finally, we believe that the best way to achieve our goals is by building a world class team of people, uniting them through a compelling organisational culture, and then engaging them in their daily work through proactive management programs. After 18 months in the educational sector the early signs are encouraging, but the proof of the pudding will be in the eating, in a few years' time.



Helen Zimmerman

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Introduction

High performing educational institutions are not defined by size or sector, ownership, product range, markets or funding source. High performing institutions can be small or large, multidiscipline or niche, publicly or privately owned, and local, national or global in reach.

High performing institutions are defined by strategic direction and alignment, culture, governance and returns to their stakeholders who are consumers of the services, government, equity holders, partners, employees, and communities. Organisations are judged, prosper and grow, by the returns (the value on money invested) they deliver to these stakeholders.

While there is always a tension about how to best allocate limited funds to achieve organisational strategy and objectives, high performing

institutions do not view business imperatives and quality outcomes as an 'either/or' decision. Quality educational outcomes are viewed as the fundamental basis for long term and sustainable business success.

Vision and strategy

High performing institutions are clear on their core, long-term strategic direction, and invest judiciously based on strong 'value for money', evidence-based arguments.

Navitas' focus, strategy and business model is a global one, driven by the massive and growing demand for tertiary education¹ and continuing skills development worldwide. There are enormous opportunities for Australian educational institutions in continuing to meet this demand for education globally and in developing export capacity to provide skilled technical, vocational, knowledge and professional workers for other developed and developing countries. Australia's most valuable industry and economic strength is education; sustainable productivity lies in becoming a leading knowledge economy that generates creative, productive and innovative global citizens through quality education and training.

Navitas' core business is providing pathways across cultures for individuals to succeed in their education and career goals. Our vision is to be recognised as the most trusted learning organisation globally. We can only do this by working in trusted partnerships with others and delivering on our promises to learners.

Currently, we provide pre-university, university programs and managed university campuses, English language and teacher training, migrant education and settlement services, creative media

education, student recruitment, professional development and corporate training services to more than 80,000 students annually across a network of over 100 colleges and campuses in 23 countries.

We offer certificate, diploma, associate degree, bachelor and masters programs, and continuing professional development in graphic design, nursing, science, health care, psychology and counselling, public safety and criminal justice, arts, creative industries, media and communications as well as organisational skills in project management, logistics, bookkeeping, leadership and supervision.

Of Navitas' university pathway college students, 90% transition to university and 95% of those successfully graduate from one of our 26 host universities. Last financial year, 29% of the wealth created by the company (AUD136 million) went to university and consortia partners.

Governance

Australia has had a raft of legislation in place to regulate the registration of educational providers and the accreditation of courses and to protect consumers. However, up to now, enforcement of the various codes and instruments has been largely ineffective in weeding out the small numbers of providers whose questionable or unscrupulous practices have damaged the good name of Australian education. Legislation and regulation are necessary but not sufficient.

Strong and effective governance structures and practices must underpin educational delivery. High performing institutions adhere to regulatory frameworks but are more importantly driven by internal practices that ensure strong governance, risk management, and quality assurance, demonstrating openness to accountability and external evaluation.

In 2010–11, seven of Navitas' Australian University Program colleges underwent Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) audits. The colleges were commended on the success of college and partner university relationships, the quality of support programs for academically at-risk students, and the attention paid to the management and training of staff.

Academic tracer studies and benchmarking confirm high quality student outcomes are maintained. Student satisfaction surveys show 96% of respondents are satisfied or better with teaching quality, and 87% of graduates continue to do as well as, if not better than, standard entry students at partner universities.

Culture and values

Values² that are manifest in the daily experiences of learners, staff and partners define an organisation's culture. This requires alignment between what is espoused and what is acted out. The challenge for managers and leaders is to be seen to deliver on promises consistently and over time.

Relationships are the bedrock of Navitas' reputation and success. Our very model means we are interconnected – with learners, partners, our markets, our local communities and the issues impacting them. As a consequence, it is imperative that we foster a culture of engagement and inclusion. This is not always easy, however, it is a fundamental requirement for us, and I would argue, for any high performing organisation.

Michael Porter and Mark Kramer's concept³ of *Shared Value* rather than *share value* offers a way of thinking about how organisations can create economic value by creating societal value.

Conclusions

High performing institutions do not view business imperatives and quality outcomes as an 'either/or' decision. Quality educational outcomes are viewed as the fundamental basis for long term and sustainable business success.

High performing institutions are less concerned with competition and more concerned with collaboration and partnership. No one organisation can deliver sustained growth to its shareholders without a commitment to long-term engagement and shared returns with its stakeholders.

Notes

¹ Tertiary enrolments globally are expected to reach 263 million by 2025 – *UNESCO Institute of Statistics*. Private higher education is the fastest growth sector in the industry accounting for 30% of all global Enrolments – *UNESCO 2009*.

² Navitas' values are: **Conviction** of our purpose and potential; **Drive** towards achieving and advancing together; **Adventurous** in mind and spirit; **Rigour** in enhancing our professional reputation and credibility; **Genuine** in the way we behave and deliver; **Respect** shown by celebrating, valuing and caring for people and the environment.

³ Michael E Porter & Mark R Kramer 2011, 'Creating shared value', *Harvard Business Review*, January–February.

UQ College: an initiative at the right time



Rod Arthur

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Introduction

The panel description for this segment referred to high performing institutions. UQ College is owned by the University of Queensland (UQ) which is one such high performing institution.

As the owner of UQ College, UQ has the expectation that UQ College will enhance the brand and also itself become a high performing institution. The underpinning of high quality in UQ College's operation is a given and so in considering its business operation, this must be incorporated into its evolving business model.

In responding to the question of balance against the key themes, what follows identifies some of the directions the College is pursuing in relation to its governance model, product differentiation, workforce roles, and culture.

A key strategy regarding its growth will be the development of cooperative arrangements with a variety of partners who at various points may be in competition or collaboration.

Governance

The range of UQ program offerings at its Ipswich Campus has reduced and the company model for UQ College evolved, originally, to provide a vehicle for the University to offer a different range of services for domestic students at its Ipswich Campus.

UQ College Ltd was registered with the Australian Securities and Investment Commission (ASIC) in April 2010 and is solely owned by the University of Queensland. The College has commenced at a time where it may also become a vehicle to address a variety of opportunities arising from a number of recent government policy directions.

Its purpose is to build a viable and sustainable population of students at Ipswich in a way that is consistent with UQ's mission and purpose.

UQ College must meet the brand requirements of UQ – excellence, service to students, and access for a diverse range of students. The quality and status associated with UQ, its demonstrated record of achievement in providing a quality student experience and its pursuit of excellence, give UQ College an opportunity to build from the UQ brand.

Fulfilling responsibilities to its funding compact does mean that UQ must demonstrate how it is contributing to increasing access for low socioeconomic status (low-SES) students to higher education, and the establishment UQ College is part of that approach.

Product differentiation

UQ College is one of many colleges attached to universities in Australia. Some focus solely on international students and with varied products. Each has paid a great deal of attention to product design against the needs of an accurately identified market, each identifies the student experience as a key aspect of what they offer, and each has a well developed branding strategy connected to their parent organisation and reflecting their product.

Many are working in a market where the product is actually a degree from the owner not the means of getting there offered by UQ College. Cooperation with other service providers and networks will also be used as a means of attracting students by connecting to regional development, equity target groups, and innovation in partnering arrangements.

It is important to note that the purpose of differentiation for UQ College is less about competition and more about identifying what UQ College can bring to partnerships.

Workforce roles

UQ College will be looking at different models of teaching delivery and support services. Theorising of models of learning between programs in the tertiary space must form part of educational staff capability. Staff must be able to converse across current VET and higher education boundaries.

The College has captured these qualities in our planning documents as follows.

UQ College educational staff will:

- maintain discipline or industry knowledge and think in new ways to ensure that qualifications are relevant to the future workforce

- include teachers with qualifications in both the appropriate discipline/industry areas and in teaching and learning commensurate with tertiary education
- have mastery of a range of assessment, moderation and reporting skills and techniques across the pedagogies used in tertiary education
- have a high level of understanding of vocational learning
- have capability in research and scholarship in vocational learning
- have high levels of IT skills to be effective in flexible learning and discharge administrative responsibilities
- be able to provide the full range of student support services including providing students with the foundation skills for tertiary study
- be active in managing external relationships, particularly with community and industry engagement
- be able to develop curriculum and design courses that are appropriate and relevant to student and future employer needs and which accommodate the requirements of regulatory bodies.

Culture

UQ College is an educational organisation being built from start-up. The owner demands the highest quality.

A culture is being built that is being driven by a quality imperative but one which will support a sustainable business growing to 3,000 students in the next 10 years. The systems and processes are being built to ensure the foundations are being laid

but not so rigidly that the College cannot deliver on the potential it has to deliver new value.

There is a constant tension between existing processes which the University understands and the desire to be new and innovative. So far, the College has been able to turn that tension into positive outcomes.

Obviously, as well, new staff are being recruited and are bringing new value which will make a positive contribution to that culture.

Conclusions

The task is to create the high performing organisation which is what the owner expects.

However, in doing so, the College's high performance will be in creating a service that meets and exceeds the goals that have been established. The College will need to take the owner on that journey as well, and establish the credibility that the College is producing high quality results but maybe in different ways.

That journey will involve links with a range of partners to access new opportunities for both parties. Again, the College needs to create a value proposition for those parties who want to work with it.

In doing so, the College needs to act locally to create its own philosophy of learning, product design and quality whilst policy directions around it continue to evolve.



Susan Hartigan

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Introduction

Getting the balance right – and, more importantly, keeping the need to retain that balance in mind – is a key factor in achieving both business and educational goals.

Western Sydney Institute has risen to meet the challenges of an increasingly competitive market place, and the need to ensure our sustainability and growth in that market, by changing the way we do business.

As a public education provider, we have both a business and a social imperative; we are expected to operate efficiently and in a business-like way, yet with a clear vision of providing high quality education. This vision sees Western Sydney Institute as an educational leader, helping produce graduates with a range of skills that will significantly enhance

their academic experiences and employment opportunities.

Product differentiation

At the beginning of our journey, we asked ourselves what was going to be the ladder to get where we wanted to go. We questioned our very purpose and our value to the people of Western Sydney and beyond. This thinking has driven our change process. We embarked on a journey of embedding the customer focus culture. We asked ourselves and our staff what it meant to them to develop a customer-centric model and required them to hone their skills to drive the cultural change. We embedded the philosophy that an overriding external customer focus galvanises staff ownership.

Our first step in achieving a successful strategy that balanced the need to grow our business with the need to encourage innovation in our workforce was to recognise that at the centre of everything we do is our customers. This was achieved as a result of research and staff consultation.

While that may seem obvious, it was the deliberate positioning of the customer at the centre that then informed our strategic planning, which is the core of our organisation. We were successful with our repositioning and rebranding strategies because we know our business intimately.

Governance

In today's changing VET sector, it is increasingly important to take a holistic approach from the outset in order to maximise return on investment and improve the education journey for those embarking on it.

A robust strategic plan and a flexible and responsive approach to our planning process have been key

factors in keeping our business sharply focused and our prioritisation relevant and current.

However, achieving this strength has been a process that has required time.

To successfully mirror the current needs and future requirements of our business, our plans had to be developed, implemented and then revised, both to sharpen the focus and to meet new and emerging needs as identified by our customers.

Our planning and reporting measures have worked to build confidence in the strength of our business process and our ability to achieve our goal to meet the needs of our customers.

But business imperatives are only one side of the story.

Culture

The development and implementation of cultural change is a gradual process which must be led from the top and modelled at every level of the organisation. Leaders must 'walk the talk' if cultural change is to be truly achieved.

We cannot claim to have really achieved our aims unless we know all our staff are a part of, and engaged in, our new approach.

Over the past five years we have promoted a culture of innovation and customer responsiveness for our staff.

Our staff work in an environment that challenges them to access development opportunities, whether it be within their field of expertise or to expand their skill base by participating in leadership and business literacy programs.

We have been actively fostering a leadership culture, asking people to believe in themselves and the

Institute, and pursue opportunities to develop their own skills.

We support this with Institute leadership and mentoring programs, open to anyone who is interested in developing and enhancing their leadership skills.

Innovation

Our tagline for this approach is that everyone at the Institute has been given 'permission to fly'.

The challenge in giving people the go-ahead to innovate and take risks is that we must also keep the need for balance in mind.

If there is too much control, innovation is lost. On the other hand, if there are no boundaries, the focus that is driving our business is lost.

To help our staff remain within this fine balance, we have ensured our planning and reporting processes — which inform our business direction — are open and transparent.

Everyone working in the Institute can monitor and track our performance against targets and review shifts that may occur due to changes in customer demand.

In this way, our customers remain our central focus, both in our business planning and in our innovative educational approaches.

When the balance is right and the focus is maintained, the innovation flows.

We are very proud of our achievements, for which we were recognised last year when we were awarded the 2010 Australian Large Training Provider of the Year.

We encourage all our staff and students to pursue awards and recognition, proving to them that their work is appreciated and applauded both internally and externally.

Summary

As a public provider, it is our mission to be leaders in business and innovation, responding to our customers and building capability in our staff and the communities we serve.

To be successful in this goal, we have to ensure we have the balance right — and that we remember to keep our focus on maintaining this balance in all areas of our operation.

Our experience has shown us that success in this area breeds success in other areas — and the proof of our success is in our customer satisfaction.

Discussion sessions

Concurrent Topical Discussion Sessions – Delegates' choice

Rapporteurs: Emerging Leaders

Topics and facilitators

1. **NATIONAL BROADBAND: A BOON FOR TAFE?**

Facilitated by Rodney Spark, Executive Director, e-Works and NBN Ambassador

The National Broadband Network (NBN) is a major Australian Government initiative to underpin Australia's growing information economy. Goal 1 of new National E-Learning Strategy 2012–2015 is focused on how the vocational education and training sector can harness the benefits of the NBN. This session will discuss what this means for training organisations in the 21st century.

2. **MODELS OF GOVERNANCE**

Facilitated by Sheryle Moon, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Project Management

Governance accountability is fundamental to the very confidence that individuals and the community can place in its institutions. It is the most critical challenge that they face today. Albert Einstein said, 'We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking that we used when we created them. Anyone can make things more complex, complicated and bigger – it takes real genius and courage to move in the opposite direction!'. Boards have overcomplicated the governance to the point where it is often an obstacle to good operational work and indeed 'good' governance. What can be done to remove the gap between operational effectiveness and transparency with codified regulations that have the opposite effect?

3. **"AS ONE – A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT MODEL"**

Facilitated by Stephen Langton, Managing Director, Deloitte Centre for Collective Leadership, UK

"As One" is a leadership model that Deloitte uses around the world to address talent management for large organisations. HR strategies to enhance leadership in TAFE teams are 'big issues' for discussion. This session provides opportunities to hear about and discuss proven ways to develop and implement those strategies.

4. **SOCIAL MEDIA TECHNOLOGY: THE REWARDS AND CHALLENGES**

Facilitated by Julian Doherty, Research Manager Slade Group – Slade Partners

Social Media is an outstanding opportunity for layered and authentic communication, but it also presents training and change management challenges, can drain resources and its impact is difficult to measure. This interactive session will include case studies of successful strategies from/relevant to the sector and effective engagement techniques and ideas.

5. SOCIAL INCLUSION...THE EVOLUTION FROM FEEL GOOD TO POINT OF DIFFERENCE (THE ROLE OF SOCIAL INCLUSION IN TAFE BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY)

Facilitated by Paul Callaghan, Institute Director, TAFE NSW – New England Institute

For many years, social inclusion has been identified as an important part of Australia's social cohesion and the development of a fair and equitable society. With multiple items of research suggesting Australia is facing a skills shortage crisis, the socially excluded are now seen as a major source of labour force skills. Feel good is now an economic imperative.

6. HIGHER EDUCATION DIPLOMAS AND ASSOCIATE DEGREES: HOW IMPORTANT ARE THEY TO TAFE INSTITUTES?

Facilitated by Bill Swetman, General Manager, Organisational Services, Polytechnic West

Higher education qualifications are now embedded into the range of offerings by many TAFE institutions. The qualifications have become an integral component and natural extension of 'vocational' learning at a number of TAFE organisations and as such, offer students alternative pathways to achieve their aspirations through an industry-relevant vehicle. If such pathways are important to our students and our industry partners, they are important to TAFE. This session will provide a forum to explore issues related to the importance of providing higher education through TAFE organisations.

7. REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS: TAFE INSTITUTES AND UNIVERSITIES: WHY DO THEY WORK?

Facilitated by Denise Janek, Managing Director TAFE SA – Regional and Gerald Brennan, Manager of TAFE Partnerships, Deakin University

Credit transfer? Merger? Are these the only options for university/TAFE partnerships? This interactive session will explore the other forms that relationships between universities and TAFE institutes might take in delivering high quality tertiary education to regional communities, while utilising the strengths of each organisation in an equal partnership.

8. WHAT'S IMPORTANT IN VET TEACHING: QUALIFICATIONS, CURRENCY OR COMMON SENSE?

Facilitated by Berwyn Clayton, Director, Work-based Education Research Centre, Victoria University

This interactive session will provide participants with the opportunity to consider what needs to happen to improve the quality of VET teaching and to discuss what skills, knowledge and attributes VET teachers and trainers really need, given the complexity of tasks and diversity of students that they are now confronted with in their day-to-day practice.

9. TESTING THE VALUE PROPOSITION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A US-AUSTRALIA 'GREEN SKILLS' NETWORK AND EXCHANGE

Facilitated by Mindy Feldbaum, Senior Director, Workforce Development Programs, Academy for Educational Development, Washington, DC, USA

With many US community colleges and TAFE institutions at the forefront of the growing momentum for action on climate change, sustainability and green skills, now may be the critical time for the advancement of an international engagement of a US-Australia Green Skills Learning Exchange and Network (Green Skills Network). This session will focus on the value proposition of such a network, potential challenges, and broader impact of creating a bilateral learning community.

10. WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR A GREEN SKILLS FUTURE

Facilitated by Dr Mary Spilde, President, Lane Community College, Eugene, OR, USA and Marcy Drummond, Vice President, Academic Affairs and Workforce and Economic Development, Los Angeles Trade-Technical College (LATTC), Los Angeles, CA, USA

Colleges have the opportunity to be leaders in preparing the workforce for a green skills future but face challenges because this future remains largely undefined. This session highlights strategies for developing institutional capacity for creating quality, green workforce development training programs and tying these programs to college sustainability initiatives.

11. TAFE MAINTAINING ITS VOCATIONAL VISION IN THE NEW TERTIARY SECTOR

Facilitated by Virginia Simmons, Director, Virsis Consulting

With increasing numbers of TAFE institutes offering degrees or becoming part of dual-sector universities, is there a danger that TAFE's commitment to vocational training will fade? This session will explore a new tertiary type that maintains TAFE's traditional role while still formally positioning it for a tertiary future.

Ministerial address

MC: Ellen Fanning

**Senator the Hon. Christopher Evans, MP,
Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations**

TAFE Directors Australia National Conference 2011 'Balancing the big issues'



Senator the Hon Christopher Evans MP

*Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs
and Workplace Relations
Leader of the Government in the Senate*

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge traditional owners and custodians of the land on which we meet today – the Gadigal people of the Eora Nations – and pay my respect to their elders past and present.

I'd also like to acknowledge:

- Martin Riordan – CEO, TAFE Directors Australia
- Stephen Conway – Chair, TAFE Directors Australia
- TDA Board Members and staff.

Introduction

TAFE Directors Australia is a strong advocate for TAFE and an important participant in national policy debates, so I welcome the opportunity to address you today.

I also welcome the opportunity to acknowledge the fundamental role which Australia's TAFE system plays in the vocational education and training sector in our country.

Our TAFE network is an essential public institution and one which this Government values highly. TAFE is on the frontline when it comes to giving Australians the skills they need to get a job and secure their future.

It is also the TAFE system that has the ability to reach those in our community who have had poor school experiences, who are marginalised or who have only been intermittently connected to the world of work and formal education.

It is TAFE that can bridge the gap between isolation and disadvantage and meaningful, skilled work.

It is a system that each year literally transforms the lives of thousands of Australians – giving them the skills they need to succeed.

And never before has the task of skilling Australians been so central to the nation's economic well being.

Ours is a patchwork economy and an economy which is undergoing restructure.

We are experiencing an unprecedented demand for skills as the resources and construction industries boom.

But demand for our resources is producing a high Australian dollar which in turn is putting pressure on export-exposed and manufacturing industries.

In recent weeks we have seen the human impact of these changes as hundreds of BlueScope Steel workers face the prospect of losing their jobs while BHP was announcing record profits.

Australian retailers are adapting to the movement of retail online and our aging population is driving demand for related health and aged care services and contributing to skills shortages.

Our workforce is shrinking and we need to encourage greater participation from those who are not currently engaged in work.

And the very nature of work itself is changing due to the impact of rapid technological change.

We are seeing high skill jobs grow at 2.5 times the rate of other jobs.

Skills Australia forecast that we will need an additional 2.4 million people within the workforce with qualifications at Certificate III or higher by 2015. To meet industry demand, that figure will rise to 5.2 million by 2025.

The sheer pace of change in our economy represents a real challenge for the VET sector – to retrain workers in industries that are in decline, provide skilled workers for industry experiencing growth, and provide highly skilled workers for the new innovative industries that will emerge in the future.

We need to shape our plans for VET reform to deal with these immediate pressures and to prepare for the longer term opportunities in our economy.

That's our shared challenge.

A challenge that demands a flexible, responsive, quality vocational education and training sector.

A sector that delivers high-level training that meets the needs of employers and students, supports competitive industries and caters to future jobs growth.

A transparent sector where funding is targeted to skills needs and where employers and students can

choose high-performing organisations that meet their needs.

And critically, a sector that facilitates increased participation for Australians of all ages and from all backgrounds.

As the oldest, the biggest and the most respected VET provider in Australia, TAFE must play a central role in the development of our future workforce.

TAFE not only has a proud place in Australia's economic history – as a source of skills and social mobility for millions of people – it has a pivotal role to play in Australia's economic future.

Millions of Australians are going to rely on TAFE to give them the education and the skills needed to maximise their personal potential and develop their skills to drive our productivity and national wealth.

And that's why the Australian Government wants to work with the TAFE system to give it a stronger future.

Government investment in TAFE

COAG's targets point to the scale of the effort required to address skills shortages in the economy. They involve halving the proportion of 20–64 year olds without qualifications at Certificate III level and doubling the number of higher qualification completions by 2020.

In response, the Australian Government has made significant investments in the VET sector which are contributing to the development of a strong, flexible TAFE system.

Total investment in the Vocational Education and Training for the 2008–09 to 2010–11 financial years is AUD11.1 billion.

This compares with AUD6.8 billion for the Commonwealth's expenditure on VET over the three years 2005 to 2007.

Included in Labor's investment has been AUD7 10 million in capital for investment in VET facilities and AUD685 million in capital for Trade Training Centres in schools.

It is a significant investment and one well made.

In the 2011–12 Budget, we announced the Building Australia's Future Workforce package, a AUD3 billion investment over six years to give industry the skilled workers it needs to grow and prosper, and give more Australians the training and the life opportunities that come through having a job.

The package includes a AUD558 million National Workforce Development Fund, reform of apprenticeships through AUD200 million of funding, and participation for the disadvantaged with a further AUD263 million for training in language and literacy and to assist people back into the workforce.

This major investment, made in the context of extremely tight budgetary conditions, demonstrates the priority the Government gives skills in its plans for the future.

Some of you may have already seen a series of television advertisements, which I launched on the weekend, encouraging Australians of all ages to consider improving their skills or gaining a formal qualification.

Many of those who respond to this call will find themselves learning new skills at a local TAFE.

I launched the campaign at an aged care facility in Perth which is accessing training for its existing staff. These were not men in hard hats but care workers, gaining skills and qualifications that provide them

with new opportunities to contribute to the care of residents. In a sector that will continue to grow strongly and demand skills as our population ages.

As part of the Government's Budget investment in delivering a skilled and productive Australian workforce, we laid out a plan to reform our national training system.

Last month COAG agreed to adopt a new national framework of objectives and principles for VET reform by re-shaping the Commonwealth-State partnership and funding arrangements.

It includes a review of the current National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development, which will be completed by the end of this year, and which will inform the re-negotiation of the Agreement in 2012.

It will also inform the introduction of a new, five-year AUD1.75 billion National Partnership Agreement focused on VET reform.

I am also very keen to ensure that stakeholders inform the development of these new inter-governmental arrangements. To that end we have recently held two roundtables with representatives from industry, unions and RTOs, including TDA, to discuss the Government's reform agenda and how it might be achieved.

At the Ministerial Council last week we agreed to host a group of stakeholders, including employers, unions and RTOs, at the next meeting in November to discuss VET reform and inform the inter-government negotiations.

The Government's objective is to achieve a world class VET system where Australians are able to choose high quality, accessible and relevant training delivered by qualified instructors in institutions with modern supporting infrastructure.

I know there are concerns about a push to implement competition in VET public funding as part of the reform agenda in a number of States.

There is a role for healthy competition to promote greater responsiveness to both employers and students but I believe this can be achieved while recognising and supporting the central role public providers play in skilling Australia. We must recognise TAFE's role in providing access for disadvantaged groups, in rural areas, in capital intensive training and so on.

If the current funding arrangements are acting as impediments to quality, accessibility and responsiveness, then clearly we need to look at changing those arrangements. But we need to do so with the outcomes clearly in mind.

The Government has identified four principles which will guide our reform agenda. These include transparency, equity, efficiency and quality.

Transparency

A more transparent system will benefit all users, providers and funders of the VET system. Students will be better able to choose the courses they need to realise their career goals. Employers will get better information about the quality, relevance and costs of the skills they are buying. And training providers will have greater certainty of funding — something I know TAFEs have struggled with.

Equity

If Australia is to have the workforce it needs over the next decade, we need to lift participation. The VET sector, and TAFEs in particular, have a strong record of engaging disadvantaged groups and giving them the skills they need to break into the labour market.

That is why the Government allocated AUD263 million in the last Budget for training aimed at assisting people into the workforce.

Once in a job, these groups will need to upskill if they are to retain their place in the economy. For millions of Australians TAFEs are the place you go to get the skills you need for the new job or the promotion.

Efficiency

I know that for some of you when I say 'efficiency' you will hear 'doing more with less', especially when you're already flat out with work.

But efficiency is not code for 'cuts' any more than funding reform needs to be. It's about ensuring that the right skills are delivered at the right time, more apprentices complete their training, RTOs respond to the needs of employers and students have their existing skills recognised.

Some States have or are currently introducing reforms that seek to provide an entitlement to training and arrange their funding so that money follows students. Most are also considering introducing some form of contestability into VET delivery, albeit a more 'managed' approach than was adopted in Victoria. These are decisions that rightly sit with State jurisdictions.

The Commonwealth will not be mandating what form of training market the States implement, however we will be mandating the types of improvements we want to see in the VET system, in line with the principles we have outlined.

Quality

Any attempt to improve efficiency must involve a guarantee of quality.

To drive down the cost of training without ensuring that quality is maintained is not improving the system, quite the opposite.

Australian governments at all levels are determined to improve the quality of VET. National quality and consistency of performance are core aims of the longer term VET reforms.

Skills Australia has called for external validation of assessments as a way of ensuring quality standards. I think we need to consider how that might be implemented, along with other measures, if we are to ensure all VET providers are delivering high quality training.

VET workforce issues

We cannot hope to improve the quality of our VET system without ensuring it has the workforce it needs. The quality of our teachers and trainers is crucial to the future of the sector and in turn raising student performance, creating a better trained workforce and achieving greater productivity and innovation.

As the Productivity Commission and Skills Australia's recent studies have found, clients' expectations of the VET workforce are largely being met, student and employer satisfaction ratings are high, and VET students are gaining useful skills that are valued by prospective employers and other educational institutions.

However, the reports also note that a number of demographic, economic, social, technological, and policy factors are creating big challenges for the VET sector that will place increased demands on the VET teaching workforce.

About 95 per cent of VET is delivered by TAFE teachers, so it is crucial for TAFE that these challenges are addressed.

While these workforce issues are the direct responsibility of the states and territories, I am looking at what incentives and rewards can be built into the reform National Partnership underpinning the Agreement to encourage States to move forward with us in developing comprehensive and effective workforce planning strategies.

Regulatory reform: ASQA

Assuring high standards requires a quality regulatory system. And to this end, the Government has embarked on one of the most significant reforms in VET: the establishment of a national VET regulator and a national standards council.

ASQA, as you know, commenced operations on 1 July 2011, through the cooperation of governments and stakeholders, including the TDA. Our new single regulatory body for the sector will ensure high standards are enforced and poor performance is not tolerated.

We need providers and industries to have an appetite for change and a willingness to work with ASQA's regulatory framework.

ASQA has now been in operation for a little over two months.

It currently has responsibility for all RTOs in New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. It is also responsible for RTOs with international students or multi-jurisdictional operations in Western Australia and Victoria.

All up, this represents about 2,000 providers. And when Queensland, South Australia and Tasmania refer their regulatory powers in the coming months, this number will double.

ASQA commenced operations with a very high volume of work, inheriting more than 640

applications. But it will not be lowering its level of scrutiny in order to reduce its workload. Levels of scrutiny will remain high in order to build a strong, well regulated VET sector.

I ask that you all show a little patience and goodwill in these early implementation stages, and provide ASQA with all the necessary cooperation it needs to do its job effectively and efficiently.

I would also like to thank TDA for its constructive input into the consultations around the Amendment Bill the Government recently introduced which picks up on concerns from stakeholders on the initial legislation for ASQA. The Bill includes an Objects section to the main Act, for which TDA argued strongly, and otherwise amends technical aspects of the Act to improve its workability.

International engagement

Just before I close, I would like to acknowledge the role that TAFE and TDA have in promoting the quality and strength of our VET offerings in the international market.

When I leave today – I am meeting with colleagues from the Mongolian government who are here to sign an MOU with TDA on the provision of VET opportunities for Mongolian students. Many of you may be aware that I recently travelled to India and visited a number of very impressive training facilities provided by Australian RTOs and of course we still have a significant number of Indian students travelling to Australia to study. And more and more, our close neighbours, the Chinese, also understand the value and quality of our Australian VET system.

Other countries see the value of our TAFE system and want to engage – and in some instances – replicate it. That is a sign of the strength of our public sector and a good thing. So I see TAFE as not only a critical

player in our domestic education systems but also in our international engagement on education.

Conclusion

In closing, let me say again how valuable the work of the VET sector is to Australia's economy and society and to the Government's agenda.

I want TAFE to play a big role in these reforms, because you not only have a big stake in its outcome, the Australian people have a big stake in you.

Your leadership in the reform process will not only determine how well your institutions thrive, it will determine how well Australia can respond to the demand for new skills that our fast changing economy is now creating.

As the major public provider, and as the leader in equity and innovation, TAFE has to play a positive role in the reform process under way.

Thank you.

Stream 1

What should VET qualifications look like?

Chair: Adrian Marron, CEO, Canberra Institute of Technology; TDA Board Member

Topic speaker:

Dr John Buchanan, Director, Workplace Research Centre, Business School, University of Sydney

Themes:

1. Is the AQF level one of the criteria for Training Package developers?
2. Where is the flexibility in Training Packages?
3. Where is the expertise in delivery?
4. Training Packages – outmoded in the new tertiary landscape?

Panel:

Suzy McKenna, Principal Project Officer, Australian Qualifications Framework Council

Allan Ballagh, Director TAFE and Vice-President, RMIT

Rod Cooke, CEO, Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council



Dr John Buchanan

*Director, Workplace Research Centre
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Clarifying basic categories for defining skills in the Australian Apprenticeship and Post- compulsory Education Systems: current conventions and implications for the defining features of VET qualifications in the future

*(This paper builds on an initial briefing prepared by
John Buchanan for the Apprenticeships of the 21st
Century Taskforce: 9 September 2010)*

1. Current conventions

(a) Problems in the definition of the education sectors

Much public and policy debate on the future of post-compulsory education is structured using the terms 'VET' and 'Higher Education'. At the most basic level these terms are commonly assumed to denote:

- i Higher Education is 'abstract' and 'advanced'/'higher order' in nature
- ii VET is 'practical' and 'lower level' in nature.

This habit of thought is unhelpful — but has been accepted and perpetuated by key players in both sectors. The mainstream VET policy network has been especially keen to distinguish itself on the basis of CBT — priding itself on a hostility to coherent, curriculum-based definitions of learning and skills. Skills for this group of people are something that can be unproblematically broken down into units of competence and then reassembled in any number of ways to meet the supposedly endlessly unique requirements of different enterprises. They can also provide the bases for defining an endless number of 'qualifications'. In the automotive sector alone, for example, there are over 70 different, discrete qualifications. The automotive workforce accounts for less than (2% to 4%) of the workforce. What the worth or meaning of these qualifications is remains unclear. Unsurprisingly, issues of quality in both 'on-the-job training' associated with CBT and the quality of VET 'qualifications' is now a major issue.

(b) Problems in the linking of workplace and classroom sites of learning

The apprenticeship system is part of VET. Completion of apprenticeships delivers a Certificate III outcome. In strictly qualifications terms this has the same status as a Cert III in Retail or Aged Care. Amongst

some RTOs such qualifications can, reportedly, be obtained in six or so weeks. But workplace practice is also part of professional education. The health professions in particular has long traditions for requiring extensive workplace practice before a person is regarded as a qualified professional. A classroom based qualification does not provide a licence to practice the profession. In VET there is an assumed equivalence between the workplace and the classroom as a site of learning: two routes lead to one outcome – ‘competence’. In higher education there is no such assumption.

2. Possible working categories to help clarify key issues

(a) Important to make some basic distinctions: classroom vs worksites, level vs types of knowledge

A number of key problems in policy arise because of some unhelpful ‘conflations’. Learning in the classroom is not the same as learning on the job or by simulator. To assume equivalence neglects the distinctiveness of both. Underpinning knowledge is not easily learnt well ‘on the job’ (a problem with many traineeships). Equally practical technique is, generally speaking, not well learnt in the classroom (a problem with much VET in schools).

Equally, it is unhelpful to conflate ‘practical’ and ‘VET’ on the one hand and ‘conceptual’ and ‘higher education’ on the other. This conflates the level of knowledge with type of knowledge.

(b) A basic categorial system: distinguishing levels and types of knowledge for different occupations and tiers of the education system illustrated by current examples of source/site of knowledge.

Type of knowledge		Level of knowledge		Aristotle's types of knowledge avoids binary thinking
Common distinctions	More helpful distinctions	Intermediate skills	Higher order skills	
Vocational Education	Practical – learnt on job – learnt in simulation – learnt in classroom	1. Workplace Trainees/ Apprentice on-job-training 2. Skill Centre instruction 3. VET in schools	7. Article clerks 8. Airline/fighter pilots 9. Legal workshops	Techné – basic techniques
	Conceptual – underpinning knowledge to underpin practice [Phronesis (i)?] – abstract principles learnt through practical project work [Phronesis (ii)?] – not linked to immediate, identifiable practice (higher order cognitive capability)	4 (a) Apprentice ‘Theory’ + (b) classroom VET	10. Law/Medicine Degree	Phronesis – practical wisdom
		5. Bergin Academy (practical problems based learning in biotech, engineering to grasp higher order thinking etc)	11. Sydney Uni MBA	
Academic/scholarly education		6. Secondary school academic curriculum	12. Arts and Science Degrees	Epistēmē – abstract reasoning

3. Implications (1): nature of current debate and identifying priorities

The stereotypes informing policy are: VET = 1+ 4b. and Higher Education = 12

In reality, professions = 7/9 + 10/11 and trades = 1 + 4a. So stereotypes don't really engage with reality.

The problem is that in reality employers and workers value 5 and 11 + quality offerings of 1, 2, 3, 8.

The existence of 2, 8, 5 and 11 is hardly recognised in policy.

If we are interested in apprenticeships:

- i we need a better understanding of what we mean by 'intermediate skills'
- ii what do we mean by 'vocational' knowledge and education?

The two are not synonymous. The assumption that they are causes lots of confusion and generates 'the problem of articulation'.

A way out of this is to move beyond the binary thinking of 'VET' vs 'HE' and 'Practical' vs 'Conceptual'. Instead, we need to think about a continuum of skill from intermediate through to higher order elements. Aristotle's three-way breakdown of knowledge is also very helpful of understanding the benefit and value of 'practical wisdom' – reasoning applied to practice as a key aspect of social reality and a virtuous life.

4. Implications (2): What VET qualifications should be like

(a) VET qualifications should have both a practical element and a conceptual (that is, coherent underpinning knowledge) element.

(b) It needs to be recognised VET operates at two distinct levels: intermediate skills level (Certificate III to Diploma level) and higher level skills (Degree and above). That is the trades + para-professional level and professional levels.

(c) The key issue is quality. Respected and effective custodians for quality need to define and enforce standards – conceptual and practical

- i For the underpinning knowledge aspect, this should be VET Regulator and TEQSA
- ii For practical knowledge, these bodies need to be advised by vocational organisations (for example, groups like the medical colleges for those concerned with medical practitioners and the Institute of Automotive Mechanical Engineering for car repair trades people).

(d) Observation: It is time to move beyond seeing training packages as the key reference point for defining skills and qualifications. The future of quality VET qualifications is intricately linked to the quality of occupational structures in the labour market. Without them, educators will struggle to overcome quality problems. And the problem is not mainly with educators – it arises from coordination failures among employers. This is the root cause of most problems with skills and workforce development in Australia today.

Stream 1: What should VET qualifications look like?



Suzy McKenna

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Notes for the panel discussion

The implementation of the strengthened Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) provides an opportunity for the tertiary sector to refresh engagement with the reviewed AQF structure, qualification type specifications and policies.

The AQF is the national policy for regulated qualifications in Australia.

It now provides an explicit levels-based taxonomy which incorporates the 15 qualification types (and therefore all accredited Australian qualifications) across the tertiary sector.

It includes specifications for each qualification type. For example: a Certificate III must be accredited (and therefore developed) at AQF level 3 and meet the qualification type descriptor for the Certificate III as well as the relevant AQF policies cited in the specification.

The purpose of all qualifications is ... 'for (a kind of) work and as a pathway for further learning'.

The new AQF Pathways Policy provides for some new considerations in the design of qualifications in Training Packages especially at levels 1 and 2, and levels 5, 6 and 7.



Allan Ballagh

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My five minutes of fame, a contribution to opening a discussion about VET qualifications, is framed within the following propositions:

Policy initiatives in 2010–11 have set the scene for a fresh and much needed conversation about the nature of VET qualifications and pedagogy; a conversation that could be roughly headlined as ‘VET Products for the 21st Century meets the AQF and the Tertiary Sector’ (consistent with the proposition to be made in Rod Cooke’s presentation).

VET Products for the 21st century

The main focus to date has been implementation of recommendations around streamlining Training Packages, flexibility and assuring the place of foundation skills in the framework. This has been a sensible and productive approach and has encompassed the broad intent of many of

the recommendations. However, fundamental changes made to the framework have to date been understated, and may have their time in the sun in due course in the context of a broadly framed discussion about the nature of VET qualifications. I refer to the revised definition of competence – ‘It (competency) embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments’; and a more explicit recognition of knowledge and assessment of knowledge. Both of these are strong hooks into a wider consideration of the purpose and architecture of learning and assessment in VET in the tertiary environment, particularly at Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) levels 5 and 6 qualification levels.

The ‘new’ AQF and tertiary sector

The ‘new’ AQF has given permission to move on from the constrained thinking imposed by the sectoral artefacts that characterised the ‘old’ AQF: VET diplomas and VET advanced diplomas on one hand and higher education (HE) diplomas, HE advanced diplomas and associate degrees on the other – into a more cohesive conversation and understanding of structure and purpose of ‘tertiary’ AQF 5 and 6 qualifications. The revised definition of ‘competency’ speaks more naturally to the HE notion of ‘capability’ than the old. The old presumed reasons for not having a sensible conversation across the sectors about qualifications architecture have been swept away by the AQF. The conversation that has to be had must be open and engaging and involve all stakeholders in quality tertiary education for the vocations and the professions. Who in the new architecture of the tertiary sector has responsibility for leading this discussion? TEQSA and ASQA; NSSC and the HE panel?; the AQF? ...What role will TDA seek to play?

The pathways and credit transfer framework would surely be greatly enhanced by a discussion about the nature of a 'tertiary' pedagogy and its contribution to workplace productivity – where industry knowledge and discipline knowledge meet. Current work being undertaken, by ALTC Fellow Dr Helen Smith, around associate degree pedagogy will be a useful contribution to this discussion. The associate degree is an interesting qualification in that it sits outside of the training packages as a para-professional qualification and approaches to the design of associate degrees are naturally suggestive of the so-called unique sectoral traditions in HE and VET at AQF levels 5 and 6: discipline knowledge meets industry knowledge. This work will be worth following and I recommend that TAFE institutes offering associate degrees get on board with it.

Knowledge economy

The VET sector has always been characterised by a broad pedagogical church, not just CBT, and it may be useful at this stage of the evolution of VET in a tertiary education sector, (especially given the current narrative about the central place of 'knowledge economy' concepts to Australia's future), to do a reality check on what mix of conceptual models of learning and assessment will ensure that VET remains a vibrant and dynamic contributor to a knowledge economy.

I have been and remain a strong supporter of competency-based training (CBT). In the hands of good educators, the training packages have 'sung and danced' and acted as catalyst to quality criterion-based education. However, I recall the day some years ago when I was invited to a working group, the task of which would be to develop the innovation competencies. I recall pondering the possibility that this was a set up. Would the

comperes jump out soon and exclaim, 'got ya'! For it had never occurred to me, in all of my years of supporting the development of CBT, that we would attempt to codify the innovation process through a competency pedagogy and then disseminate it through a CBT delivery process. Were we attempting to apply a CBT pedagogy where it logically shouldn't be applied? The process of innovation is of course more than competency as known in the VET sector, involving, for example, knowledge creation, imagination, creativity, trial and error and risk taking. This dilemma, strongly supportive of CBT and yet sceptical as to its limitations, is unresolved for me.

I have been privy to some early needs analysis work being undertaken to get a grasp on how the application of the National Broadband Network (NBN) can be effected at an enterprise level to improve competitiveness and productivity. It does seem as though this is primarily a knowledge-based innovation challenge, perhaps better understood through knowledge management frameworks than through a quest to define the competencies needed to apply the NBN. Of course competencies will have role to play in building a skills base for the NBN but they are not in themselves the driver of innovation and a productivity that the NBN promises. Perhaps the new broader definition of 'competency' might allow VET learning to better speak to the innovation process?

In this context, is there possibly something limiting in the language that we have invented over the years to describe the development of training packages? How well do terms like 'training package developer' and 'training package deliverer' sit in a knowledge economy narrative? I get senior educators involved in emerging technologies at AQF level 6 sharing their challenges and frustrations in balancing the tensions between CBT and

curriculum-based qualifications design. One of them suggested to me that the 'developer' and 'deliverer' constructs are more suggestive of a pizza than of an educational product to foster an innovation process. Despite the better efforts of 'training package developers', are many of our best vocational educators being left 'off to the side'? I would like the broadly based discussion that we must now have about the nature of AQF 5 and 6 VET qualifications, to give voice to our best vocational educators.

Looking forward to the discussion ...

Stream 1: What should VET qualifications look like?



Rod Cooke

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Context – The following comments pertain to my experience in the Community Services and Health (CS&H) Sectors and are notes for the panel discussion.

Training packages

- Not a descriptive or useful term and devalues them to many stakeholders in industry.
- Could be called a 'Development Package', as training is only one of many development pathways.

Qualifications and competency standards

- Reflect what is required in the workplace by employers.
- Need greater focus on delivery and attainment in the workplace

- > Lead to work readiness
- > On and off the job delivery and assessment
- > Focus should be on-the-job performance
- > RCC not RPL.
- Need to be flexible and adaptable to cope with change (especially in CS&H sectors)
 - > Current model too rigid and inflexible
 - > Employers want to package competencies they need into qualifications
 - > Employers will only use competency standards if they can align them to their business purpose, strategic objectives and competitive needs
 - > Maybe the answer is to not specify the units of competency in qualifications, other than how many. After all, to the employer, the value of a qualification is only as good as the competency attained and productively applied.

Qualification growth

- COAG targets of 40% of the workforce having a degree by 2025.
- Will require current jobs to have supporting qualifications; will need to move up a level.
- Many diploma/advanced diploma roles will now require a degree (as occurred with nurses).
- Smoother articulation methodology required between VET and Higher Education sectors.

Maybe the conversation is not about 'VET qualifications' but about 'tertiary qualifications along the AQF'.

Stream 2

Unpacking the green skills challenge

Chair: Denise Stevens, CEO, TAFE Development Centre, Victoria

Topic speaker:

Dr Garry McDonald, Associate Director, National Centre for Sustainability, Swinburne University.

Themes:

1. Why and how should VET invest in sustainability?
2. What are the jobs requiring green skills, now and in the future?
3. What can we learn from international experiences?

Panel:

Elizabeth McGregor, Institute Director, and Alicia Bales, Faculty Ecological Sustainability Project Officer, TAFE NSW – North Coast Institute

Dr Michelle Fox, Chief Strategist for Education and Workforce Development, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, US Department of Energy, Washington, DC, USA

Stream 2: Unpacking the green skills challenge



Dr Garry McDonald

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It may come as a surprise to some that both the current Australian Government and the coalition Opposition share a bipartisan goal of achieving a 5% reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2020 on 2,000 levels, which amounts to a 25% reduction in today's terms. This is a significant challenge for the country, and a huge challenge for the tertiary education sector. We have nine years to provide professions and trades, particularly within the existing workforce, with the knowledge, skills and personal commitment to decarbonise society by 25%. To help to address this challenge the national Green Skills Agreement (GSA) was endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in 2009.

This paper uses a basic taxonomy to explain green skills and the challenges of their delivery within our TAFE system.

Green jobs and green skills

The GSA defines green skills, also known as skills for sustainability, as the technical skills, knowledge, values and attitudes needed in the workforce to develop and support sustainable social, economic and environmental outcomes in business, industry and the community.

Despite the GSA, there has been ongoing confusion and debate about green jobs and green skills; how do we define them and are they really different to any other skills and jobs anyway? But we risk wasting valuable time and opportunity in debating the semantics and overlooking the substance of the issue, education for a sustainable future. A less confounded approach, therefore, is to think of green jobs and skills as those that directly or indirectly reduce carbon emissions, reduce environmental impacts or that produce broader sustainability outcomes within business or the community. Along the dark green to light green spectrum, these jobs include:

- jobs in front line, often emerging, green industries such as electric and hybrid car design, manufacture and operation; development, assessment and installation of low energy lighting; carbon farming; wind, solar, geothermal energy generation; and water recycling
- jobs in existing industries that contribute to improved environmental outcomes such as building retrofits to increase energy efficiency, construction of six and seven star houses, installation, upgrade and maintenance of HVAC and space heater systems; reforestation; gas fired power station system operators; lean manufacturing, and . . .

- all other professions and trades such as barristers, hairdressers, sport and recreation managers, fine artists, finance, hospitality, etc., in which sustainable, resource efficient and socially responsible practices are equally important.

The Green Skills Agreement

To assist with the transition to a low carbon, sustainable economy, the GSA was developed with a central framework of four elements. In many respects, these elements complement the other key national policy initiative, the National VET Sector Sustainability Policy and Action Plan (2009–2012):

1. embedding skills for sustainability practice and teaching in vocational education and training, within the requirements of the national regulatory framework
2. reviewing Training Packages to embed sustainability knowledge, skills and principles
3. up-skilling VET practitioners to deliver skills for sustainability
4. implementing a transition strategy to re-skill vulnerable workers.

For the purposes of this paper, I focused on the second and third elements.

Training Packages review: education about sustainability

As a direct consequence of the GSA, Australia's eleven Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) each undertook a strategic review of the Training Packages to embed sustainability knowledge, skills and principles. This work is now completed and has resulted in changes to Training Packages at different levels.

- a. **Green technical skills.** Many of the units of competency involving the specific technical skills required to undertake jobs in category 1 or 2 above (for example, renewable energy installations, green plumbing, LED lighting) have been progressively added to Training Packages as the packages have been reviewed. Clearly, this process will need to be ongoing to take account of new technologies and emerging industries or services.

A complexity is that some green skills, particularly those involved in energy efficient outcomes, are not just technical but require energy literacy and a systems understanding across trades or disciplines. For example, constructing or retrofitting an energy efficient building requires an understanding of and collaboration between all professions and trades that contribute to the building. Similar principles apply across a manufacturing line, or within a business operation.

- b. **Skills for sustainability 'bolted on'**
In themselves, green technical skills do not necessarily deal with sustainability principles. In 2006, three (guideline) competency standards for sustainability were noted by the National Quality Council as appropriate units for training packages:
 - > Develop workplace policy and procedures for sustainability (AQF V & VI)
 - > Implement and monitor environmentally sustainable work practices (AQF IV)
 - > Participate in environmentally sustainable work practices (AQF II).

These units provide skills related to planning for, implementing, or acting on the need

for resource efficiency improvements in a generalised workplace or community, respectively. Sector contextualised versions of these have now been introduced as core (for example, MSA, CPSISC, EEOz) or elective units into most training packages. The units are equally relevant to all qualifications in preparation for all jobs. This is affectionately regarded as the 'bolt-on' option, where a single unit is or can be added to a qualification in the expectation that the principles infuse across all learning.

- c. **Sustainability embedded.** A more effective method of 'teaching' the principles and skills of sustainability is to embed them into the fabric of all relevant units of competency. This is achieved by identifying potential or implicit sustainability skills in the training specification, and documenting these skills as part of the learning and assessment strategy. The IBSA TAE10 unit and part sustainability skill set, *TAESUS501a Analyse and apply sustainability skills to learning programs*, has been developed to assist VET practitioners to achieve this.
- d. **Qualifications in sustainability.** Since 2005, at least two dedicated qualifications have been available nationally, the *Diploma of Sustainability* and the *Vocational Graduate Certificate in Sustainability*, both designed to provide learners with a deeper understanding of how sustainability might be applied to work and community environments. In August 2011, Manufacturing Skills Australia (MSA) launched a new Sustainability Training Package with a *Certificate IV, Diploma and Vocational Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Operations*, largely targeting the manufacturing sector.

Up-skilling of VET practitioners: education for sustainability (EFS)

It is self-evident that the introduction of 'new' concepts and content into the training system, such as those associated with green skills, necessitates the provision of both relevant teaching and learning resources, and professional development (PD) for VET practitioners involved in training. With respect to PD, there are two challenges for practitioners: the need to become vocationally competent and the need to use pedagogical practices which engage students to reflect on their own 'values and attitudes' towards sustainability (EFS).

- a. **Green Skills vocational competence.** Difficulties in recruiting or developing vocationally competent teachers in the (green) technical skills being taught, often in nascent or emerging technologies, reflects the classic skills shortage challenge. There is an acute shortage of many of these specialists, and many are not attracted to the typically lower salaried positions of the VET sector. As a priority, our sector needs to identify the most critical green technology streams and find system level approaches to creating pools of specialist teachers (for example, lighting design, electric cars, carbon farming, etc.).
- b. **Education for sustainability.** Teaching the technical knowledge and skills about sustainability design, materials and technologies does not necessarily bring about change in itself. EFS is shorthand for learning-based strategies to stimulate change towards sustainability, and is recognised internationally as the educational and pedagogical platform for teaching in sustainability. It encourages systems thinking, problem solving, critical

thinking and reflection, allowing the learner to not only acquire knowledge and skills, but to develop a personal perspective and commitment toward action on sustainability. This approach is entirely consistent with best practice in VET teaching as a whole.

- c In 2010, a new post graduate qualification was developed and accredited by Swinburne University and NSW Department of Education and Community, the *Vocational Graduate Certificate in Education and Training for Sustainability*. The qualification is a twelve-month part time course aimed at sustainability champions within education, training and community-based institutions. Additionally, a second unit to the TAE10 Sustainability skill set is likely to be endorsed in September 2011: *TAEUS502a Identify and apply current sustainability education principles and practice to learning programs*.

Conclusions

As Australia transitions towards a less carbon and resource intensive economy, the VET and TAFE challenge is to equip learners with the critical knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to actively work towards this transition. The GSA sets a framework to enable this, the ISCs have gone some way to embedding green skills in all training packages, but the greatest challenge sits with TAFEs and other RTOs. We need to have our teachers skilled in sustainability, education for sustainability, energy literacy and specific green technical skills. And we need to reach out to the existing workforce, and maximise training to those that are most empowered to drive change now.

Stream 2: Unpacking the green skills challenge



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How do we up-skill for a low carbon economy?

Introduction

To begin, a proposition for your consideration . . .

That is, there is one 'green job' that has greater capability than any other single vocation, to facilitate a rapid and effective transition to a low carbon economy.

Your thoughts may lead towards energy efficiency technicians with an ability to transform our existing infrastructure and energy-related behaviours to make the most of the valuable fuels we consume; or to agriculturalists with the opportunity to offset our carbon emissions through sequestration of carbon in soils and vegetation. Yes, these job roles are critical

to meet the challenges of the ecologically founded social and economic reform that lies ahead, but even these are reliant on the skills of another practitioner. The VET practitioner.

The role of the VET practitioner in up skilling for a low carbon economy

As we focus on how a carbon constrained economy will change the skill needs of industry, we must also take the time to consider what the VET practitioner, a key facilitator of these skill shifts, should look like. In fact, this vocation itself may require some substantial transformation if we are to support industry in developing the resilience and adaptability required for these changing economic and climatic times.

At present, we are in the throes of building a VET workforce that is abreast of the technical skills and sustainability issues relevant to the communities we engage with – working to develop trainers on the edge of innovation and technological change in industry. However, this focus on learning content as opposed to the learning process is fraught with risk. It has the potential to ignore the principles of effective adult education and more poignantly, the internationally recognised principles of Education for Sustainability.

What our sector must embrace is a reorientation to facilitated learning, that is, a shift from the trainer being the ultimate content expert delivering through instruction for translational learning outcomes to a training role that fosters learner-directed activity, critical thinking, a systems approach and participation. The learning facilitator can then bring the content into the learning environment via the learners themselves or via content experts or ‘edgers’ in industry.

Our learners need far more than just technical skills if our objective is to facilitate far-reaching change for sustainability. Is it enough for a chef to know the technicalities of running an energy-conscious kitchen if she or he plans a menu that doesn’t consider the sustainability of the production methods used to grow the food? Is a green automotive mechanic, one who services hybrid and electric vehicles, but is ignorant of the need to reduce the dependence on single occupant passenger vehicles? In a retail environment, is a store ‘green’ because it has banned plastic bags, but leaves unattended the selection of products for sale that are manufactured using finite resource unsustainable processes? The answer is no – if the above scenarios are reality, then we are a long way from an informed and active society that is ready for real change.

So what needs to change?

We need staff capable in the ‘what’ AND the ‘how’.

In building staff capability we have two parallel development paths to consider:

1. the knowledge and skills that underpin the theory and practice of sustainability
2. the appropriate pedagogical response that will successfully engage others in the above knowledge and skills.

The VET sector as a whole is only on the cusp of acknowledging the place of Education for Sustainability principles as an essential partner to skills and knowledge. It is only in the past few years that we have seen Education for Sustainability formally recognised in the National Training Framework through qualifications such as the Vocational Graduate Certificate in Education and Training for Sustainability, and National Units of

Competency such as TAESUS502A: Identify and apply current sustainability education principles and practice to learning programs.

We must transform instructional trainers.

Education for sustainability is not instructional or translational; it does not require a trainer that is necessarily a subject matter expert; and it does not benefit from strict curricula and copious information-based resources. What it does require is a trainer, or preferably a facilitator, who can actively engage the participants in learning. This is not a comfortable space for many more traditional-style trainers. With this group we need to build confidence: that it is OK to not be the expert but rather, reinforce that there is a role in seeking the experts and the 'edgers' and bringing them into the learning experience; to embrace co-learning, anticipating that the collective knowledge of the group can lead the learning; and recognise that their role in sustainability education extends beyond the classroom and into their training organisation, community and home as an agent of change. In sustainability education we need to avoid information overload – good instructional design that engages learners in action-learning is far more critical.

We need to avoid 'token' sustainability skills.

With the inclusion of discreet sustainability competencies through training package revisions, trainers are looking at how these units may be incorporated into programs. If units are delivered as standalone units, rather than embedded across a course or qualification, there is risk that sustainability is only addressed when learners are undertaking the sustainability unit. In addition, this approach deviates from the holistic methodology that Education for Sustainability advocates.

Conclusions

The argument is that a learning process that embeds the Education for Sustainability principles of transformation and change, lifelong learning, critical, systems and futures thinking, participation, partnerships and value-based learning will deliver a forward thinking, holistic approach that builds resilience and the capacity of people to not only adapt, but drive change for a more sustainable future. This is a challenge for our sector that we must not ignore. We must not underestimate the significance of the VET trainer in influencing change for sustainability. However, the warning is that if we rely only on technical skills and our trainers as the technical experts, we will never enable industrial and social change at the pace that is required of us. Education for Sustainability is the key.

Stream 3

Australia's support for international students

Chair: David Riordan, Director, TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute

Topic speaker:

Allan Asher, Commonwealth Ombudsman – Overseas Students Ombudsman

The role of the new Overseas Students Ombudsman in ensuring that international students get a fair deal while studying in Australia.

Themes:

1. What are the priority needs of international students studying in Australia?
2. What are best practice strategies for educational providers to support international students?

Panel:

Colin Walters, Group Manager – International, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations

Diane Seath, Director International Students Centre, DEC International, NSW Department of Education and Communities

Wesa Chau, Young Victorian of the Year 2010, Founder, Australian Federation of International Students

Launch of International Education Resources

Victorian TAFE International: and TDA

Stream 3: Australia's support for international students



Allan Asher

Commonwealth Ombudsman – Overseas Students Ombudsman

The role of the new Overseas Students Ombudsman in ensuring that international students get a fair deal while studying in Australia.

Introduction

The Overseas Students Ombudsman role is only a few months old, coming into being on 9 April this year following the passage of legislation through the Australian parliament. To date, we have received 200 complaints from international students.

Overseas students of private education and training providers in Australia have recourse through the Overseas Students Ombudsman to **a free, independent and impartial complaints service** when they cannot resolve problems directly with their private providers.

As far as possible, we work with state ombudsmen, who have ongoing jurisdiction in relation to

students at public education providers in their states, including TAFEs. In the ACT, my office has jurisdiction in this area as ACT Ombudsman.

We also work with other organisations such as the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission responsible for consumer protection, the Australian Human Rights Commission and the Fair Work Ombudsman, where they are better placed to deal with a particular issue. We will also work with state and, increasingly, national regulators (such as the Australian Skills Quality Authority) where that's the best way of getting a complaint or issue addressed.

Together we aim to provide a comprehensive safety net for overseas students, whether in private or public education and training. We will always achieve more collectively and cooperatively than we will by operating as single, disconnected entities.

Baird Review

Among the Baird Review's many recommendations when it reported in March last year were a number that addressed concerns about inadequate complaints and dispute handling services for overseas students.

More than half the submissions received by the Review commented on the issue of complaint handling, with the vast majority supporting measures to strengthen and streamline the complaints process for overseas students.

The review considered the recommendation made by the *Senate Inquiry into the Welfare of International Students* in November 2009 to extend the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Ombudsman to cover the international education sector, agreeing that international students should have access to the highest standard of complaint handling. It

considered that better use could be made of existing statutorily independent complaints handling bodies.

The *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Legislation Amendment Act 2011* created the Ombudsman role.

Our approach to complaint investigations

We are acutely aware that the investment made by overseas students — and their parents — in an education in Australia is significant and the consequences of failure often greater than for domestic students. We are conscious too that a domestic student who is dissatisfied with the course they've enrolled in, or has a change of heart, can relatively easily withdraw and take another direction. It's not that simple under the ESOS framework, in which overseas students are bound to stay for a defined period with a provider they've chosen 'sight unseen'.

These are just some of the reasons we take our complaints investigation role very seriously, and why we endeavour to make a genuine difference by ensuring we investigate individual complaints thoroughly, identify the systemic issues or problems and disseminate information about the lessons as widely and as effectively as we can.

This is also an intensely competitive industry and Australia currently has some disadvantages to overcome, such as a high Australian dollar and internationally publicised violent incidents against international students. To be successful in this environment, the industry will need to go well beyond meeting 'minimum standards'.

There are essentially two levels we look at: compliance and 'fairness'. Compliance can be measured and corrected in a strong regulatory

framework and the *National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007* (the National Code 2007) is the key compliance 'tool' in this sector. But fairness goes beyond simple compliance. We can look for the root cause of the issues behind the complaints we see. Where a provider's actions are unreasonable or unfair, we can and do ask ourselves: is the student understandably confused because communication needs improvement? Is the provider being let down by its own staff training or the manuals they follow? Is the provider's policy based on wrong, unfair or simply confusing information? Or are the providers themselves struggling to interpret government policy, legislation and regulations that are too complex, or which lead to unintended consequences?

It is fortunate that as well as being the Overseas Students Ombudsman, and able to look at the actions of individual education providers, as Commonwealth Ombudsman we are able to look even more broadly at the policy and legislative frameworks set by the Departments of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and Immigration and Citizenship. We can consider how the procedures, practices and legislation of these departments work or fall short, enabling us to draw out lessons to build more robust systems and processes.

Rivers of gold

Complaints are a critical asset in the current re-examination and reshaping of the international education industry. That's why a significant part of our role includes helping providers themselves to improve their own complaint handling.

People have a right to complain, to access

information and question government, or in this instance, their private education providers.

Complaints are part of the answer, not the problem. Often we find out about underlying problems and shortcomings through complaints.

Our role in this sector is essentially the same as the Commonwealth Ombudsman role in relation to the Australian Government, only more so: that is, to provide useful information about how to turn a complaint into a tool for improving systems. In the education sector, unlike the citizen dealing with government, the unhappy customer can walk away and take their business with them. The discontented overseas student is, I suspect, also more likely to log into Facebook or Skype and to share bitter experiences with their network of friends and fellow-students.

It's incumbent on us to work with other stakeholders and interest groups in this sector, to better understand how it works and where the opportunities are to make a stronger, more sustainable international education industry. Those organisations that we connect with are often invaluable 'critical friends' — able to provide insights that we may miss in the single-minded focus on our core complaints business.

We want to see a strong international education sector with a long-term future. We consider that indicators of a healthy sector would include:

- an informed, confident body of overseas students who know their rights and their responsibilities and how to obtain redress if problems arise
- private education providers who are committed

to providing their students with clear, unambiguous information and necessary support to ensure they achieve their education goals, and have effective systems for resolving problems in the first instance

- providers who are aware of, and accountable for, their education agents and their activities overseas.



Colin Walters

*Group Manager, International
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Introduction

- Central to Australia's engagement in international education is a commitment by governments and the sector to ensure that students receive a high quality education and that the experience of studying and living in Australia is positive and meaningful.
- The Australian Government has implemented a number of important key initiatives that are aimed at enhancing student welfare, strengthening provider responsibilities and streamlining regulation.
- The available evidence shows that the vast majority of international students are more than satisfied with their overall study and living experience whilst in Australia.

The International Students Strategy for Australia

- Continuous improvement of the student experience is a critical factor in ensuring the sustainability of the international education sector.
- In response to concerns about student welfare and the student experience, the Australian Government and state and territory governments came together under the auspices of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to develop the International Students Strategy for Australia (ISSA). The Strategy outlines 12 initiatives across four action areas:
 - > international student wellbeing
 - > the quality of international education
 - > consumer protection
 - > the availability of better information for international students.
- The establishment of the Overseas Students Ombudsman is a key ISSA consumer protection initiative.

Embedding quality

- In response to major changes taking place across the international education landscape in 2009, the Australian Government commenced a program of reform.
- The Government brought forward the review of the ESOS Act, that was initially scheduled for 2012 and appointed the Hon. Bruce Baird to undertake the review. Mr Baird delivered his report in March 2010 and the Government responded with a range of targeted initiatives.
- Amendments to the ESOS Act in March 2010 required all education providers on the

Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS) to re-register by 31 December 2010. Around 1,100 Australian international education providers met the new, tougher criteria and were re-registered and about 200 providers exited the system.

- A further tranche of amendments to the ESOS Act was passed on 21 March 2011 establishing the role of the Overseas Students Ombudsman and further strengthening of provider registration requirements.
- The Government is currently considering more reforms to support the long-term future of the international education sector.

International Student Roundtables

- In 2009, the Australian Government conducted the inaugural International Student Roundtable from which a number of key initiatives arose including:
 - > A new student portal providing comprehensive information for international students covering matters such as accommodation, safety, culture and work rights with links through to state specific information.
 - > Informing the review of the ESOS Act undertaken by the Hon. Bruce Baird. Representatives of the roundtable met with Mr Baird who was conducting a review of the ESOS. Mr Baird's report and recommendations reflected many of the recommendations of the roundtable.
 - > Development of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) International Students Strategy for Australia (ISSA). A

number of initiatives in that strategy, such as the Community Engagement Strategy, reflected matters raised in the roundtable Communiqué.

- > The Australian Government worked with the National Union of Students and the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations to establish a new national representative voice for international students, the Council of International Students Australia (CISA).
- On 21-23 August this year, the second International Student Roundtable was convened under the auspices of the COAG International Students Strategy for Australia. Thirty international students from all education sectors gathered in Canberra to discuss the challenges and opportunities that impact on the quality of their study and living experience in Australia.
- During the roundtable students met with Senator the Hon. Chris Evans, Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Workplace Relations. The event culminated in the presentation of a communiqué to governments, which acknowledged the significant policy progress that has been made since the 2009 roundtable, and proposed further actions to address on-going challenges in the five categories: education experience, social inclusion, safety and welfare, cost of living pressures and visa related matters.

2010 International Student Survey and International Graduate Outcomes research

- The results from the 2010 International Student Survey showed the vast majority of

international students were satisfied with their study and living experiences in Australia. The top four factors influencing the choice of where to study in Australia were quality of teaching, reputation of the qualification, personal safety and reputation of institution.

- Research undertaken in 2010 into the employment outcomes of international students educated in Australia found that the majority of international graduates have similar employment outcomes to Australian graduates and most were working in the same or a field related to their study.

New National Regulators

- The creation of two new independent bodies to regulate university and vocational education providers underpins the Government's continued support for embedding quality and streamlining processes in both the VET and higher education sectors.
- Of importance to the VET sector is the commencement of the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) which regulates courses and training providers to ensure nationally approved quality standards are met.
- Responsibilities for CRICOS registration will also be transferred to the national regulators.

International education integrity measures

- AEI is working closely with international partners to develop common ethical principles for education agents. The development of a jointly agreed statement of principles will promote best practice among the education

agent and consultant professions that support international students.

- The principles will serve as a unifying set of understandings for Australia and its key partners in international education.

In conclusion ...

- The international education sector is strong and vibrant in Australia and is underpinned by quality and integrity.
- The Australian Government and the international education sector will continue to work closely and cooperatively to ensure that international education remains focused on quality and sustainability, and that the experience of studying and living in Australia is a positive and meaningful experience in the lives of our international students.
- The reform program that the Australian Government has embarked on lays the foundations for a sustainable future in the coming decade.

Stream 3: Australia's support for international students



Diane Seath

Diane Seath, Director International Students Centre, DEC International, NSW Department of Education and Communities

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Introduction

International student support has a multi-layered approach in NSW:

- The Premiers Council on International Education – representatives from all education sectors including providers and industry associations, government, NSW Police. The Council is addressing issues such as transport concessions, and held the first NSW International Student Festival in March 2011.
- Government departments such as the Community Relations Commission, Fair Trading, NSW Police and city councils provide publications to support international students, attend student orientation and support local provider activities.
- NSW Department of Education and Communities International – a centralised

approach to marketing, recruitment, admissions, compliance and agent management for TAFE NSW Institutes and NSW government schools.

- TAFE NSW Institutes – provide high quality educational delivery and support, including international student coordinators at each college, specialist international student administration staff, highly qualified and caring teaching staff, professional counsellors qualified to assist students with a wide range of personal and educational issues.

TAFE NSW participated in the International Student Barometer for the Australian TAFE Sector (known as the i-graduate survey) in 2010, coordinated by TDA.

TAFE NSW achieved above the national average for both overall satisfaction (86% compared to national average 84%) and for satisfaction with support services (84% compared to national average 83%). Individual institutes found this a useful tool and are working through improvement strategies at a local level.

I support the indicators of a healthy sector that Mr Asher described and would like to provide some examples of how TAFE NSW Institutes are addressing the three indicators mentioned.

1. Informed overseas students who know their rights and responsibilities
 - TAFE NSW has a central website for international students to access at any time. This includes information about accommodation, transport, working in NSW, safety and protection, students' rights and responsibilities, and lists student support services available.
 - All students attend an orientation program at their local college where they meet

their international student coordinator and receive information on local support services, their rights and responsibilities, and safety and security. Various publications are distributed to students, for example, NSW Government Fair Trading Consumer Guide for International Students and the Community Relations Commission Guide to NSW Services for International Students.

- International Coordinators and International Student staff are always available at the college to provide additional information and support.
2. Education providers that have effective systems for resolving problems in the first instance
- Overarching philosophy that a holistic approach to the overall welfare of our students will result in their educational goals being more easily achieved leading to improved student satisfaction and retention.
 - Small class sizes assist in the early detection of individuals who may be struggling with educational or personal issues.
 - Highly experienced International Student staff who can assist and/or refer students to appropriate help.
 - Counsellors who are registered psychologists available at colleges (at no cost to the student) to provide professional support. This helps to resolve issues immediately and reduces the potential risk students may be exposed to either personally or educationally.
 - A clear and fair complaints procedure available on our website and in orientation

information. The abovementioned points, however, result in a very small number of formal complaints being made.

3. Providers who are aware of, and accountable for, their education agents
- Centralised management of agent contracts to ensure consistency.
 - Stringent EOI process for agents, at least one member of the agency to complete PIER education agent training course.
 - Registered agents listed on website as per the Baird Review recommendation.
 - Implemented a compliance checklist for agents to first self-assess and then a checklist is completed by staff travelling to onshore and offshore agent offices. This is signed by both parties and any required improvements are followed up.

In addition, we must always remember a key factor in achieving customer satisfaction is to start at the very beginning and provide clear and concise information to prospective students and their families so they have realistic expectations of living and studying in your local area. This will assist them to make well informed decisions about where and what to study.

Some providers have very large marketing and advertising budgets in order to attract students to their institution but fall down in the support and delivery of their promised product. Providing appropriate support to your international students and delivering good quality educational outcomes will result in very satisfied graduates who become advocates for your institution and provide precious word of mouth advertising – a win for the satisfied graduate, a win for the institution and a win for the community and economy.

Stream 4

Symposium – 2011 Emerging Leaders only

Facilitators:

Ian Colley, Make Stuff Happen and Melinda Waters, Business Development Manager, TAFE Development Centre, Victoria

Thirty-five Emerging Leaders drawn from every state and territory of Australia attended the Symposium.

Speakers and Panellists

Note: Facilitators for the interactive sessions were not invited by TDA to submit papers

Rod Arthur, Chief Executive Officer, UQ College Ipswich

Rod Arthur is CEO of UQ College Ipswich. UQ College was established by the University of Queensland in response to developing better pathways between higher education and vocational education.

Previously, Rod's roles included being Deputy Director-General of Training Queensland for the Department of Education and Training after many years' experience in TAFE, including as Director of the Open Learning Institute of TAFE.

Rod has an outstanding depth of understanding and experience in the policy frameworks and delivery of Vocational Education and Training. He has also worked in schools and now is working closely with higher education in his new role.

Allan Asher, Commonwealth Ombudsman

Allan Asher began his five-year appointment as Commonwealth Ombudsman on 30 August 2010. He has been an outspoken consumer advocate for some 40 years. Before becoming Ombudsman, Allan was the inaugural chief executive officer of the Australian Communications Consumer Action Network (ACCAN), the peak advocacy body for communications consumers.

Prior to ACCAN, Allan spent eight years in the UK, as Director of Campaigns and Communication with the Consumers' Association and as a board member of the Office of Fair Trading. He also worked for the global non-government organisation, Consumers International, and from 2003 to 2008 was CEO of Energy Watch, which protected consumer rights in a deregulated energy market. At Energy Watch (now part of Consumer Focus), he helped curb inappropriate conduct by energy companies that included cutting off customers' power during Britain's freezing winters and using thugs to bully people into signing extortionate contracts.

Before leaving for Britain in 2000, Allan spent five years at the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) as Deputy Chairperson and Consumer Protection Commissioner. Earlier in his career, he spent 10 years at the Australian Consumers' Association. Allan studied law at the University of NSW and the University of Sydney, and practised as a barrister for a number of years.

Alicia Bales, Faculty Ecological Sustainability Project Officer, TAFE NSW – North Coast Institute

From a childhood with tears shed over 'friends lost' as the garbage truck collected her household green waste and Saturday mornings at the tip sorting newspapers and aluminium cans collected in a recycling system she initiated at primary school, Alicia Bales has moved through roles in bush regeneration, the waste industry, local government and community-based sustainability education to now lead North Coast TAFE's approach to ecological sustainability. Alicia's skills support a response, across both the organisation and the North Coast Region, to the complex challenges of transitioning communities, individual lifestyles, industry and local economies for a more sustainable, resource-constrained future. With expertise in both Education for Sustainability and dragologies as well as

operational sustainability issues such as resource efficiency, environmental management and behaviour change, Alicia continues to push the boundaries to test how we can respond (as VET providers and as a society) to what is one of the biggest challenges of our time

Allan Ballagh, Director TAFE and Vice-President, RMIT University, Melbourne

The Director TAFE and Vice-President is responsible for planning and the development of vocational education at RMIT University. Allan Ballagh has a record of leadership in developing and implementing approaches to teaching and learning, professional development and the implementation of quality systems in the TAFE sector. He is RMIT's nominee to the Victorian TAFE Association (VTA) CEO Council.

Allan currently represents TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) as a member of the Framework Implementation Action Group which oversees implementation of the recommendations of the *VET Products for the 21st Century* report.

Annette Blackwell, Editor-in-Chief, *Campus Review*

Annette Blackwell has more than 30 years' experience as a journalist. Seven years of those were spent as a full-time lecturer and researcher in journalism at UTS in Sydney. She held the position of postgraduate journalism coordinator for several years to 2010 before returning to the practice of journalism in the role of editor-in-chief at APN Educational Media and editor of *Campus Review*. She says the pedagogical challenge at UTS was how to instil best practice through theory and skill-based subjects against the backdrop of dramatic, technology-driven shifts taking place in the media industry. This has given her an appreciation of the challenges faced by the higher education and VET sectors.

Prior to joining UTS, Annette was Sydney bureau chief with Australian Associated Press, and before migrating to Australia from Ireland in the early '90s, she held senior positions with Independent News and Media Inc in Dublin.

Annette has written for papers in London, New York and Australia including the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian*.

Gerald Brennan, Manager TAFE Partnerships, Deakin University

Gerald Brennan had 20 years' experience as a manager working within regional TAFE institutes prior to 2010 when he accepted a newly created position with Deakin University, Manager TAFE Partnerships. The focus of Gerald's role is to develop and implement a strategic TAFE partnerships framework for Deakin University that builds collaboration with TAFE institutes and strengthens pathway opportunities for TAFE students.

Linda Brown, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Director TAFE, Swinburne University of Technology, Hawthorn

Linda Brown is recognised at state and national levels as an innovative strategic thinker with leadership skills to drive exceptional business performance and is passionate about education and training for all.

Linda is Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Director TAFE at Swinburne University which is globally recognised as an innovative dual sector institution. Linda has responsibility for maximising the dual sector advantage, driving the sustainability and social inclusion strategies across the University and managing the TAFE Division, which is one of Victoria's largest VET providers and recognised in 2009 as the *National Large Training Provider of the Year*.

Prior to Swinburne, Linda held the position of Director of Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE in Brisbane and was a senior Queensland government executive with the Department of Education, Training and the Arts. Linda's global business and educational experience, including Corporate CEO, Futures Stockbroker, Managing Director Dartington Tech UK and Director of Stoke-on-Trent FE College, strengthens her ability to provide leadership and outcomes. Linda was also part of the UK Government's rapid response team for the Further Education Funding Council utilised to turn around failing colleges, and was part of the UK 'think tank' on education as a global business whilst Director, Ayr College UK. Linda has presented nationally and internationally on leadership and female diversity and is known for her frank and fearless style.

Dr Barbara J Bryan, Campus President, Broward College North Campus, Florida USA

Dr Barbara Bryan is a senior leader at a diverse, multi-campus college in the USA in Broward County, Florida. Broward College is formally a community college, the sixth largest in the country enrolling 66,000 students and with centres on four continents. As Campus President, Barbara leads the environmentally friendly 120-acre Broward College North Campus. With an operating budget of USD24 million, she serves a student population of 14,000 with a team of seven deans and 420 faculty and staff.

Sharing a vision to meet workforce demands in Broward College's service region, a guiding coalition of institutional stakeholders began a journey led by Dr Bryan towards deep institutional change. With nearly 30 years of higher education experience in the USA, Barbara led academic teams of faculty, staff, and administrators, who successfully created State of Florida proposals for the development and implementation of baccalaureate degrees; Broward College's first Bachelors of Applied Science degrees. 'State approval alone is not sufficient', she stated, and her teams successfully developed three Substantive Change Prospectuses which received the approval of the Southern Association of College and Schools – Commission on Colleges, the country's regional accrediting body.

appointment Robin was Principal and CEO of a Central London College of Further and Higher Education. From 1989 to 2005 Robin worked for the Department of Education and Training in New South Wales. There he was Deputy Director-General for Technical, Further and Community Education (TAFE). From 1995 to 2000, he was Director (Principal) of the North Coast Institute of Technical and Further Education in northern New South Wales. Robin has been a director of a wide range of organisations including the NSW Board of Studies, the Paddington Development Trust, the London Apprenticeship Company and WorldSkills Australia. He is currently a member of the advisory boards of the Critical Skills Investment Fund and the LH Martin Institute. (see page 6).

Dr Bryan stated, '... careful consideration of our intended outcomes rested on data-driven decisions, long- and short-term planning, guiding coalitions, removal of barriers, and teams marked by an abundance of emotional intelligence; these elements are some of the critically important ingredients of successful higher education

transformation'. This leader and her teams took seriously the challenges evoked by rapid organisational change and now she offers guidance to those involved in transforming their institution in the area of baccalaureate degree development, implementation, and expansion, using an academic and business model for success.

Dr John Buchanan, Director, Workplace Research Centre, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Sydney

Between 1988 and 1991 Dr John Buchanan was part of the team that undertook the first Australian Workplace Industrial Relations Survey (AWIRS). He joined the Workplace Research Centre (formerly acirrt) in 1991 and has been its Director since 2005. Until recently, John's major research interest has been the demise of the classical wage earner model of employment and the role of the state in nurturing new forms of multi-employer coordination to promote both efficiency and fairness in the labour market. Building on this research, he is now devoting special attention to the evolution of the labour contract, working life transitions and the dynamics of workforce development.

John was one of the authors of *Australia at work: just managing?* (1999) and of *Fragmented futures: new challenges in working life* published by Federation Press in 2003. These texts provide an overview of the restructuring of work in Australia since the 1970s. His most recently co-authored book is *Safety in numbers: nurse-patient ratios and the future of health care*, published by Cornell University Press in 2008

Paul Callaghan, Institute Director, TAFE NSW – New England Institute

Paul Callaghan commenced duties as Institute Director for TAFE NSW New England Institute in April 2009 and brought with him a diverse background of experience in both the private and public sectors.

Paul's various roles with TAFE NSW have included responsibility for delivery of training to over 8,000 students a year in the areas of business, management, information technology, retail, real estate, marketing and library services. In this time, he has also been responsible for the delivery of teaching and learning and related support services to access and equity students including programs targeting Aboriginal communities, students with a disability, isolated communities, multicultural students and women.

Previously, Paul worked at the University of Newcastle in marketing and promotions and as a lecturer in economics. He also worked for many years with the Department of Mineral Resources as a policy adviser and survey draftsman and before that time worked in private practice as a surveyor.

Paul has also spent many years working on the land including running an oyster farming small business in Port Stephens and currently runs 50 head of Hereford cattle on his small farm.

Dr V Celeste Carter, Program Director, Division of Undergraduate Education, National Science Foundation, Arlington, VA, USA

Dr V Celeste Carter received her PhD in Microbiology from the Pennsylvania State University School of Medicine in 1982. She joined the Division of Biological and Health Sciences at Foothill College in 1994 to develop and head a Biotechnology Program.

Celeste was the recipient of a National Science Foundation (NSF) Division of Undergraduate Education (DUE) award, which produced a set of case studies and associated laboratories with biotechnology industry partners. From 200–03 and 2007–08, she served as a Program Director in DUE at the NSF. She returned to Foothill College at the completion of each rotation to resume her position as Director for both the Biotechnology and Bioinformatics Programs.

Celeste accepted a permanent program director position in DUE in 2009; she is the Lead Program Director for the Advanced Technological Education (ATE) Program.

Wesa Chau, Young Victorian of the Year 2010; Founder, Australian Federation of International Students

In 2002, Wesa Chau, a migrant from Hong Kong, founded the Australian Federation of International Students (AFIS), a non-profit, community orientated organisation which now provides services to more than 8,000 students a year. Wesa is currently employed at ADEC – Advocacy, Disability, Ethnicity, Community – as Direct Services Manager, and Assistant Secretary for Ethnic Communities Council of Victoria. She is a strong advocate for international students, multiculturalism, young people, women, and people with disabilities. She works in partnership with stakeholders to reduce discrimination against marginalised communities within the Australian community.

Wesa was named Young Victorian of the Year 2010, and was recipient of Melbourne Awards (Youth) 2005 and Victoria's Award for Excellence in Multicultural Affairs 2006.

Berwyn Clayton, Director, Work-based Education Research Centre, Victoria University

Berwyn Clayton is Director of the Work-based Education Research Centre at Victoria University. She has had over twenty-five years' experience as a practitioner-researcher in VET. Her research interests are organisational capability, VET workforce development and teacher education.

A founding member of AVETRA and a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators, she is NCVET's VET Researcher of the Year for 2011.

Richard Clifford, Executive Manager, Quality – Corporate Governance, Box Hill Institute

Richard Clifford is the Executive Manager, Quality – Corporate Governance at Box Hill Institute. Box Hill Institute's vision is to be Australia's number one global vocational education and training provider, and Richard's role is to support the quality of this delivery locally and internationally.

One of the first University Managers appointed in the early 1990s with a specific Quality Management role, and one of a very small number of people in Australia with a specific Master's degree in Quality, Richard's involvement in Educational Quality Management and Academic Quality Assurance has covered the University, Higher Education, and Technical and Further Education sectors in Australia and internationally, including eight years working with New Zealand Universities and Polytechnics, a period with the United Nations University in Jordan, recent work with the UK Association of University Administrators, and over three years conducting Quality Reviews of Australian courses delivered internationally through Box Hill Institute.

Gary Cobbledick, Managing Director, Discover English

Gary Cobbledick is an owner of Discover English, an English language college, and CLB Training & Development, a workplace training company, and is responsible for the overall performance, direction and strategy of the companies. He has worked in a range of industries and countries over the past 20 years. Gary began his career as a lecturer in Constitutional Law before switching to legal practice and business. He has a Masters of Law degree (LLM) from Harvard University, as well as a BA and LLB from the University of Natal (South Africa). He worked as a corporate lawyer in New York and in Australia, and since leaving the law in 1997, he has worked in general management or CEO roles in the recycling, retirement living and book industries. Gary returned to the educational sector in January 2010. He has also served on the boards of several public and private companies.

Ian Colley, Partner and Director, Make Stuff Happen

Ian Colley is Partner and Director with Make Stuff Happen, a consulting partnership specialising in change and learning. Ian developed his facilitation skills through extensive experience with the design and facilitation of hundreds of events in business, government and community settings. His confidence comes from a rich background in senior public policy roles in education and training, along with hands-on experience in ambitious practical reforms. He was a senior ministerial adviser in vocational education and then Project Director with the Dusseldorp Skills Forum. His work has garnered a high reputation, including a Global Best Practice Industry Education Partnership Award, and a NSW Premier's Public Service Award. Ian currently teaches management and facilitation skills at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Wayne Collyer, Managing Director, Polytechnic West, Perth

Wayne Collyer was born in Brisbane and spent most of his early childhood in Cairns, North Queensland. Over the years, he has held various positions within TAFE institutes in Queensland and Western Australia and in 1993, he completed a Masters in Education Leadership.

Since 2004, Wayne has been Managing Director of Polytechnic West in Perth, Western Australia, having spent the previous 10 years in Central West TAFE in Geraldton. Under his direction, the institute has undergone immense changes. A commitment to providing quality training has distinguished Polytechnic West as *WA Large Training Provider of the Year 2006* and a finalist for *National Large Training Provider of the Year 2006*.

Wayne continues to make significant contributions to training policy development and delivery especially in employment-based training for students acquiring higher qualification through a VET pathway. He is highly sought after as a guest speaker and presenter at national and international conferences for his experience and knowledge in positioning high performance organisations and contemporary training delivery in the VET sector.

Wayne is a board member of TAFE Directors Australia and serves the training sector on many state and national committees.

Stephen Conway, Chair, TAFE Directors Australia; Managing Director, TAFE SA – Adelaide South

Stephen Conway is the Managing Director of the TAFE SA Adelaide South Institute. With a background in Engineering, Stephen has been in the TAFE SA system for 25 years. During that period he has been the Director of both metropolitan and regional institutes at the time when there were 10 separate TAFE institutes in South Australia.

As well as his institute leadership roles, Stephen has taken responsibility across the system in the areas of; Marketing, International as well as Industrial Relations. Stephen was recently appointed Chair of TAFE Directors Australia, having served as a Board Member for several years.

Stephen holds formal qualifications in organisational development, vocational education and training as well as corporate governance. His Master's thesis was based on professional development needs of educators/administrators, and teaching and learning processes are of particular interest to him. Stephen was the recipient of an Australian Fellowship and has undertaken international research around flexible learning.

Working as part of a commercially focused Executive Team for TAFE SA, Stephen is looking forward to the challenges facing the system through the latest South Australian VET Reform Agenda – Skills For All.

Rod Cooke, Chief Executive Officer, Community Services & Health Industry Skills Council

Rod Cooke has an extensive background in training and recruitment, and in the vocational education sector. He has held senior management and training positions including the positions of CEO with Orana Education & Training Cooperative Ltd, General Manager HR & Administration with Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, National Learning & Development Manager with NRMA, Training Manager for Integral Energy and the Director of the Army Training Development Centre.

Rod has strong board and community services and health background including previous roles with the National Finance ITAB and UPA Aged Care Services. He is currently on the Board of the Lane Cove Community Aid Service and Rural Financial Counselling Service NSW (Central West). He has a BA, a Graduate Diploma in Training & Development, a Masters in Educational Administration, a Masters in Business Administration, Diploma in Training and Assessment Systems and a Company Directors Diploma.

John Coyle, CEO, HunterNet Co-Operative Limited

John Coyle is the Chief Executive Officer of HunterNet Co-operative, a Hunter-based network of engineering and manufacturing companies and is responsible for the planning and management of the operations of the Network and its subsidiary HunterNet Group Training Company. In this role, and as past Chair and company member of HunterNet, John works closely with the network's membership as well as industry, government and professional bodies throughout the Hunter region.

John has held many senior positions, including as a current Board member of HunterNet Group Training Company, Newcastle Innovation (formerly the University of Newcastle Research Associates) and the Treloar Group Pty Ltd. He is also a committee member of the Hunter Manufacturing Association, a director at the Hunter Community Foundation, and has been a member on the TAFE NSW – Hunter Institute Advisory Council since 2005 and Deputy Chair. John holds a B.Com (Ecs) from the University of NSW, and is an Associate of the Institute of Company Directors.

The Hon John Dawkins AO, Chair, National Skills Standards Council (NSSC) and Chair, Australian Qualifications Framework Council (AQFC)

John Dawkins served for 18 years in the House of Representatives and, from 1983 to 1994, was a member of the Governments of Bob Hawke and Paul Keating as Finance Minister, Trade Minister, Employment Education and Training Minister and finally Treasurer.

He was Chairman of the OECD Ministerial Council in 1993 and in 1988 chaired a Ministerial conference on Education and the Economy which repositioned OECD perspectives on education and training.

Since leaving politics in 1994, John has advised Australian universities, state and foreign governments on education and training issues. He has worked with The World Bank, UNESCO and the OECD on Education reform projects.

He is Chair of the Australian Qualifications Framework Council, which advises the MCTEE on the maintenance and development of the Australian Qualifications Framework. He has recently been appointed as Chair of the new National Skills Standards Council.

Martin Doel, OBE, Chief Executive, Association of Colleges, UK

Martin Doel, Chief Executive of Association of Colleges, UK, works alongside the AoC Board, President, staff and membership to champion and promote the work of Colleges, develop and promote an environment in which they can flourish and ensure Colleges are recognised as major contributors to the economic and social prosperity of the UK. Martin was formerly Director of Training and Education at the Ministry of Defence, responsible for training and education policy and strategy across all three armed forces. His extensive experience in education and skills includes the development of a skills strategy across the MoD in response to the Leitch report and close liaison with the Department of Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) on education initiatives for service personnel, including the development of policy relating to under 18s. The Armed Forces are the largest single provider of apprenticeships in the UK.

Martin has previously been responsible at Board level for developing HR and training strategy for the Royal Air Force's 45,000-strong workforce, and for delivering training in leadership and management to officers of all three UK services and to those from 47 other nations.

Martin has a first class honours degree from King Alfred's College (now the University of Winchester), and a Masters Degree from Kings College London. His interests include international affairs, military history and modern art.

Julian Doherty, Principal, Yellow Folder Research (ex Head of Research, Slade Group)

Julian Doherty joined Slade Group in 2003 and led the research, knowledge management and direct sourcing function across the business from 2005 to 2011. He has been responsible for leading a team of four sourcing specialists and the delivery of national and international executive search campaigns.

With a background in marketing systems and database utilisation, Julian has observed fundamental shifts in the available tools and approach of recruitment consultancies to promotional strategies and information management.

Engagement via Social Media is an outstanding opportunity for layered and authentic business communication but it also presents challenges of training and change management, cost-time-reward equations and measuring return/impact. Following his role at Slade Group, Julian started his own research consultancy, Yellow Folder Research, in August 2011.

Marcy Drummond, Vice President, Academic Affairs and Workforce and Economic Development, Los Angeles Trade-Technical College, Los Angeles CA, USA

Marcy Drummond is Vice President for Academic Affairs and Workforce and Economic Development at Los Angeles Trade-Technical College (LATTC) where she also held the position of Dean of Research, Planning, and Community Development.

Marcy's commitment to green workforce development is unparalleled among community college administrators. She spearheaded LATTC's Green College Initiative and is the convener of the Los Angeles Infrastructure and Sustainable Jobs Collaborative. She served as a member of the National Commission on Energy Policy's *Task Force on America's Future Energy Jobs* and Green For All's *national Green Pathways Out of Poverty Community of Practice*. In 2008, she was awarded the Green Achievement Award for Workforce Development by an Individual by *Green Technology Magazine* and in 2010 the Energy Star Award by the President's Roundtable.

Under Marcy's leadership, over 75 new 'green' courses and 15 certificate and degree programs have been developed establishing LATTC as a national leader in green workforce development including Solar Energy Systems Installation and Maintenance; Weatherisation and Energy Efficiency; Solar Thermal; Sustainable Lighting; Green Building; Alternative Fuels; and Hybrid and Electric Vehicle Technology to name a few. These green workforce efforts and programs have received national media attention — featured in publications such as *On Campus*, *Sustainable Industries*, *Community College Journal*, *Green Technology Magazine*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *ABC News.com*, and on television shows such as *Focus Earth with Bob Woodward*. In addition, Marcy has spoken at numerous national conferences such as Green Economy Best Practices National Summit; Good Jobs, Green Jobs National

Conference; national green education webinar cosponsored by the American Association of Community Colleges, the Association for Career and Technical Education, Green For All, and the National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education; and the Harvard University and Sustainable Cities Green Boot camp to name a few.

Senator the Hon. Christopher Evans MP, Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations

Senator Christopher Evans was elected to Federal Parliament in 1993, and was sworn in as the Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills, Jobs and Workplace Relations in the Gillard Government on 14 September, 2010. He is also the Leader of the Government in the Senate. Senator Evans served as Chair of the Joint Native Title Committee and was appointed as the Opposition Whip in the Senate following the 1996 election. He was appointed to the Shadow Ministry after the 1998 election as the Shadow Minister for Family Services and the Aged. Following the 2001 election, he was appointed Shadow Minister for Defence, and in 2004 became the Shadow Minister for Defence Procurement, Science and Personnel.

In October 2004, Senator Evans was elected as the Federal Labor Leader in the Senate, and also became the Shadow Minister for Social Security. In June 2005, he became Shadow Minister for Indigenous Affairs and Shadow Minister for Family and Community Services and in December 2006 became Shadow Minister for National Development, Resources and Energy. From December 2007 he served as Minister for Immigration and Citizenship.

Prior to entering Federal Parliament, Chris was the State Secretary of the Labor Party's WA Branch and before that was Secretary of the Fire Fighters Union in WA. He is married with two sons; is very keen on rugby union and is also stubbornly loyal to the Fremantle Dockers Football Club.

Mindy Feldbaum, Senior Director, Workforce Development Programs, National Institute for Work and Learning (NIWL), Washington, DC, USA

Mindy Feldbaum has more than 20 years' experience providing leadership on education and workforce development strategies and initiatives. Mindy was recently awarded DEEWR's Endeavour Executive Award and is currently working with TAFE Directors Australia to create a US-Australia Green Skills Network. Mindy has co-authored several publications focused on sustainability and green workforce education including *The Greening of Corrections: building a sustainable system*, and *Going Green: the vital role of Community Colleges in building a sustainable future and green workforce*. Mindy works on green workforce education and training projects for multiple federal agencies, including the US Departments of Labor and Education and also serves as a Principal Investigator for a National Science Foundation grant examining the employment outcomes of community college graduates.

Prior to NIWL/FHI360, Mindy served as the Program Director for four major discretionary grant programs at the US Department of Labor and was the Director of Workforce Programs at the US Conference of Mayors, advocating on behalf of big city mayors. Mindy began her workforce education career at Oakland Community College, managing programs that supported educational success for low-income single mothers. She holds a Masters in Public Administration from the George Washington University.

Pat Forward, Federal TAFE Secretary, Australian Education Union

Pat Forward was elected to the position of Federal TAFE Secretary of the Australian Education Union (AEU) in January 2004.

She previously held the position of Federal TAFE President for six years and was, at the same time, Vice President TAFE in the Victorian Branch of the AEU. She has taught in Victorian TAFE Colleges, at university and in schools.

Pat is an advocate of the public TAFE system in Australia and is committed to maintaining and extending the status of the profession of TAFE teaching, for all TAFE teachers.

Dr Michelle Fox, Chief Strategist for Education and Workforce Development, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, US Department of Energy, Washington, DC, USA

Dr Michelle Fox serves as the Chief Strategist for Education and Workforce Development, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, US Department of Energy. She provides strategic direction for education and workforce development programs, especially through the integration of advanced learning technologies.

While at DOE, she has been using her extensive background in developing and evaluating technology including games, simulations and virtual worlds to develop new kinds of training and education. These efforts are set in the larger context of her interagency efforts on Green Jobs and STEM education, alternative credentialling and program accreditation. Michelle also sits on the Board of ANS/I's Certificate Accreditation Program.

Prior to joining DOE, Michelle served as Vice President of the Learning Technologies Program at the Federation of American Scientists, a non-profit research group.

Michelle earned her BA at Trinity College, Hartford, CT; her MA at King's College, London; and her doctorate at Oxford University.

Dr Malcolm Grothe, Executive Dean, Professional and Technical Education, South Seattle Community College, Seattle, WA, USA

Dr Malcolm Grothe has worked with community and technical colleges for nearly 25 years. As a college programs manager at Boeing, he worked with colleges to develop programs to help meet industry needs. Building upon his relationship with higher education, he was selected as a Boeing Loaned Executive to support the Seattle Community College district and was eventually hired as the Executive Dean for South Seattle Community College.

Malcolm has worked on many projects across multiple campuses and has testified before legislative bodies in Washington, Oregon, California, and Michigan in support of community colleges. He is currently on loan from South Seattle Community College to the Aerospace Joint Apprentice Committee where he is working on a project which will provide professional development for technical faculty. In addition, he teaches a graduate-level class in Adult Learning Theory at Seattle University. Malcolm holds a PhD in Community College Leadership from Oregon State University.

Julie Hare, Higher Education Editor, *The Australian*

Julie Hare is Higher Education Editor at *The Australian* which she joined in August 2010 after six years editing the specialist higher education title, *Campus Review*. Before that, Julie was a writer and editor in the school and vocational education sectors.

Her early years in journalism were in magazines, as an editor, sub-editor and feature writer.

Julie won the 2010 Universities Australia and National Press Club award for writing about higher education teaching and learning.

Kevin Harris, Institute Director, TAFE NSW – Northern Sydney

As leader of a dynamic government institution with a strong commercial focus, Kevin Harris is responsible for all elements including the development and future directions of TAFE NSW – Northern Sydney Institute. He is very active at the national and state level in ICT and e-learning. He chairs TAFE NSW Business Systems Strategies and Knowledge Management peak bodies and represents TAFE NSW on numerous Department of Education and Training peak ICT committees and programs. Kevin's other commitments include board membership of TAFE Directors Australia and WorldSkills Australia.

A degree in Mathematics & Physics from Macquarie University followed trade and para-professional qualifications. Further qualifications include diplomas in both Engineering (Electronics) and Teaching (Sydney University), a graduate diploma from the Australian Company Directors Institute, and certification as a Quality Management Assessor (Australian Quality Council).

With a diverse career that has included roles at Honeywell Australia as a Supervising Project Engineer, Assistant Director (TAFE NSW – Southern Sydney Institute), Program Manager – Engineering Education Services (TAFE NSW), Senior Head Teacher – Electronics (TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute), Kevin understands the importance of self-development and the essentiality of ongoing education and training. An avid surfer, Kevin is an active member of Surf Lifesaving Australia and has a number of Australian Master SLSA titles.

Kaylene Harth, Board Member, Institute Director, Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE

Kaylene Harth has been involved in vocational education and training for over 20 years in various contexts. Key roles have included leading the implementation of user choice in Queensland in 1998, followed by the position of Director, Infrastructure for the Department of Employment and Training from 2001 to 2004. From 2004 to October 2008 she was Director of The Bremer Institute of TAFE, during which time the institute won a number of state and national awards, including the Australian Training Provider of the Year in 2006.

Kaylene describes her leadership style as 'evolved' and is always looking for ways in which to broaden her leadership capability. Her style is very much about empowering and mentoring staff. She is a good listener and values the richness of various perspectives before taking action.

Susan Hartigan, Institute Director, TAFE NSW – Western Sydney

Susan Hartigan is the Director of TAFE NSW – Western Sydney Institute, one of the largest Registered Training Organisations in Australia enrolling over 100,000 students annually and providing exceptionally high quality vocational education, training and workforce development services to industry, enterprises, individuals and the community.

The Institute includes the specialist distance education provider, the Open Training and Education Network (OTEN) and Sydney West International Education. The Institute was recently named the 2010 Australian Large Training Provider, one of the Australian Training Awards highest honours, in addition to winning the NSW Training Award for Large Training Provider of the Year in both 2009 and 2010.

Susan has a strong commitment to vocational education and training. She has a keen interest in strengthening relationships and alliances with industry, the community and other educational providers to ensure the Institute makes a significant contribution to local, national and international development.

Marie Hill, Senior Education Manager, Australian Trade Commission (Austrade)

Marie Hill is a Senior Education Manager with Austrade based in Melbourne. She manages Austrade's relationships in the VET and ELICOS sectors. She also has responsibility for the implementation of Future Unlimited, the new brand for Australian education internationally, along with the further development of the Study in Australia website.

Marie has worked for Austrade for a total of five years, including in Johannesburg, South Africa, from where she ran an education exhibition series in five African countries. Prior to that, she worked with new-to-export firms in a range of industries across Victoria.

She also has worked for University of Melbourne, the US Foreign Commercial Service in Melbourne, and for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in Canberra and on posting to Budapest in Hungary.

Mark Howland, Chief Executive Officer, DEC International and TAFE NSW National Business

Mark Howland is responsible for DEC International and TAFE NSW National Business, NSW Department of Education and Communities. The key objectives of this portfolio are to provide a coordinating, monitoring, reporting and business development point for all international operations within the department. This includes marketing and recruitment of international students for NSW government schools, TAFE NSW and all international projects and high level international delegations.

Mark has extensive experience working within and across culturally diverse geographies throughout the world.

Before assuming the role of CEO, he was the Institute Director of the Abu Dhabi Vocational Education and Training Institute (ADVETI) in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. The Institute was established in 2007 by the Abu Dhabi Government and is jointly managed and operated by TAFE NSW and the Abu Dhabi Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training.

Previously, Mark has undertaken a number of senior roles including Chief Executive Officer of the University of Western Sydney College, Chief Executive Officer of the Australia Property Institute, and senior roles with IDP Australia and FINSIA.

Nicholas Hunt, Chief Executive Officer, William Angliss Institute, Melbourne; TDA Board Member

Nicholas Hunt was appointed Chief Executive Officer of William Angliss Institute in August 2007. Since joining the Institute Nick has focused on strategic planning, brand development, further development of educational programs and strengthening of the Institute's activities to support industry partners. Under Nick's leadership the Institute's annual revenue has increased 31% to \$60million per annum.

Prior to joining the Institute, Nick held a variety of positions in tourism and education development sectors including Executive Director for Tourism Training Victoria where he directed research, competency standards development and implementation, as well as skill development and promotional activities.

Nick is a director of the International Centre of Excellence in Tourism & Hospitality Education (THE-ICE), a member of the Melbourne Hospitality Advisory Board to the City of Melbourne and treasurer of the Victorian TAFE Association.

Nick is an honours graduate from the University of Tasmania and has studied Documentary Journalism as part of the Salt Institute for Documentary Studies, Maine (USA). Nick is also a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Denise Janek, Managing Director, TAFE SA – Regional

Denise Janek has had 36 years' experience as a teacher and a manager of TAFE programs in South Australia. She started her career as a high school teacher in NSW then joined TAFE in SA in 1975 at the then Language and Migrant Education Centre.

From 1991 to 1998, she was State Program Manager for Human Services programs and coordinated work on the State Training Profile in 1996. Denise has managed several national government projects, most recently *Access and Equity in Online Learning*.

She was the Director of Adelaide Institute of TAFE in 2004 and has served on numerous state and national Vocational Education and Training Committees.

Denise was appointed Managing Director, TAFE SA Regional, in September 2004. She currently chairs the TAFE Directors Australia Board's Regional Reference Group.

James Knight, President and CEO, Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC)

James Knight has been President and CEO of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges (ACCC) since November 2007. ACCC represents the interests of Canada's colleges, institutes of technology, university colleges, cégeps and polytechnics. Jim holds a BA (Hon) in History and Philosophy from the University of Western Ontario, an

MA in Canadian History from the University of Toronto, a Certificate in Management from Queen's University and a Sommelier Diploma from Algonquin College.

With over 25 years of leadership with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM), prior experience with the federal government in Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Environment Canada, and as Associate Director of the Heritage Canada Foundation, Jim brings a depth of national, international and community-orientated expertise to ACCC. During his tenure at FCM, many new initiatives were launched including a tripartite program for municipal infrastructure, a program for reimbursement of Goods and Services Tax paid by municipal governments, the transfer of five cents per litre of the federal excise tax on gasoline to municipalities, the creation of the Green Municipal Fund and an award-winning international program.

With ACCC, Jim helped secure a major capital contribution to member institutions from the Government of Canada, matched by provincial/territorial governments. Just under CAD2 billion in upgrading and expansion projects are now being implemented.

He is a proponent of the central contribution of Canada's colleges to Canada's economic, social and environmental sustainability.

Jim is Past Chair of the Canadian Society of Association Executives; past Chair of WaterCan, a Canadian NGO that invests in water and sanitation projects in the Nile basin; and a Member of Sustainable Technology Development Canada, a publicly funded not-for-profit agency that helps bring to market green innovations and products.

Stephen Langton, Managing Director, Deloitte Centre for Collective Leadership, UK

Stephen Langton is Managing Director of the Deloitte Centre for Collective Leadership at Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Limited. He has specialised in the field of leadership consulting for the past 15 years.

Having completed his Master of Business Administration at the Australian Graduate School of Management in 1996, he conducted postgraduate studies in the assessment and development of leadership cultures in organisations as well as the design of a due diligence process to better determine leadership risk in top teams and chief executive officers.

Later, at Amrop International, he developed a new centre of expertise in adapting search assessment methodology to large-scale global merger and acquisition integrations and the design and implementation of associated culture and employee engagement interventions.

Stephen is a regular contributor to the World Economic Forum regionally and at Davos. He is a regular guest lecturer at business schools and frequently speaks at international business forums and events.

The Hon Sussan Ley MP, Federal Shadow Minister for Employment Participation

Sussan Ley has held the seat of Farrer since 2001. She is the Federal Shadow Minister for Employment Participation and the Federal Shadow Minister for Childcare and Early Childhood Learning.

Sussan was born in Nigeria and spent her early childhood in the Middle East. She was educated in England and Australia and her tertiary qualifications include a Bachelor of Economics, Masters of Taxation Law and a Masters of Accounting. She also holds a Commercial Pilot's Licence.

She travelled extensively through rural Australia during her early career, working as an aerial stock mustering pilot and shearers' cook, at one time living in a caravan.

The van came in useful in the 2001 election campaign when she used it to campaign the length of the electorate and slept in it overnight at caravan parks.

Sussan lives in Albury, NSW and enjoys having her three adult children close by..

Dr Garry McDonald, Associate Director, National Centre for Sustainability, Swinburne University of Technology

Dr Garry McDonald is the Associate Director of the National Centre for Sustainability (NCS) at Swinburne University of Technology and is responsible for the strategic direction of the Centre. Under Garry's leadership, the NCS Swinburne delivers a range of sustainability courses, research and consultancies in green skills and behaviour change, and professional development programs for teachers in Education for Sustainability.

Garry also provides specialist advice and support to University management on best practice sustainability services, education and training programs, and represents TAFE Directors Australia on the national Green Skills Agreement Implementation Group.

In his previous roles with the Department of Primary Industries, Garry acquired 32 years' research and extension expertise in agricultural science, entomology, agricultural ecosystems and environmental sustainability, including extensive experience in senior management. He was Institute Director, Rutherglen Research Institute for ten years and subsequently Research Director, Sustainable Landscape Systems, before joining Swinburne.

Elizabeth McGregor, Institute Director, TAFE NSW – North Coast

Elizabeth McGregor is currently Institute Director, TAFE NSW – North Coast, one of 10 institutes in TAFE NSW, and Acting Chair of Regional Development Australia, Mid North Coast. Her institute has been on a decade-long strategic journey to embed sustainability principles into both operations and teaching and learning.

NCTAFE takes its role as a regional community leader very seriously and engages strongly with other local bodies to help the region adapt to climate change. For instance, NCTAFE was a Founding Signatory to the innovative Northern Rivers Climate Change Collaboration from which Sustain Northern Rivers has emerged.

Suzy McKenna, Principal Project Officer, Australian Qualifications Framework Council

Suzy McKenna has been the Principal Project Officer with the Australian Qualifications Framework since January 2009. She was previously the National Project Director of Reframing the Future, the staff development and change management program for vocational education and training.

Suzy has a variety of experience in government, the private sector and education in several countries and has almost always worked in areas that involve the development of people. She has a Bachelor of Education.

Bruce Mackenzie PSM, Chief Executive Officer, Holmesglen Institute

With over 25 years in the field of vocational education, Bruce Mackenzie PSM has played a leading role in the successful development and implementation of the TAFE system in Victoria. His contribution to the vocational education and training (VET) sector was formally recognised in his selection for the 1994 National AUSTAFE Award for Educational Leadership. In the 2005 Australia Day Honours List, Bruce was awarded the Public Service Medal for outstanding services to vocational education. He was a founding member of TAFE Directors Australia and is immediate past Chair.

Holmesglen Institute enrolls over 50,000 students each year, trades locally, nationally and internationally with substantial international contracts in the Middle East. It offers courses over three educational sectors, upper secondary, vocational and higher education.

Peter Mares, Journalist and Broadcaster, ABC Radio National

Peter Mares has been a journalist and broadcaster with the ABC for more than twenty years and currently presents the weekly public policy discussion program *The National Interest* on ABC Radio National. Peter is also an Adjunct Fellow at the Institute of Social Research at Swinburne University where he pursues an interest in issues around migration, borders and human rights.

Peter's book on Australia's policies towards refugees and asylum seekers (*Borderline*, UNSW Press 2001, 2002) won prizes in the Queensland and NSW Premiers' Literary Awards. He often contributes to newspapers and journals including *Griffith Review* and *Inside Story* and has published articles in academic books and periodicals.

Adrian Marron, Board Member, Chief Executive Officer, Canberra Institute of Technology

Adrian Marron is Chief Executive Officer of the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT), the largest vocational education and training institution in the Australian capital, with more than 26,000 students' annually providing programs and services in a wide range of disciplines.

Adrian has an extensive background in the education sector, including experience in the schools, colleges and universities. He has contributed to a number of policy debates at the State and National level and has spoken at a number of international conferences and events. He has a commitment to organisational capability building and believes in and is committed to educational quality and a very strong focus on the customer as well as excellent business practice in the provision of educational services in VET.

Adrian is a Fellow of the Australian College of Educators, a board member of TAFE Directors Association, and a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management. He is currently the TDA representative on the national Quality Council.

Adrian is passionate about life, music, and the Glasgow Celtic, not necessarily in that order!

Sheryle Moon, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Institute of Project Management (AIPM)

Sheryle Moon is the Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Institute of Project Management (AIPM), the peak body for project management in Australia. The AIPM has been instrumental in progressing the project management profession in Australia.

Sheryle has over 25 years' experience in the professional services environment, with senior roles such as managing partner at Andersen Contracting, VP for CSC, Director Manpower Services, President Australia and New Zealand for ASX listed Global HR Solutions provider, Ross Human Directions, and two Association CEO roles for the Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA), and the Australasian Association of Convenience Stores. She is an author on *Work and Life Balance* and the impact of demographic and generational change on the workplaces in Australia. Sheryle is a Fellow of the AICD, and has a BEc from Sydney University and a Masters of Management in Technology from ANU.

Dianne Murray, Director, Illawarra Institute, Critical Skills Investment Fund

Dianne Murray was appointed as Director, Illawarra Institute in 2006.

Dianne is experienced in strategic planning, policy setting, systems development, and resource management. She has been involved in developing international programs in the People's Republic of China for over 10 years and was recently appointed by the Tianjin Municipal Government as its Vocational Education Adviser.

Dianne has extensive experience providing leadership to support improvements in organisational performance and the provision of education and training services and initiatives.

She is a member of the Illawarra Business Chamber Board of Directors; member of the Board of Regional Development Australia Illawarra and Deputy Chair of TAFE Directors Australia.

Dianne is also a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and the Australian Institute of Management and Chair, Australian TAFE International Network. In 2010 she was appointed by the Prime Minister to the Critical Skills Investment Fund Advisory Board.

Dr Dianne Orr, Acting Commissioner, Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)

Dr Dianne Orr has been appointed as Acting Commissioner — Compliance in the Australian Skills Quality Authority. Dianne led the project team based in Melbourne and Brisbane to design the regulatory systems for the national VET regulator. She was formerly the Executive Director of Training and International Quality in the Queensland Department of Education and Training.

Dianne has worked in TAFE administration, workforce capability development, VET policy development and regulation. She has been a member of the National Quality Council and has worked on a number of the Council's national action groups, strengthening standards, and driving quality and national consistency.

Bob Paton, CEO, Manufacturing Skills Australia

Bob Paton is the CEO of Manufacturing Skills Australia (MSA). This is one Australia's 11 national Industry Skills Councils, recognised and funded by the Australian Government. The organisation's roles include the ongoing development and maintenance of national vocational qualifications and training products for the manufacturing industry, gathering and providing industry intelligence and assisting companies with their workforce development.

Bob was appointed at the end of 2004 after more than eight years as National Executive Officer of the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Industry Training Advisory Body.

Prior to that Bob spent 20 years working for TAFE NSW as a teacher and then in various administrative roles associated with state-wide and national manufacturing and engineering curriculum development and implementation.

Bob originally served an apprenticeship as a motor mechanic.

Dr Dan Patterson, President, Niagara College, Welland, ON, Canada

Dr Daniel Patterson has been Niagara College's President since 1995. Under his leadership, the College has reached an enrolment of 9,000 students with an operating budget of over CAD117 million. In 2008, the College launched a CAD90 million campus redevelopment project to expand student capacity and provide new and renovated state-of-the-art learning environments at its Welland and Niagara-on-the-Lake campuses.

Prior to his appointment as President, Dan served as Vice-President Ventures Division for four years. Previously, he was Director of the Partnership and Training Support Services Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Skills Development, and held various senior management positions including Director of Planning for the Department of Indian Affairs.

Beginning 1 September 2011, Dan will be taking a nine-month professional development sabbatical at Oxford University in the United Kingdom.

The Hon Adrian Piccoli MP, New South Wales Minister for Education

The Hon Adrian Piccoli was sworn in as the Minister for Education on 3 April 2011.

Prior to entering Parliament, Adrian graduated from the Australian National University with a Bachelor of Economics and Bachelor of Laws in 1993. Adrian has a commanding interest in the plight of the residents in his electorate as he was both a solicitor and farmer from 1994 to 1997. He was elected as the Member for Murrumbidgee to NSW Parliament on 27 March 1999. He was re-elected in 2003, 2007 and 2011.

Adrian has previously held the Shadow Ministerial portfolios of Water, State and Regional Development, Mineral Resources, Lands and Natural Resources, as well as serving as the Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader for Natural Resources (Forests) and Ethnic Affairs. Following a leadership ballot on 22 October 2008, his Nationals colleagues elected him to the position of Deputy Leader. He was appointed as the Shadow Minister for Education, Skills, Juvenile Justice and Youth Affairs in late 2008. After the 2011 election he was re-elected as the Deputy Leader of The Nationals NSW.

Born and bred in Griffith in 1970, in his free time Adrian is an avid cyclist and rugby union supporter. Adrian is married to Sonia and they have two children.

David Riordan, Director, TAFE NSW – Sydney Institute

David Riordan has over 26 years' experience working in the vocational education and training (VET), higher education, schools and corporate sectors commencing as a teacher at Sydney Institute in the 1980s, teaching and managing a range of language and literacy programs. In 1996 David moved to the Middle East where he worked at the Kuwait Naval School on an Australian higher education project. On return to Australia, he headed up the bid and later managed the training of the workforce for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Sydney in 2000 on behalf of TAFE NSW.

In 2001 David was appointed as Director Business, at Sydney Institute. David then moved to Europe to pursue his international career managing large projects associated with the Olympic Games in Athens, then in Italy as a consultant for the Winter Games in Turin. After five years away David returned to Sydney to head up the TAFE NSW National Business Office and in 2007 was appointed CEO of Department of Education & Training (DET) International.

Martin Riordan, CEO, TAFE Directors Australia

Martin Riordan is Chief Executive Officer of TAFE Directors Australia, the peak incorporated body representing Australian TAFE and technology institutes. Martin was appointed to head up "TDA" in December 2005, having previously worked at executive levels in vocational education, and communications, in Australia and through the Asia-Pacific. Immediately prior to his appointment, Martin was an executive with Federal Education (DEST), and was a guest lecturer in communications at Northern Sydney Institute of TAFE NSW. Martin was awarded an Australian American Fulbright Professional Scholarship in 2009, to review leadership skill sets and innovation in the American Community College system. His BA (Hons) undergraduate qualification was gained at Macquarie University, and MBA from the University of Technology Sydney.

Dr David Ross, President and CEO, Langara College, Vancouver, BC, Canada

Dr David G Ross is President of Langara College in Vancouver, British Columbia. David brings close to 25 years of higher education leadership experience at the University of New Brunswick and various positions at Kwantlen Polytechnic University including Vice-President, Administration and Student Services; Chief Financial Officer; Associate Vice-President, Advancement and External Relations; and Undergraduate Chair, School of Business.

David has a strong background in marketing and public relations, which includes teaching experience in leadership, marketing, and entrepreneurship. His scholarly activity includes numerous works on topics such as enrolment management, institutional branding, media relations and the development of baccalaureate programs in a traditional two-year setting.

In British Columbia, David is Chair of the Post-Secondary Employers' Association of British Columbia, Vice Chair of British Columbia Colleges Association and a Board Governor of the Business Council of British Columbia.

Nationally he is a Board Member of the Association of Canadian Community Colleges and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Council of Canada Advisory Board. He also sits internationally on the American Association of Community Colleges Commission on Communications and Marketing and is Vice Chair of the College Baccalaureate Association. David was also President and Board Chair of the National Council for Marketing and Public Relations and Chair of the Regional Cultural Diversity Council.

His educational background includes PhD (University of Nebraska); MAQ (Simon Fraser University); MBA and BSc (Dalhousie University).

Diane Seath, Director International Students Centre, DEC International, NSW Department of Education and Communities

Diane Seath is the Director, International Students for NSW Department of Education and Communities. Her responsibilities include the marketing and recruitment of international students for TAFE NSW and NSW Government schools.

With over 20 years' experience in the education sector, Diane has worked in a broad range of educational, faculty and senior management positions. She is passionate about the difference education can make to our lives and the increasing importance of providing skills and knowledge for our global economy.

Diane has a Bachelor degree from the University of Technology, Sydney and a Masters degree from Griffith University, Queensland.

Robin Shreeve, Chief Executive, Skills Australia

Robin Shreeve has worked in the skills sector for more than 30 years in Australia and England. He is currently the Chief Executive of Skills Australia. Skills Australia is an independent advisory body advising the Australian Government on workforce development and workforce skill needs. Prior to this appointment Robin was Principal and CEO of a Central London College of Further and Higher Education. From 1989 to 2005 Robin worked for the Department of Education and Training in New South Wales. There he was Deputy Director-General for Technical, Further and Community Education (TAFE). From 1995 to 2000, he was Director (Principal) of the North Coast Institute of Technical and Further Education in northern New South Wales. Robin has been a director of a wide range of organisations including the NSW Board of Studies, the Paddington Development Trust, the London Apprenticeship Company and WorldSkills Australia. He is currently a member of the advisory boards of the Critical Skills Investment Fund and the LH Martin Institute.

Virginia Simmons AO, Director, Virsis Consulting

Virginia Simmons AO enjoyed a career of over 30 years in the Victorian TAFE system, 23 years of which were in senior positions: CEO of Kangan Institute of TAFE, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (TAFE) at Swinburne University of Technology, and most recently CEO of Chisholm Institute. Throughout that time she played an active role in contributing to the VET policy debate through involvement in Victorian and national organisations and peak bodies.

She has international VET experience spanning some 20 years. Now working as a consultant, Virginia specialises in tertiary education policy and strategy in both domestic and international settings. She has received a number of major awards for her contribution to education.

Sue Slavin, Managing Director, West Coast Institute of Training; Deputy Chair, TDA Board

As Managing Director, West Coast Institute of Training, Sue Slavin has created a vibrant, values-based culture enabling the reinvention of this innovative and future-focused government VET organisation. Through its West Coast Way, a resourceful, agile and partnered approach, almost half the institute's training is conducted non-traditionally, including in the workplace. Sue has introduced International Academy for Law Enforcement and Security, jointly with the WA Police, and the statement Business Growth Centre.

Sue is a trained early childhood education teacher and journalist, holds a BA from UWA and is a former Western Australian finalist in the Telstra Businesswomen's Awards. She is Deputy Chair of TDA and on the Australia-China Business Council Executive Committee and Workpower boards.

Rodney Spark, Executive Director, eWorks and NBN Ambassador

Rodney Spark is the Executive Director of eWorks, which provides a range of e-learning advisory and support services for the Victorian training system and manages a range of major state and national ICT change projects to increase participation and improve learning outcomes in the VET sector. This includes the Training Virtual Campus and the Flexible Learning Toolboxes, e-learning materials aligned to Industry Training Packages. Rodney is the Victorian representative on the VET sector's Flexible Learning Advisory Group (FLAG) and his FLAG responsibilities include Chair of the E-Standards for Training Expert Group, which is the national VET sector's ICT standards endorsement body. In addition, Rodney represents VET on the Australian ICT in Education Committee's (AICTEC) executive group and the Edu Domain Advisory Committee (eDAC).

Keith Spence, Chair, WA State Training Board; Board Member, Skills Australia

Keith Spence is Chair of the WA State Training Board which provides policy advice to the Minister for Education and Training on matters relating to vocational education and training in Western Australia. He is a member of the Board of Skills Australia and chairs the Critical Skills Investment Fund Advisory Board. With over 30 years' experience in the oil and gas industry, including 18 years with Shell, Keith has a broad knowledge of the industry. He retired from Woodside in 2008 after a 14-year tenure in top executive positions in the company. Keith held many roles during his period with Woodside, including Chief Operating Officer, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Director Oil Business Unit, Director Northern Business Unit and Exploration Manager North West Shelf. Most recently, he was Executive Vice President Enterprise Capability.

Keith is a member of the National Carbon Capture and Storage Council and chairs the Board of the National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority, the Australian Institute of Management (WA), the State Training Board of Western Australia and the Industry Advisory Board of the Australian Centre for Energy and Process Training. He is a member

of the Curtin University Council, a Non-Executive Chairman of Clough Limited and Geodynamics Limited and a Non-Executive Director of Verve Energy. Keith graduated from the University of Tasmania with a Bachelor of Science in Geophysics (First Class Hons) and is married with two adult children.

Dr Mary Spilde, President, Lane Community College, Eugene, OR, USA

Dr Mary Spilde, President, Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon, August 2001 to present, joined Lane in 1995 as Vice President for Instructional Services. In 1997, she became Vice President for Instruction and Student Services. Prior to that, she served 15 years at Linn-Benton Community College in Albany, Oregon, in a variety of positions including dean of business, health, and training. Mary served on the Oregon Workforce Quality Council for six years and the Oregon Workforce Investment Board for three years as well as serving on numerous local boards.

Mary earned a Bachelor's degree in business and social systems and a law degree from the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. She completed a Master's degree in adult education and a doctorate in post-secondary education at Oregon State University.

Presently, Mary is past chair of the American Association of Community Colleges board of directors and serves on their Sustainability Task Force. Lane Community College is a League for Innovation in the Community College board college, and Mary currently serves as a board member and was co-editor of the League publication *The sustainable community college: holistic approaches to sustainability*. She is also a board member of the American Association of Colleges and Universities and recently served on the steering committee for the American Presidents' Commitment to Climate Control.

Denise Stevens, Chief Executive Officer, TAFE Development Centre

Denise Stevens leads the TAFE Development Centre, having developed extensive educational management experience over the past 25 years working in the VET sector. She has had a variety of management and leadership positions in the VET sector with responsibility for teaching and learning practice. Highlights throughout this time have included the establishment of teaching departments, establishing an industry liaison centre of excellence, working in the Middle East, and developing and implementing vocational degrees in TAFE.

Denise's practical approach to education and training is predicated on the philosophy that education provides a pathway to both personal and professional development.

Bill Swetman, General Manager, Organisational Services, Polytechnic West

Bill Swetman has over 25 years' experience in education and training in Australia including primary and high school teaching (metro and regional), VET teaching and VET senior management roles at a number of VET institutions (metro and regional), tertiary lecturing experience, and experience as a senior manager in the WA office of Education and Training Regulation. In his current role as General Manager Organisational Services at

Polytechnic West, Bill is responsible for the coordination of all support services for the delivery of education and training; including Teaching and Learning, Higher Education, International Services, Client Services, and Strategic Partnerships.

Miranda Taylor, Director Skills & Safety, Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association Limited (APPEA)

Miranda Taylor is currently the Director of Skills & Safety for APPEA. Prior to joining APPEA three years ago, Miranda had more than 20 years' experience in HSE management and skills development in the resources sector with extensive experience in strategic policy and political advocacy working with state and federal governments.

Miranda has an Honours degree from the London School of Economics. From Australia, Miranda has postgraduate qualifications in industrial relations and is also trained in mediation and facilitation.

Laura Tingle, Political Editor, *Australian Financial Review*

Laura Tingle has reported politics from the Canberra press gallery for twenty years for *The Australian*, *The Age*, *The Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Australian Financial Review*.

Before this, she covered financial markets for the AFR and economics for *The Australian*. Her 1994 book, *Chasing the Future*, documented how the recession of the early 1990s changed Australia's political and economic debate.

She is currently Political Editor of the *Australian Financial Review*, and has won both a Walkley Award for Journalism and the Paul Lyneham Award for Excellence in Press Gallery Journalism.

Dr Phillip Toner, Senior Researcher, Centre for Industry and Innovation Studies, University of Western Sydney

Dr Phillip Toner is a Senior Research Fellow in the Centre for Industry and Innovation Studies at the University of Western Sydney. Phillip's major areas of research interests include industry policy; the economics of technical innovation; labour market analysis and comparative national skills formation systems. He has undertaken research for a broad range of organisations including the OECD, World Bank, ASEAN, Industry Canada, National Centre for Vocational Education Research; NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training; NSW TAFE Commission; Department of Innovation, Industry, Science and Research, Department of Education, Employment, and Workplace Relations; Australian Industry Group; Dusseldorp Skills Forum, Group Training Australia and Fair Work Australia.

Phillip has published extensively in leading journals including the *Cambridge Journal of Economics*; *British Journal of Industrial Relations*; *Journal of Contemporary Asia*; *Issues & Studies: A Quarterly Journal on China, Taiwan and East Asia*; *Journal of Industrial Relations*; *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*; *Australian Bulletin of Labour and Labour & Industry*.

Colin Walters, Group Manager – International, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Canberra

Colin Walters has been Group Manager, International, and Chief Executive Officer of Australian Education International, in the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, since January 2009. At that time, he was also appointed to the Board of the Australian-American Fulbright Commission. Between 2005 and 2008, he was Group Manager, Higher Education and a Board Member of the Australian Universities Quality Agency.

From July 2003 to May 2005, Colin was responsible for Science Group in the Department of Education, Science and Training and from 1998 to 2003, he managed the Vocational Education and Training Group. In 1994–95, Colin was a member of the Senior Executive Service in the Departments of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and Industry, Science and Technology and from 1992 to 1994 he managed the preparation and passage of Australia's first native title (land rights) legislation in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. Prior to 1992, Colin held a number of senior appointments in the UK.

Melinda Waters, Business Development Manager, TAFE Development Centre

Melinda Waters has held a range of senior leadership positions in the VET sector and has extensive experience in business. She has a strong focus on strategic educational workforce development, project management, development of learning resources and innovative teaching and learning practices. In these roles she has developed teacher capability frameworks and PD programs for the VET sector and worked internationally on the implementation of competency-based training and assessment systems. She has an MBus, GradDipBus, and a DipEd&Trng.

Associate Professor Leesa Wheelahan, LH Martin Institute, University of Melbourne

Dr Leesa Wheelahan is an associate professor at the LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Management at the University of Melbourne. She has published widely on lifelong learning, tertiary education policy, student equity, relations between VET and higher education, student pathways, credit transfer and articulation, and the role of theoretical knowledge in curriculum. Leesa has taught in tertiary education for approximately 17 years, which includes time as a TAFE teacher, in policy development, as an academic developer, and as a teacher of VET teachers. Her recent projects include research on higher education in TAFE and private providers, and on the quality of teaching in VET. She is currently leading a research consortium funded by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research on improving pathways within and between education and work.

David Williams, Executive Director, Victorian TAFE Association

David Williams was appointed to the role of Executive Director of the Victorian TAFE Association in June 2003. He previously worked for the Association in the role of Manager, Workforce Development & Employment Relations for seven years. Prior to joining the Association, David spent 11 years with the Australian Services Union, Victorian Authorities and Services Branch and for the last four years with the Union, held the elected position of Victorian Branch Secretary.

David has a strong background in industrial relations, human resources and governance issues.

Helen Zimmerman, Executive General Manager, English Navitas Ltd

Helen Zimmerman is a senior executive with Navitas Ltd, a diversified global education provider that offers an extensive range of educational services for students and professionals including university programs, English language training and settlement services, workforce education and student recruitment.

Helen is a board member of the International Education Association of Australia Inc. and represents the IEAA on the NSW Premier's Council on International Education. She is a Council Member of the Australian Business and Community Network Inc. and a member of the Pearson Test of English (PTE) Academic Advisory Board.

Helen graduated with first class honours from the Australian National University. She also holds a Diploma in Education and a Graduate Diploma in Adult Education. She is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and has a Diploma in Company Directorship. In 2000 Helen won the Private Sector Award for the Telstra NSW Businesswoman of the Year. In 2010 she was one of five national finalists for the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Agency's award of Leading CEO for the Advancement of Women. She was also named as a Paul Harris Fellow by the Rotary Foundation of Rotary International in 2010.

Conference organiser

Pam Caven, Director Policy and Stakeholder Engagement, National Secretariat, TAFE Directors Australia

Pam Caven took up the position of Director Policy and Stakeholder Engagement, TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) in May 2007.

Pam's career has included being a secondary school teacher, teachers' college lecturer, TAFE teacher, senior manager in State and Federal Government departments, and author. She was a Director in the Victorian Department of Education and Training prior to moving to the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) as Project Director. Post ANTA, Pam managed a variety of projects and was engaged as an audit consultant by the Victorian Auditor General. At TDA, Pam has drawn on input from members to develop formal TDA submissions to a range of government and departmental enquiries and consultations. She has managed significant national projects and organised a range of seminars and the annual TDA national conferences.

Pam holds a BA (Hons), Dip Ed, Cert.IV (Training & Assessment) and a Masters degree in Education – Leadership and Management.

Conference MC

Ellen Fanning

Ellen Fanning is best known for her work as an award-winning current affairs journalist. At 24, she broke new ground, becoming the first woman to host one of ABC Radio's national current affairs programs. Two years at the helm of PM were followed by several years anchoring AM on ABC Radio and serving as occasional host of ABC TV's 7.30 Report.

Ellen also served as the ABC's Washington correspondent and has reported from locations as diverse as Transylvania and the North Pole, under the Indian Ocean aboard an Australian Navy submarine and 30,000 feet over Serbia from a US Air Force refuelling jet.

She has interviewed every current and former Australian Prime Minister from John Howard to John Gorton and has met and interviewed world leaders from France, Britain, Ireland, Israel and the United States.

Most recently, Ellen has been a reporter for the Nine Network's 60 Minutes and Sunday programs. She has also had extensive experience moderating political, business and community events in Australia.

As a facilitator Ellen's strength lies in her ability to clarify goals, define roles and reach agreed outcomes across both cultural and language barriers.

With a wealth of experience in communications, politics, social, cultural and business issues, Ellen's informative and stimulating presentations make her an ideal MC for the 2011 TDA National Conference.



Chair of the National Skills Standards Council, and Chair of the Australian Qualifications Framework Council, the Hon John Dawkins AO



Gala Dinner at the Opera House



NSW Minister for Education, the Hon Adrian Piccoli MP



Dr Michelle Fox, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, US Department of Energy, Washington DC



TAFE Alumni Gallery



Robin Shreeve, CEO of Skills Australia, and Bob Paton, CEO, Manufacturing Skills Australia

Program at a glance

Sunday 4 September 2011

12:30pm	Emerging Leaders Forum (by invitation only)	Sheraton on the Park
	Emerging Leaders Professional Development Program	Times on the Park Room, Level 2
4.00pm	Registration opens	Sheraton on the Park, Level 2
5.30–7.00pm	ETS TOEFL Welcome Reception	Sheraton on the Park Times on the Park Room, Level 2

Day 1 – Monday 5 September 2011

8.00am	Registration and Exhibition open	Sheraton on the Park, Level 2
9.00am	<i>OFFICIAL CONFERENCE OPENING</i>	<i>Ballroom, Level 2</i>
9.15am	Welcome address	
	2011 TAFE Alumni Gallery launch	
9.35am	Panel session: A balancing act...the big issues faced by the VET sector	
10.30am	National Skills Standards Council	
	Keynote speaker	
11.00am	Morning tea, exhibition, Alumni Gallery and foyer conversations	
11.30am	Wealth of resources – or patchwork economy?	
12.50pm	Global trends in Vocational Education and Training (VET)	
1.00pm	Lunch, sponsored by CISCO	Botanica Brasserie, Level 1
2.00pm	Shadow Ministerial address	Ballroom, Level 2
2.30pm	USA-Australia: Sustainability, engagement and 'green' skills training	
3.30pm	Afternoon tea, exhibition, Alumni Gallery and foyer conversations	
4.00pm	Stream 1, Why should TAFE offer higher education?	Ballroom
	Stream 2, Offshore TAFE	Phillip Room
	Stream 3, The new regulatory policy landscape	Hyde Park Room
5.00pm	Close Day 1 proceedings	
6.20–6.30pm	Bus transfers to Opera Point Marquee – Sydney Opera House – if required	
7.00pm	Gala Dinner – Opera Point Marquee, Sydney Opera House	
	Dinner speaker: Thérèse Rein, Managing Director and Founder, Ingeus Limited	

Day 2 – Tuesday 6 September 2011

8.00am	Registration and Exhibition open	Sheraton on the Park, Level 2
8.30am	Welcome Day 2, Early morning news – how the media conveys issues of skills and training	Ballroom, Level 2
9.15am	Community Colleges' Baccalaureate Degrees – trends in the United States of America and a practical model for change	
9.45am	Higher education outside of universities	
10.50am	Morning tea, exhibition, Alumni Gallery and foyer conversations	
11.20am	Internationalisation and a Big Australia: debates on migration, education, population	
12.10pm	High performing institutions: competitors and collaborators	
1.00pm	Lunch, sponsored by CISCO	Botanica Brasserie, Level 1
2.00pm	Concurrent Topical Sessions – Delegates' choice	
3.00pm	Ministerial address	Ballroom 1
3.30pm	Stream 1, What should VET qualifications look like?	Ballroom
	Stream 2, Unpacking the green skills challenge	Hyde Park Room
	Stream 3, Australia's support for international students	Phillip Room
	Stream 4, Symposium: 2011 Emerging Leaders only	Castlereagh Room
4.15pm	Conference wrap – Key messages from the conference	
4.30pm	Conference close Afternoon tea, exhibition, Alumni Gallery and foyer conversations	



Artist Apple Yin showing her artwork to the NSW Minister for Education, the Hon Adrian Piccoli MP



Dr John Buchanan, Director, Workplace Research Centre, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Sydney



Keith Spence, Chair, WA State Training Board, and Board Member, Skills Australia



Thérèse Rein, Managing Director and Founder, Ingeus Limited



Sue Slavin, Managing Director, West Coast Institute of Training, and Deputy Chair, TDA Board



Martin Doel OBE, Chief Executive, Association of Colleges, UK

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