

**Flexible delivery as a 'whole-organisation' operation: what does this mean in practice?**

**John Henry  
Deakin University  
Lyn Wakefield  
Gordon Institute of TAFE  
Peter Smith  
Deakin University**

**Research Institute for Professional and Vocational Education & Training (RIPVET)**

This paper reports on a project undertaken by RIPVET for TAFE frontiers in the latter part of 2000. This project focused on the organisational 'readiness' of training providers for flexibly delivered training programs. The research implemented a research procedure developed by Smith & Henry (1999) called generalisations from case studies. The case study sites selected included large and small, urban and rural based TAFE Institutes, private providers and ACE sector providers.

The focus of the research was on the processes of change within training organisations as these organisations explicitly attempted to integrate flexible delivery as a 'whole organisation' operation. The areas of interest to the researchers were those support service sections of organisations that function as underpinnings to the education and training operation of the RTO, but influence the character and quality of students' experiences at each stage in their training pathway.

The paper reports on an 'organisational development needs hierarchy' identified through the case study research. This hierarchy includes the key professional development needs associated with critical support services for effective flexible delivery of training. It also recommends on quality management processes and strategies for addressing these needs at the organisational level within a RTO.

Additional key outcomes from the project will also be noted.