

Welcome



Welcome Message from Professor Gerard Sutton, Vice Chancellor, University of Wollongong.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome the participants to the 9th Annual Conference Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association (AVETRA) to the University of Wollongong.

The University of Wollongong is proud to be associated with the organization of this conference in partnership with the Illawarra Institute of TAFE.

The University of Wollongong has an enduring and historic relationship with vocational education in the Labarra region and the joint hosting of this conference builds on this strong sense of collaboration. We at the University of Wollongong value greatly this relationship with the Illawarra Institute of TAFE and I am personally very pleased to see it has resulted in this international research conference being in Wollongong.

The themes of the conference Global VET: Challenges at the Global, National and Local Level are very important issues to be exploring at this moment and I commend AVETRA in taking this initiative.

The conference themes highlight the importance for all our endeavors in the field of research to span, and have relevance to, both the global and the local dimensions of contemporary society. The themes also underline the growing importance for research as well as practice in teaching and learning, both in VET and higher education, to respond to the challenges of internationalization.

As many of the participants will be aware, questions about how Australia continues to maintain "cutting edge" quality research and maintain research-intensive universities that are recognized internationally is an ongoing debate. I am aware that these questions are relevant to the VET research community and I am sure the participants and members of AVETRA will be able to make positive contributions to maintain a research culture that values innovation and change and assist us all to maintain high quality and world class research.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate and thank all members of the organizing committee.

Welcome to the University of Wollongong.

Prof Gerard Sutton

Vice Chancellor - University of Wollongong

Welcome



Peter Kell

Welcome from the President of AVETRA, Associate Professor Peter Kell

On behalf of the members of the Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association (AVETRA), I would like to welcome all participants to the 9th Annual Conference of this association

This is the first time AVETRA has been hosted in a regional centre and this is an important recognition of the role of the vocational education in underpinning industry and economic growth in regional Australia. It is also recognition of the importance of the crucial role of regional training providers such as the Illawarra Institute of TAFE, along with the University of Wollongong, who are joint hosts of this conference.

The themes of this conference span the local, the national and the global and the objective of this conference is to explore the relationships between these themes. At every level the challenge of change and innovation are features of vocational education, and research has a vital role in documenting, informing and guiding practice and policy.

The conference will have an important forum for exploring the dimensions of globalization on VET and VET research. Contributions from the United Kingdom, New Zealand and other countries will inform the participants of developments and questions for VET research on the global level.

In Australia the last 12 months have seen significant changes in the direction and organization of vocational education training and this conference will also enable participants to explore the opportunities and questions for VET research and researchers emerging from this dynamic policy environment.

How practice is influenced at the local level will also be a key theme at the conference and this theme will have an important role in identifying how research might help improve outcomes for students, staff, the community and industry.

This year's conference has a role to profile the achievements of AVETRA, and its members, as we move into our tenth anniversary year. I am pleased to announce we will have new awards to recognize exemplary contributions to VET research but also to AVETRA itself. Two new awards will be presented this year. They are the Berwyn Clayton Award for Distinguished Service to AVETRA and the Ray Barker Award for Distinguished Service to VET research. They will be presented in addition to our award for best conference paper.

In addition to the formal program there will be opportunities for researchers, industry, administrators and policy experts to explore issues in a spirit of enquiry and scholarship.

On behalf of the organizing committee and the members of AVETRA I welcome the participants to the conference.

Associate Professor Peter Kell

President - AVETRA.

Welcome



Welcome by Mr Barry Peddle Director Illawarra Institute of TAFE, TAFE NSW.

TAFE NSW Illawarra Institute is pleased to co-host the 9th Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association (AVETRA) annual research conference with the University of Wollongong. It is a great pleasure to work in partnership with AVETRA and the University to further VET research effort.

This conference is an opportunity for those interested in improving the quality and outcomes in vocational education to hear about the developments in vocational education research from a range of sources. This conference explores VET at the Global, National and Local level and this will enable participants to gain a broader understanding of the relationship between these dimensions of VET.

The conference also has a range of research interest groups that include such important topics as vocational education in schools, apprenticeship training, innovations in teaching and learning as well as VET provider and industry partnerships and I am sure these will also be of great interest to VET practitioners and researchers.

It is also an opportunity for participants to see what is happening in regional Australia in vocational education and training and TAFE's role in skills formation and community education. TAFE has an important role in building capacity in the communities in which they work and the participation of the Illawarra Institute of TAFE in 9th Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association conference is an important part of this mission.

On behalf of our Institute I welcome participants to Wollongong and extend our best wishes to all delegates and participants for a productive and enjoyable conference.

Barry Peddle

Institute Director - TAFE NSW - Illawarra Institute



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Conference Highlights

Wednesday 19 April 2006

- 2.00pm – 2.30pm Registration - for Workshops and/or Conference
- 2.30pm – 5.30pm
- Selection of Professional Development Workshops
 - Getting Published – *Dr Gavin Moodie*
 - Getting Your Message Across: NCVET Research Reports
– *Andrea Aveis, Kaye Bowman, Lucy Potter, NCVET*
 - Access and equity – *Wing-Yin Chan Lee and Margaret Thornton, TAFE SA*
- 5.15pm – 7.00pm Registration for Conference
- 5.30pm – 7.30pm Welcoming Cocktails
- Foyer, Level One, McKinnon Building University of Wollongong
 - Optional dinner, Food Re-Thought, Level one

Thursday 20 April 2006

- 8.00am – 8.50am Registration and tea/coffee
- 8.50am – 9.05am Conference Opening, Welcomes and Housekeeping
- Rita Curtin, elder of Wodi Wodi people
 - Professor Gerald Sutton, UOW Vice Chancellor
 - Assoc Professor Peter Kell, President AVETRA
- 9.05am – 9.20am Opening Address
- David Campbell MP, Minister for the Illawarra
- 9.25am – 10.15am Keynote Theme 1 (Global)
- Professor Michael Singh, University of Western Sydney
- 10.15am – 11.00am Panel Theme 1
- Michael Singh, UWS
 - Toni Fraser, Industry Training Federation of New Zealand
 - Fran Ferrier, CEET
- 11.00am – 11.30am Morning Tea and Exhibition
- 11.30am – 1.00pm Streamed Sessions and Symposia
- 1.00pm – 2.00pm Lunch
- AVETRA AGM
- 2.00pm – 2.45pm Keynote Theme 2 (National)
- Aurora Andruska, DEST
- 2.45pm – 3.30pm Panel Theme 2
- Pat Forward AEU
 - Erica Smith AVETRA
 - Tom Karmel NCVET
- 3.30pm – 4.00pm Afternoon Tea
- 4.00pm – 5.30pm Streamed Sessions and Symposia
- 7.00pm - Dinner
- Illawarra TAFE Student Association Inc. Foleys Lane Nth Wollongong

Friday 21 April 2006

- 8.00am – 9.00 am Registration, Opening and Housekeeping
- 9.05am – 9.50am Keynote Theme 3 (Local)
- Barry Peddle TAFE Illawarra
- 9.50am – 10.40am Panel Theme 3
- Casper Cumming - Swinburne Student Union
 - Peter Kell - University of Wollongong
 - Kevin Heys - NSW TAFE
- 10.45am – 11.15am Morning Tea
- 11.15am – 12.45pm Streamed Sessions and Symposia
- 12.45pm – 1.45pm Lunch - NZ Meeting
- 1.45pm – 3.15pm Streamed Sessions
- 3.15pm – 3.45pm Thanks and close of conference

About the Venue



University of Wollongong

University of Wollongong

The University of Wollongong traces its origins to 1951 when a Division of the then New South Wales University of Technology was established in Wollongong.

Ten years later the Division became the Wollongong College of the University of New South Wales and, in 1975, the University of Wollongong was incorporated by the New South Wales Parliament as an independent institution of higher learning. In 1982, the University amalgamated with the Wollongong Institute of Higher Education, which had begun life in 1962 as the Wollongong Teachers' College. The merger formed the basis for a period of rapid growth in the 1980s and the emergence of the University of Wollongong's distinctive identity as an enterprising institution with a personalised style and a growing reputation for excellence in teaching and research.

The conference will be held in the J B McKinnon Building (building 67) of the University. The Exhibition and Plenary sessions, plus the Secretariat desk, will be on Level 1 (main entry). Breakout sessions will also be on levels 2 and 3 of this building - easy to navigate. A map of all room locations will be available on site. Parking for cars would normally be in the Northern Car Park, a short walk from Building 67. Additional information re parking, bus shuttles and general services will also be available on site.

The Conference Secretariat

The Conference Secretariat

The Conference Secretariat will be housed in one of the exhibition booths, level 1, McKinnon Building and serviced at all times to assist you.

Badges

Badges may be 'shared' amongst delegates from the one organisation, but ALL delegates must wear a valid badge at all times. The badges / lanyards have been colour coded as follows:

Organising Committee: GOLD Lanyards

Speakers: RED Lanyards

Delegates: BLACK Lanyards

PLUS an indicator denoting your dinner status: RED dot indicates Dinner Attendee.

Transport

Doherty Coaches, Wollongong will transport delegates staying at Conference Hotels as follows:

Thursday 20 April, 2006 Pick up from hotel at:

Rydges	8.00 am
Novotel	8.15 am
Kiera View	8.00 am
Belmore Suite Hotel	8.15 am

Pick up from McKinnon Building UOW at 6.00pm & 6.15pm.

Pick up from hotel at:

Rydges	7.00 pm
Novotel	7.15 pm
Kiera View	7.00 pm
Belmore Suite Hotel	7.15 pm

Pick up from hotels from 7.00pm to the Conference Dinner.

Shuttle bus services leaving after ITSA Dinner at 10.30pm, 10.45pm and 11.00pm

Friday 21 April

Pick up from hotel at:

Rydges	8.00 am
Novotel	8.15 am
Kiera View	8.00 am
Belmore Suite Hotel	8.15 am



Our Sponsors and Exhibitors

Charles Sturt University

Charles Sturt University is based at five major regional campuses in New South Wales with a number of other locations both in Australia and overseas. It has over 33,000 students of whom 23,000 study by distance education, making CSU the largest distance education provider in Australia. The Faculty of Education offers strong teacher training programs at all levels of education – early childhood, primary, secondary, VET and higher education – as well as a number of other education related courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level. The Faculty has well-known researchers in all areas of education.

The VET teacher training programs within the Faculty are the largest in Australia, with over 300 enrolled students. The Faculty is the preferred provider of teacher training to the majority of TAFE Institutes in New South Wales and has many other students from all areas of VET: other TAFE systems in Australia, private Registered Training organisations, industry and the community sector. VET academics have been at the forefront of developments in VET teacher-training over the past six years, and spear-headed universities' response to the changes in qualifications for VET teachers. CSU's own VET courses, which are at the cutting edge of VET teacher preparation, comprise the Associate Degree, the Bachelor's Degree and the Grad Dip in VET. The programs are all offered in the distance education mode and embed the new Certificate IV in Training and Assessment in an innovative and rigorous manner. Details of CSU's VET courses are at <http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/educat/edu/vetfolder/>

The work of the VET team is supported by a rich research profile provided by members of the RIVET (Research in Vocational Education and Training) Community of Scholars. These internationally significant researchers have won many nationally competitive grants in areas such as flexible delivery, apprenticeships and traineeships, VET teacher education, VET curriculum and policy, VET history, Indigenous VET and VET in schools. RIVET has recently been appointed to the panel of preferred providers for both the New South Wales and the Victorian Departments of Education & Training. RIVET members regularly provide advice to government and serve on a number of major committees in VET and VET research. RIVET's web site is at <http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/educat/edu/vetfolder/research/> and RIVET can be contacted at vetresearch@csu.edu.au

Blackboard International B.V.

The Blackboard Learning System™ is a Web-based server software platform that offers industry-leading course management, an open architecture for customization and interoperability, and a scalable design that allows for integration with student information systems and authentication protocols. This system is available for local installation or hosted by Blackboard ASP Solutions. The Blackboard Learning System is an industry leading course management system based on a third-generation enterprise technology platform featuring curriculum-driven content management and content sharing provides instructors with flexibility and control.

University of Wollongong

The University of Wollongong is a University of international standing with an enviable record of achievement in teaching and research. It is also located in one of the most beautiful settings in Australia, just an hour's drive south of Australia's largest city, Sydney.

The University's aim is to nurture quality graduates who are experts in their fields and who can work anywhere in the world. Above all, the University looks towards producing the leaders of tomorrow, mature well-rounded individuals who will return a contribution to society.

Twice named Australia's University of the Year* - in 1999-2000 for its outstanding research and development partnerships and in 2000-2001 for preparing its students for the e-world - Wollongong has also been ranked the nation's top university for educational experience and graduate outcomes for the last five years.



TAFE Illawarra Institute

Illawarra Institute is the largest provider of vocational education and training in Southern NSW. The student body of over 40,000 people come from across the nation and from many overseas countries.

One of the many pleasant aspects of studying in the Institute is the diversity of the student population who bring many cultural, social and work experiences to the classroom. TAFE Illawarra believe this adds to the quality of the teaching and learning environment. The Institute's vision is to become a 'world class learning organisation'.

TAFE Illawarra offers an array of some 500 courses delivered across our fourteen Campuses through nine specialist teaching Faculties.

The Institute also offers a comprehensive range of student support services that enrich the learning experience. The courses are designed to meet the needs of individuals, industry and the community. They have been developed in consultation with employer associations, industry and community groups to ensure the content is relevant to all user needs.

NCVER (National Centre for Vocational Education Research)

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) aims to be Australia's leading provider of quality, independent information about vocational education and training (VET).

Their vision is that VET policy and practice are informed by a sound base of high-quality information. In this capacity, NCVER is responsible for collecting and managing national VET and New Apprenticeship statistics, and managing national surveys of TAFE graduates and students, and employers' views of training.

It undertakes a strategic program of research, and collects and provides VET research findings from Australian and international sources through the VOCED research database.

NCVER actively communicates this information to the state, territory and federal governments, industry, the VET sector and the community.

Additionally, NCVER undertakes consultancy work specialising in industry skills studies, conducting program evaluations, and undertaking statistical analyses of various aspects of VET.

The Conference Dinner and Awards Night

The Conference Dinner and Awards Night

This year's dinner will be held at the Illawarra TAFE Student Association Inc. Foleys Lane Nth Wollongong. from 7:00pm - 11:30pm on Thursday 20th April. Coaches will collect delegates from the 4 conference hotels, at 7:00pm and 7.15pm and return to the hotels departing 10:30, 10:45, and 11:00 pm.

The evening promises great entertainment, not only will we be presenting several awards, some for the first time, but also an entertaining (surprise) interlude which is highly recommended.

Students from the Illawarra TAFE School of Hospitality will assist with the presentation of the dinner.

Please ensure you wear name badge showing red dot to indicate that you are registered to attend.

The Cocktails Venue

The Cocktails Venue

The Welcome Cocktails will be held in foyer of the McKinnon Building on Wednesday 19th April from 5.30 pm until 7.30pm. Dinner will be available at the Food Re-Thought Restaurant on the same level after this event for those people who have previously indicated that they would like to attend.

Workshops

Avetra Workshops

Getting your message across: NCVER research reports

NCVER wants your research reports to inform your readers and inspire positive action.

The ability to communicate your research findings in clear and understandable English is the first step to ensuring your research can make a difference.

This workshop will assist you to understand the direction NCVER is taking to ensure greater accessibility and use in VET policy and practice and practical hints. towards improving the style of written research.

This workshop will cover:

- NCVER's direction and standards for written reports
- What makes a good research report?
- Tools and tips to assist with improving your writing
- Common writing faux pas and how to write for a wider audience (not just other researchers).

Presenters:

Kaye Bowman, General Manager NCVER

Andrea Averis, Manager, Research Management, NCVER

Lucy Potter, University of Adelaide

Access and Equity: whose responsibility is it?

Review of recent NCVER research on access and equity practices in Vocational Education Training (VET)

Summary of needs of access and equity practices in VET

Present various models/case studies of access and equity practices

Explore possibility and challenges of cross-sectoral approaches to access and equity

Raise questions for delegates to respond to pros and cons of different models of practices

Gather feedback from delegates to reflect on current practices and models being adopted to address access and equity in own organisations

Facilitate discussion on future research that can inform VET organisations to improve on effectiveness of access and equity practices

Summary of outcomes of discussion to be shared with researches for future research

Presenters:

Wing-Yin Chan Lee and **Margaret Thornton**, TAFE SA

Getting Published

This workshop is a step-by-step guide from that discreet ambition and half-formed thought to the glory of publication in an internationally-refereed journal. The beginning author will be introduced to techniques for overcoming obstacles to writing and publishing, stroking fickle editors, taming ferocious journal referees, and key tricks such as the graded build-up, the chameleon project/manuscript, the persevering author and the mpu will be exposed. We will take a good idea, develop it into a paper proposal, identify journals that are good prospects for publication, write and submit a manuscript, deal with the bloody referees' comments, and finally get into print. High impact journals will be identified, foreshadowing a future glittering career. And we will take every opportunity to wring most benefit from our achievement for our self-promotion and advancement.

Presenter:

Gavin Moodie

Symposia:

A Schedule of speakers for each symposia can be found in your conference satchel.

The Conference Program

START TIME	END TIME	WHAT	Room # 303	Room # 203	Room # 201	Room # 102	Room # 301	Room # 302
8:00	8:50	Registration and tea/coffee						
8:50	9:05	Welcome to Country						
9:05	9:20	Opening Address						
9:25	10:15	KEYNOTE Theme 1 - Global						
10:15	11:00	PANEL Theme 1 - Global						
11:00	11:30	Morning Tea & Exhibition						
11:30	1:00	STREAMED SESSIONS & SYMPOSIA						
11:30	12:00	PA 05 Crazy paving? Learning pathways between and within VET and higher education Roger Harris/Linda Rainey						
12:00	12:30	Organisational capability and the work of National Consortium 2 on VET Research Chaired by Roger Harris						
12:30	1:00	Organisational capability and the work of National Consortium 2 on VET Research Presented by Victor Callan						
1:00	2:00	Lunch						
2:00	2:45	KEYNOTE Theme 2 - National						
2:45	3:30	PANEL Theme 2 - National						
3:30	4:00	Afternoon Tea						
4:00	5:30	STREAMED SESSIONS & SYMPOSIA						
4:00	4:30	Research to support VET providers build capability Chaired by Berwyn Clayton						
4:30	5:00	Research to support VET providers build capability Chaired by Berwyn Clayton						
5:00	5:30	Research to support VET providers build capability Chaired by Berwyn Clayton						
5:30	6:00	Dinner & Awards						
6:00	6:30							
6:30	7:00							
7:00	7:30							
		Lecture Theatre 104						
		Rita Curtin, Elder Wadi Wadi People Dr Gerald Sutton, Vice Chancellor UOW Assoc. Prof. Peter Kell David Campbell MP, Minister for the Illawarra Prof Michael Singh, University of Western Sydney						
		Michael Singh UWS, Toni Fraser, Industry Training Federation of NZ Fran Ferrer CEET,						
		Lecture Theatre 104						
		WK 04 Research Priorities Kaye Bowman						
		PA 19 Challenging VET: using autobiographical research to illuminate lessons for really reflexive professional learning Linden West						
		PA 35 An Exploration of TAFE Institutes as Learning Organisations Jayne Pitard						
		AVETRA AGM Aurora Andruska - DEST Pat Forward AEU, Erica Smith AVETRA, Tom Karmel NCVET						
		Lecture Theatre 104						
		PA 69 VET history has a past: does it have a future? Chaired by Richard Pickersgill						
		VET History: Does it have a future? Chaired by Richard Pickersgill						
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		PA 36 Literacies @ work: Professional development in an organizational learning system Bobby Harrevelid						
		PA 14 Two Cultures, One Reform: Identity Formation in ACE and VET Managers Annette Foley						
		PA 70 Review of delivery of the Certificate III Electrotechnology (Systems Electrician) program in order to improve pass rates in Electrical License assessment. Roberts/W. Cross/L. Shang						
		AVETRA AGM Aurora Andruska - DEST Pat Forward AEU, Erica Smith AVETRA, Tom Karmel NCVET						
		Lecture Theatre 104						
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		PA 31 Deconstruction, Confusion and Frequency: Surveying Technology Use by Vocational Teachers Liz Renshaw/G. Mackenzie						
		PA 70 Review of delivery of the Certificate III Electrotechnology (Systems Electrician) program in order to improve pass rates in Electrical License assessment. Roberts/W. Cross/L. Shang						
		PA 15 Promises but not guarantees - movement from TAFE to Higher Education in a dual sector university Sue Holden/R. Gabb						
		PA 48 Making choices: Exploring pathways Annette Green/Erica Smith						
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Friday 21st April 2006

The Conference Program

START TIME	END TIME	WHAT	Room #	Room #
8.00	9.00	Registrations		
9.00	9.05	Opening & Housekeeping		
9.05	9.50	KEYNOTE THEME 3 - Local		
9.50	10.45	PANEL THEME 3 - Local Barry Peddle- TAFE Illawarra Caspar Cumming Swinburne Student Union, Kevin Heys TAFE NSW, Peter Kell UOW		
10.45	11.15	Morning Tea		
11.15	12.45	STREAMED SESSIONS & SYMPOSIA		
			Room # 102	Room # 203
11.15	11.45	VET in Schools: Where next for research? Chaired by Angela Hill	PA 49 Following through: Longitudinal research into new VET in School teachers with an industry background Annette Green Peter Elliott	PA 57 Research in the Middle: The link between issues and action in equity and access Madeline Fernbach/H. Kimberley PA 26 Challenging the Status Quo – skilling for emerging technologies Cathy Bahari/A. Avertis/G. Field/J. Murdoch/C. Trood
11.45	12.15	VET in Schools: Where next for research? Chaired by Angela Hill	PA 50 Negotiating a VET Teacher Education Practicum in Rural and Isolated Areas Peter Elliott	PA 61 Generic Skills: What's the point? Geof Hawke
12.15	12.45	VET in Schools: Where next for research? Chaired by Angela Hill	PA 33 Building a VET pedagogy: what we can learn from Certificate IV courses Michelle Simons	PA 74 Developing innovative and sustainable pedagogies for vocational learning Mike Brown
12.45	1.45	Lunch		
1.45	4.15	STREAMED SESSIONS	NZ Meeting	
			markets, sustainability	industry training and performance
1.45	2.15	PA 40 Australian enterprises' use of apprenticeships and traineeships to meet specific labour shortages Erica Smith	PA 03 Towards a National Sustainable Development Framework for VET in Australia: 'Greening' small business and communities- or 'greening' the marketplace? Karen Plane	PA 07 Capability Development for the Knowledge Era: Reculturing and Life Based Learning Maret Staron/Marie Jasinski/Robby Weatherley
2.15	2.45	SYMPOSIUM: National skill formation through apprenticeships and traineeships Chaired by Erica Smith	PA 43 New Zealand Industry Training Organisations' contribution to the supply of and demand for skills Toni Fraser	PA 68 The new Topuddle Martyrs: VET practitioners and practice in the new industrial relations of training Richard Pickersgill
2.45	3.15	SYMPOSIUM: National skill formation through apprenticeships and traineeships Chaired by Erica Smith	PA 71 - The challenge of small business and VET: Evidence for policy and practice from INCVET's systematic review of research Susan Dawe/Andrea Avertis	PA 38 Addressing the Workforce Performance Requirements of the Post-Industrial Workplace. Paul Brady
3.15	3.45	CLOSE		

Our Keynote Speakers

Professor Michael Singh

Michael Singh is a Research Professor of Education in the School of Education at the University of Western Sydney.

Professor Singh is an international leader in the field of global and multicultural teaching and learning. He has co-authored five books on the subject in the past few years with titles such as 'The World of Learning: Globalisation and Multicultural Education' and 'Adult Education in the 21st Century: Troubling Stories of Neo-liberal Globalisation'. As the titles suggest, he is a critic of simplistic thinking about globalisation and multiculturalism, and a strong advocate for linguistic diversity and a cosmopolitan language policy

His most recent book, with Michael Apple and Jane Kenway interdependence of social, economic, and cultural processes affecting various forms of education and related human services in global and local contexts. See Apple, M., Kenway, J. and Singh, M. (2005), *Globalising Education: Policies, Pedagogies and Politics*. New York: Peter Lang

Professor Singh is currently undertaking an ARC project funded with Professor Fazal Rizvi (University of Illinois) investigating the uses of international education by students from India and China. Professor Singh is also leading a team of Australian and overseas scholars investigating the risky opportunities for "Globalising Public Education."

He currently conducting research into the Education and Training Reform Agenda in Queensland

Prior to his appointment to the University of Western Sydney, Professor Singh was Professor of Language and Culture at RMIT University (Melbourne), where he was Head of RMIT Language and International Studies with management responsibilities for VET sector teaching in language and community services.

Prof Singh is the current President of the Australian Association for Research in Education.

Aurora Andruska

Group Manager - National Training Directions Group, Department of Education, Science & Training

On behalf of the Australian Government, Aurora Andruska is responsible for driving Australian Government leadership of the national training system, in particular through the Commonwealth-State Funding Agreement and the New Apprenticeships Programme.

Aurora formerly led the Department's Corporate Strategy Group and was instrumental in the Department's recognition as a people orientated organisation which values diversity, creativity and commitment.

As a long standing and respected member of DEST, Aurora has been responsible for many initiatives including the development and implementation of changed funding arrangements for non-government schools. She also played a major role in the development and implementation of the student assistance programmes AUSTUDY and ABSTUDY including changing work practices in Student Assistance Centres.

Barry Peddle, JP

Barry Peddle has been the Institute Director of the TAFE NSW Illawarra Institute for over nine years and prior to that the inaugural Institute Director of the Riverina Institute of TAFE for seven years. He has recently been appointed to head up South Western Sydney Institute, one of the largest RTO's in the country.

Barry also manages the TAFE NSW Worldskills portfolio and the NSW International Centre for VET.

He has a background in the building and construction industry having commenced his career as an apprentice and eventually managed his own construction business for eight years.

He is a Ministerial appointment to the NSW Board of Adult and Community Education, the NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board, the Illawarra Regional Development Board and the Commonwealth Illawarra Area Consultative Committee. He is also a Director of the Illawarra Business Chamber.

Barry is currently Chair of TAFE Directors Australia and was a founding Director and Deputy Chair of that Association until his appointment as Chair of the Planning Forum for the 2nd World Congress of Associations of Colleges and Polytechnics. He represents Australian TAFE Directors on the World Federation of that body today.

Barry's recent international experience includes project management for a Middle East military college tender, project consultancies in China and restructuring the Thailand VET Institute system.

Full Paper Presentations

- by paper number as referred to in the program

*** **Refereed papers** - Papers annotated with three asterisks in the Contents below have been refereed to comply fully with the verification requirements of the Department of Employment, Science and Training for a conference publication, full written paper refereed. An anonymous refereeing process has been used.

Towards a National Sustainable Development Framework for VET in Australia: 'Greening' small business and communities, or 'greening' the marketplace? 0003

Karen Plane

- CREEW, University of SA, South Australia, Australia

This paper will highlight the challenges for embedding Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) within Vocational Education and Training (VET) as debated in the research discourses at the national and international level, and by presenting findings from the 'community ecology' of a PhD qualitative case study of small business community partnerships within one peri urban region of South Australia. It questions the impact of globalising, neoliberalist policies for economic growth on promulgating cross sectoral partnerships in the regions, which are often dependent upon short term funding initiatives, the work of volunteers and local champions, without addressing how sustainable development will be strategically embedded in VET for the long term. The research has found much work in ESD in this region is being accomplished, but often outside formal VET, and there are tensions to creating social partnerships for capacity building across fragmented, diverse industries and community sectors in a competitive, market economy. It critiques the vacant space for governance within public private partnerships and extent to which they can resource sustainable development successfully for the long term, without the marketplace itself becoming 'greener'. It discusses deconstructing the predominant discourses of the 'politics of the disengaged', and understanding the tensions to implementing global policies in sustainable development in small business and community workplaces at the local level. The paper concludes there is a clear role for both small business and the community in ESD, but for resourcing capacity builders to develop trust and find the common ground between centralised government, local government, industry and the wider community. It contends also, for the need to empower the VET practitioner and VET graduate as change agents, supported by an overarching sustainable development policy for VET, which brings together the work being undertaken in ESD in research centres internationally, and in Australia.

Down the Track: Young people's longer-term outcomes from TAFE training. 0004

RLW Sherman

- National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide, South Australia, Australia

What benefits do young people get from training in the longer-term? Whilst there is information readily available on short term outcomes from vocational education and training, such as the Student Outcomes survey administered annually by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research, it has been suggested that outcomes six months after training is too short a time period to fully measure the effectiveness of the training.

Using survey results of student outcomes in 2002 and a follow up survey of these people in 2004, it is possible for the first time to show longer-term improvements for 15-24 year olds who completed TAFE training in 2001.

The aim of this presentation is to use data from these surveys to examine the longer-term improvements from TAFE training including shifts in employment from prior to training, six months after training and a few years after training. Comparisons to those with no post-school qualifications are made and show TAFE graduates have higher employment levels, wages and higher skilled occupations than those with no training. Graduates are also using their training as pathways into further study. Many graduates, especially those completing lower level qualifications, completed additional qualifications at a higher level to their 2001 training.

Many gains can be achieved from undertaking training in the vocational education and training sector and these gains are still realised in the longer term. TAFE training has many positive impacts for its participants in terms of employment outcomes, as a gateway to lifelong learning and for other personal benefits.

***** Crazy paving? Learning pathways between and within VET and higher education** 0005

R Harris 1, L Rainey 2

- 1 University of SA, SA, Australia, 2 University of SA, SA, Australia

Promotion by governments and institutions of pathways and seamlessness over the past decade may be perceived as both positive and problematic. Seamlessness can provide considerable choice for young people and yet at the same time can readily lead to uncertainty and indecision. A number of studies have drawn attention to the phenomenon of indirect transfer where movement of tertiary students is not linear but instead involves several moves within and between institutions and sectors.

This paper examines what some of these pathways look like, explores patterns in such movement and proposes a typology of learning pathways. The research involved in-depth interviews held with 49 students in South Australia who had experienced both VET and higher education. Such research can help us to understand more fully the experiences in, reasons for and consequences of moving within and between various pathways. It might also help policy-makers and institutional planners with insights into how best to position relationships between sectors and to implement policies and services that help learners navigate through education systems.

**Capability Development for the Knowledge Era:
Reculturing and Life Based Learning**

0007

M Staron 1, R Weatherley 1, M Jasinski 2

- 1 TAFE NSW, Meadowbank, Australia, 2 Design Planet Pty Ltd, Adelaide, Australia

More so than ever before, business viability depends on the human factor – on the capability of its workforce and the ability to transfer and share knowledge. Business in the vocational education and training (VET) sector requires dynamic and adaptable learning systems and the capacity to support learners designing their own learning.

Learning through who and how you know is becoming as important as what you know. Learners in VET need to engage in a wide range of learning other than professional learning. Much of this 'life-based learning' deeply influences our thinking and our work practices. A key challenge is how to recognise, value and support learning that extends beyond the work environment yet is inextricably connected with and influences that environment.

An ecological metaphor provides a framework for this. It allows us to create a range of adaptive learning models. It provides a suite of capabilities and draws on plurality and richness of ideas. The ecological metaphor also recognises that there are multiple ways to adapt to and shape the environment in which we live, work and learn. The message is that there is no one-way or no best model for working and learning in the knowledge era. We are challenged to think beyond the familiar and to recognise, value and celebrate 'humanness' while investing in the characteristics that define a learning and working ecology.

Professional learning for the knowledge era will be characterised by variety, inclusiveness, interrelatedness, acknowledging the importance of relationships, the capability to adapt and influence and a shared responsibility for ensuring the 'fitness' of the environment in which we work and learn. The focus is on learning models for the future and the research findings of a group of people who are passionate about exploring how we will work and learn in the knowledge era.

Symposium: Research to support the building of capability in VET providers

0008

R M Harris

- University of SA, Adelaide, SA, Australia

Vocational education and training (VET) providers face a wide range of challenges in developing and sustaining a workforce that has the capacity to respond to the progressively more complex and changing demands of clients. Use of traditional workforce development practices such as qualification and experience based recruitment and in-service training courses, as strategies to improve individual and organisational capability, are no longer regarded as sufficient in themselves to satisfy the demands of the contemporary work environment. Problems of skill and knowledge transfer, flattened organisational structures, financial and time constraints, commercial pressures and the changing nature of work itself have led to renewed interest in finding learning solutions rather than training solutions to workforce development; with learning conceptualised as a central, on-going and integral feature of contemporary work.

Workforce development strategies that focus primarily on individual workers within an organisation are inadequate if the goal is to develop organisational capability. Innovations in products, processes and services including teaching and learning innovations are rarely the result of individual initiative. Rather, they rely on group, managerial and technological systems which when brought together with individuals' capacities build organisational capability.

This symposium will be a discussion of the key findings so far by some of the Principal Researchers in the national consortium, 'Supporting VET providers in building capability for the future' – a large, two-year research program managed by the NCVET and funded by the Australian, State and Territory governments through the Department of Education, Science and Training.

Critical issues in teaching and learning in VET: national and international findings 0010

J G Mitchell 1, C Chappell 2, A Bateman 3, S Roy 4

- 1 John Mitchell & Associates, NSW, Australia, 2University of Technology, NSW, Australia, 3Bateman & Giles Pty Ltd, VIC, Australia, 4NSW Department of Education and Training, NSW, Australia

A national research study undertaken in 2005 found that teaching, learning and assessment occur within an environment of complexities and opportunities. VET practitioners need to understand the complexities raised by the enormous changes occurring in the economy and in the workplace, while at the same time responding positively to the opportunities arising for the sector.

The paper reports on that national study and examines the implications for teaching and learning arising from an analysis of the needs of VET's individual learners and industry clients. The findings include the increasing demand for the customisation and personalisation of training services; the need for VET practitioners to understand the many different ways learning can occur in workplaces; and the need for teaching and learning to address the requirements of both the employer and the employee.

This paper is one product of a large, two-year research program in 2005-2006 managed by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) and funded by the Australian, state and territory governments through the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). The research program, Supporting vocational education and training providers in building capability for the future, is being undertaken by a consortium of researchers from around Australia.

This paper is drawn from the consortium's research project on 'critical issues in teaching, assessment and learning', which concluded in late 2005. The project on critical issues acknowledged the challenges for VET practice identified by recent research on VET pedagogy, both in Australia and internationally. The purpose of the research project was to identify critical issues in teaching, learning and assessment, in order to inform and influence VET practice. Methods used to collect data included the dissemination of a discussion paper, an online forum, focus groups and case studies.

The research included a comparison of policy and practice in Australian VET and English and Scottish Further Education and found that improving quality is a critical issue in all three countries. Given the breadth of the research, the paper will be able to provide commentary on the three perspectives that are the focus of the conference: the global, national and local perspectives.

Killing me softly: stories from the 'boundary spanners'

0011

A Hill 2, S Broughton 1

- 1Griffith University, Brisbane, Qld, Australia, 2James Cook University, Townsville, Qld, Australia

This paper reviews the efforts of two Queensland universities seeking to collaborate with the vocational education sector in particular TAFE. The authors, academics who have both been employed to forge and maintain university-TAFE partnerships with the VET sector, explore the rhetoric and reality of collaboration drawn from their personal experience with anecdotes from their work spanning the sectors. The paper reviews a range of policy documents that set the broad agenda for collaboration between the two sectors, examines documents from each university to review how VET and collaboration with the VET sector is positioned at each institute, and discusses the challenges and struggles in forging such links in an increasingly marketised and competitive tertiary environment. The paper argues that institutions from both sectors have not sufficiently clarified the terms of engagement, and concludes that collaboration is not a worthwhile exercise under the current terms of engagement.

Two Cultures, One Reform: Identity Formation in ACE and VET Managers

0014

A. J Foley

- University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Vocational Education and Training (VET) policy priorities are being disseminated into the Victorian Adult Education and Training (ACE) sector at a level not experienced in the past. Requirements for ACE to step inline with VET and deliver skill development programs that produce vocational outcomes are, in some cases, experiencing tensions relating to the culture and philosophical approaches of ACE delivery. Coordinators working and managing ACE organisations are being encouraged to meet policy requirements that are at odds with their traditional role.

Full Paper Presentations - by paper number as referred to in the program

The paper draws from data that explores how ACE and VET managers/coordinators are experiencing policy reform and how the central role of identity and identity change in the formation of frontline manager in VET and ACE coordinator is being understood from a separate philosophical and cultural position. The reflections and perceptions from five ACE coordinators and ten VET frontline managers are examined with the aim to better understand the working experiences and perceptions of people responsible for delivering and coordinating change in their positions within ACE and VET.

Promises but not guarantees - movement from TAFE to Higher Education in a dual sector university

0015

S Holden, R Gabb

- Victoria University, Melbourne, Australia

Many TAFE programs at Victoria University have developed articulation pathways that allow students to qualify for entry into a degree course on the basis of studies undertaken at TAFE level and they may also gain credit for their TAFE studies in the destination course. The evidence for the success or otherwise of these pathways and the degree of transparency of the articulation arrangements is largely anecdotal. This paper will discuss the outcomes of a longitudinal project conducted at Victoria University in 2005 to 2006 on the aspirations and experiences of TAFE students travelling along these pathways to higher education.

The project involved individual interviews with over 100 TAFE students and their teachers across seven disciplines in the second semester of 2005 to determine both students and teachers understanding and experience of the articulation process. In first semester 2006 the same students who have articulated will be interviewed to determine their experience of the articulation process from TAFE to higher education. Higher education lecturers will also be interviewed to provide their insights into the articulation process. It is anticipated that the research team will then conduct a similar project with international students.

The paper will provide an analysis of the processes that facilitate or hinder articulation and the success or otherwise of the articulation pathways developed within the University. It will discuss the aspirations of students and the "promise" of a pathway in a cross sector university.

Working it out: Approaches to learning in the workplace at Victoria University

0017

S Keating, D McDonald, R Gabb

- Victoria University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

This paper will present findings from an online survey on learning in the workplace practices at Victoria University (VU). Areas of good practice in the design and management of learning in the workplace activities from both TAFE and higher education sectors of VU will be highlighted.

The aim of the research was to establish baseline data on the learning in the workplace activities currently required in courses at VU from Certificate I through to postgraduate course work degrees. Data on learning in the workplace activities was collected using an online questionnaire which all unit/subject coordinators for higher education courses and program managers for all TAFE courses were requested to complete.

The findings from the research present a clear picture of the extent of learning in the workplace in VU courses and has informed our support for the implementation of a new Learning in the Workplace policy which requires all courses as they are reviewed (with some exceptions) to include a compulsory learning in the workplace component.

*****Challenging VET: using auto/biographical research to illuminate struggles for really reflexive professional learning**

0019

L West

- Canterbury Christ Church University, Canterbury, Kent, United Kingdom

This paper stems from in depth auto/biographical research into the lived experience of learning as a professional, in marginalized communities, in the United Kingdom. This is related to the crisis of professionalism and of what counts as professional knowledge, as well as managerialism and the dominance of highly instrumentalist imperatives in vocational education, to the neglect, for instance, of deeper forms of reflective practice. Ironically, research itself can provide a facilitative, reflexive learning space, in its own right, in which emotional insight develops alongside critical social and cultural awareness, biographically informed knowledge of self with understanding of the other.

*****‘I see nothing has changed’: Reshaping practitioner concerns about institutional language**

0021

L J Grace

- Faculty of Education, Deakin University, Geelong, Victoria, Australia

My PhD research revealed widespread disquiet that Training Packages are typically written in a complex and abstract institutional language form that excludes all but knowledgeable readers. Many practitioners and participants struggle to understand the units of competency they are trying to work with. In a national VET system which claims that decision making and policy development are based on consultation and research, how can this disquiet go unnoticed? This paper examines a sequence of 5 texts drawn from the review and development of the Training Package qualifications for VET practitioners. It argues that the impact of an excluding language form has been recognised and then subsumed in two separate review and development processes. When the first competency standards for workplace trainers and assessors were reviewed in 1997 much of the target population was found to lack awareness, familiarity, experience or expertise in using the standards. Yet the review is reported to have concluded that most users were satisfied with the language used in those standards. When the Training Package for Assessment and Workplace Training was reviewed in 2001 the complex language was one of the most common issues raised in unprecedented consultations and was identified as a significant accessibility issue. Yet the Training and Assessment Training Package responded by entrenching the use of this language as a compulsory assessable requirement and suggesting that individuals who have difficulty with the language may require training to improve their own (presumed deficient) language and literacy skills. Practitioner input was ‘written down’ but not ‘taken up’. The paper concludes that the concerns expressed by practitioners exposed to public critique fundamental issues about a Training Package that was a ‘lynchpin’ of the VET system and a key component of the ‘rules of the VET game’. But the concerns were reshaped and redefined in a process that was aligned to national VET policy rather than to local needs.

*****CROSSING THE LINE – Teachers as Learners : Learners as Teachers**

0022

E. J. Renshaw, G. D Mackenzie

- TAFE, South Western Sydney, Australia

This research reports the findings of an applied research project initiated by a group of teachers working as VET practitioners within Employment Preparation in TAFE NSW during 2005. The teachers decided to substantially change the way they were working by using “personalised learning” as a vehicle for moving towards a more learner centred focus. This shift involved supporting the tenets and practices personalised learning as advocated by NSW DET. The teacher’s found that, in a continually changing Vocational Education and Training (VET) context, they needed to undergo a mind shift if they were to remain relevant and capable of adapting quickly to learners with different expectations, interests, abilities, technological skills and educational needs. Teaching and learning changed rapidly as pedagogy focussed on a learner centred agenda; and teachers questioned their identities and authority in new ways. This paper conjectures that the challenge for this group of VET practitioners was to recognise that they were part of an emerging learning community within which they needed to be willing to engage as learners - not just be teachers.

*****Barriers to successful transitions from VET to HE – a case study of student pathways in early childhood education and care.**

0024

L Watson

- University of Canberra, Canberra ACT, Australia

The expectation of a “seamless” pathway through education and training, particularly between vocational and higher education, places demands on learning institutions in both sectors.

This paper examines the cross-sectoral learning pathways available to people employed in early childhood education and care (ECEC), which encompasses childcare, pre-school education and the early years of schooling. While there is a recognised pathway between the VET Diploma of Children’s Services to a university degree in early childhood or primary school teaching, students who are making the transition face a range of obstacles. Sectoral differences in approaches to learning and teaching, course delivery and curriculum and assessment means that many VET Diploma students are not adequately prepared to undertake studies in higher education. Lack of understanding of the VET system by teaching staff in universities compounds the difficulties VET graduates face in making the transition. Although credit transfer and articulation arrangements assist VET Diploma graduates to obtain admission to some universities, many students find the transition difficult due to sectoral differences in teaching and learning, and the failure of teaching staff in both sectors to recognise and accommodate them. These obstacles may contribute to the rate of attrition among VET Childcare Diploma graduates enrolled in early childhood education courses at Australian universities.

This paper argues that successful cross-sectoral transitions depend heavily on the level of understanding by teaching staff (in both sectors) of the differences between VET and HE and their willingness to cater for these differences in their programs. Institutions therefore need to look beyond credit transfer and articulation agreements if they are to facilitate successful student transitions between the sectors. Teaching staff in both sectors should be assisted to understand the differences between VET and HE and to accommodate the specific learning needs of students from another sector. Policy makers should also consider the costs of perpetuating unnecessary divisions between VET and HE and should investigate measures to reduce the differences between the sectors.

Challenging the Status Quo – skilling for emerging technologies

0026

A Averis³, C Bahari¹, G Field⁴, J Murdock², C Trood¹

- ¹TAFE, NSW, -, ²Hawkers College, Canberra, -, ³NCOVER, South Australia, -, ⁴HELLA PTY LTD, Victoria, -

The role of Vocational Education and Training in the innovation paradigm is one that has attracted significant interest and research over much of the past decade. Emerging technologies, global economics and the race for competitive advantage through new products, processes and markets has placed innovation as a key business ingredient and VET as a key player.

Over the past few years various responses to test and further develop VET's role in innovation have emerged. The complex yet critical challenge of responding to and incorporating new and emerging technologies into VET is greater than ever as skills gaps grow both locally and globally.

One such response has been the Australian Industry Group Emerging Technology Working Party of 2003 that recommended a range of actions to address the emerging technology issues and in 2005, the Emerging Technology Taskforce whose work was to implement the recommendations of the Working Party.

Within this context the paper outlines outcomes of the Taskforce activity and the ongoing challenges that face Industry and VET in developing the skills to use and develop emerging technologies.

*****Pathways from VET to higher education and the selection process**

0027

C Woodley, F Henderson, M deSensi, R Gabb

- Victoria University, Victoria, Australia

The TAFE/higher education interface is a growing interface and one that is expected to continue to grow. For a decade we have heard State and National calls for more accessible pathways across educational systems, qualification linkages through the AQF and a national system of credit transfer between VET and higher education. Even so, figures of VET to higher education articulation are not healthy in Victoria or, more specifically, at Victoria University (VU) – a dual sector institution.

Reasons offered anecdotally at VU to explain problems of TAFE to higher education articulation in some areas include the idea that TAFE students are academically unprepared, Training Packages serve a different purpose to higher education curriculum, areas in higher education have seen either increases in demand or decreases of load.

This paper argues, however, that selection practices in higher education play a vital role in the selection or rejection of VET students. Often, the results of selection are evident but the practice of selection is not: the selection process itself has escaped interrogation in the call for improved inter-sectoral pathways.

The project team interviewed a range of selection officers in each faculty to examine how they dealt with the various selection mechanisms. Selection officers were asked to discuss selection criteria, the timing of decisions, 'reading' supplementary forms, the demands of VTAC and how applicants from VET could enhance their prospects of selection.

This paper makes a number of recommendations for both sectors to consider including the need for more cross-sectoral curriculum design. The study is currently informing a comprehensive review of admissions policy and procedures at Victoria University.

*****A profile of men's sheds in Australia: patterns, purposes, profiles and experiences of participants: some implications for ACE and VET about engaging older men. 0028**

Barry Golding

- University of Ballarat, Ballarat, Australia

There has been a very recent 'grassroots' proliferation of a diverse range of spaces for men in community contexts in Australia that are generally known as 'men's sheds'. This paper briefly explores the recently determined distribution of men's sheds across Australia and some of the rationales for their establishment. It particularly draws on recent findings from surveys of men's sheds in Victoria to begin to develop a typology of men's sheds and a profile of men who participate in them. The paper includes consideration what participants say they learn and experience as a consequence of their participation. These recent research findings from spaces and programs that cater deliberately and specifically for particular groups of older men and their diverse needs have the potential to inform both the VET and ACE sectors on what might be done to attract older men that otherwise might not 'enrol' in 'courses' in more formal education or training settings. The paper is considered timely in the context of debates about the extent and nature of engagement of men and boys in education and training. Some of the spin offs from men's sheds in terms of men's health and well being are also outlined in the paper. The research on which the paper is based forms part of a broader research strategy funded by the Adult Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board in Victoria to encourage more men in ACE. It also includes some early insights from in-progress national research into men's learning spaces and program – including men's sheds in Australia for NCVET.

Vocational Learning Zones – Links, Pods and Hubs

0029

T. Knack¹, J. Bell²

- Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE, Townsville, Queensland, Australia

This paper proposes an educational concept for the delivery of vocational education by Barrier Reef Institute of TAFE. It proposes an individualised learning environment that encompasses the needs of community and industry and is in tune with the economic development of the Townsville and Thuringowa regions. These environments are named Vocational Learning Zones. Vocational Learning Zones are community based and may be in partnership with other enterprises. The TAFE presence being distributed into areas of growth and development, growing and evolving with the community by providing vocational learning as needed in spaces that have been termed VetLinks, VetPods, VetSims and VetHubs. The concept is technically based using the rapid growth of communication technologies such as broadband and wireless, and their infrastructure as enablers for the distribution of services, learning content and support into a geographically distributed area. Such communication technology can enable the best instruction in a vocational field to be available no matter where the respective physical locations of teacher and learner. The concept also involves novel approaches to curriculum design and an exploration of the relationship between learning spaces and learning activities.

*****The ladder system works well enough: Perspectives of policy and power elites about student pathways in post-secondary education and training in WA**

0030

C F Buckley

- The University of WA & WA Department of Education & Training, Perth WA, Australia

Strategies to address changes in demand for post-secondary education and training, especially within the context of lifelong learning, tend to focus on articulated pathways and effective cross-sectoral links. These traditional linear pathways 'as conceived by policy-makers' (Schofield 2002; p150) no longer apply, and changing patterns of student participation in post-secondary education and training have been the focus of significant attention both in Australia and internationally.

A significant body of literature argues that from a student perspective, institutional or sectoral boundaries have little meaning as students increasingly transfer in all directions. This includes patterns of reverse transfer (Golding 1994) and lateral transfer (Palmer 1999), and movement in and out of vocational and academic programs and institutions as students use tertiary institutions in their own ways to meet their needs as they gather the combinations of skills, knowledge and qualifications they need for career pathways.

Further to this, these changing patterns of student movement have also been described as 'churning and fluctuation' (Goldrick-Rab 2004; p6) and 'like leaves in the wind' (Townsend 1995; p5). This 'consumer-oriented approach to taking

courses' (Johnstone et al 2002; p3) in what is described as 'the post-secondary shopping mall' (Schwartz 2004 as quoted in Goldrick-Rab 2004; p10) has been the focus of significant attention in international and national literature. However, the policy focus in WA remains on uni-linear vertical pathways from TAFEWA to university.

This paper presents perspectives of policy and power elites about student pathways in post-secondary education and training in WA. It represents one of the findings from a research study that examined the perspectives of policy and power elites about degree-awarding status for TAFEWA.

*****Deconstruction, Confusion and Frequency: Surveying Technology Use by Vocational Teachers**

0031

I Robertson

- RMIT University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

This paper reports on a survey of the use of online technology by VET teachers and compares the survey method with similar research. While there is some comparison of results from similar surveys, this is not the central concern of the paper.

It is argued that surveys into the adoption of technology for teaching and learning require the deconstruction of the functionalities of the technology in terms that are relevant to the respondent group. The use of general and ill-defined terms such as online learning and e-learning are ineffective in providing meaningful data on the uptake of technology for teaching and learning. My second contention is that surveys should provide an option for the respondent to indicate that they are either not sure or do not understand the question. Finally, I contend that effective surveying of technology for teaching and learning should collect data related to the frequency with which the respondent uses the specific functionality. In the absence of such data it is not possible to determine if the use is a novel experience that has not been repeated or the use of the functionality in a systematic manner.

*****Transforming skills: popular music, adult education and learning for social change** 0032

J Haycock, D Anderson

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Contemporary music has played a significant role in shaping the social and cultural history of the last half of the 20th century, and has provided a source of informal adult learning that has led to social change. However, its role in formal adult learning and education is largely under-theorised and under-researched. Given both the prominence of popular music as a cultural form in contemporary mass culture, and the overtly political nature of protest music, the relative lack of interest in its role and influence in processes of social change is rather surprising. This paper explores the educative power of contemporary music – defined as any popular (and not so popular) music that has received radio and later television airplay – and its role in social change. To this end, popular music is first contextualised in the mass media-dominated, modern world. Its ability to motivate and inspire adults to question, challenge and confront authority, and act on and redress social injustices and inequalities is then examined from a historical perspective. Whilst, as Berger (2000) argues, its potential use as a tool in formal educational settings remains largely unexplored, learning through contemporary music is examined in both informal and formal adult education contexts as learning for social change and, in its most powerful form, as a catalyst for conscientization (Freire, 1970). As it has done in the past with its power to overturn official versions of 'truth' by offering a critical perspective on issues presented in the global media, it is argued that contemporary music can be used by adult educators and trainers to empower learners to initiate and participate in processes of social change.

Building a VET pedagogy: what we can learn from Certificate IV courses

0033

M Simons

- University of South Australia, South Australia, Australia,

Much of the literature on VET professional development has been descriptive, focusing on the development, construction and outcomes of a range of initiatives. A smaller body of work has analysed the nature and extent of initial and on-going professional development either generally in VET or in particular aspects of training reform such as competency-based training and on-line learning. However, there has been little critical analysis of the curricula (learning pathways) that inform one of the most common initial VET teacher/trainer development programs, the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training, which has been delivered since 1998 and will continue to be delivered till late 2006, and became a requirement for VET practitioners under the Australian Quality Training Framework from 2002. While the qualification has been heavily critiqued little empirical research has been carried out on curricular and pedagogical issues associated with its delivery.

This paper addresses this gap. It presents the outcomes of research that adopted a constructively critical stance in examining ways in which learners and processes of learning are constructed, understood and embedded in developmental pathways that lead to attainment of the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training. The study involved 16 case studies of registered training organisations that deliver this Certificate. The paper pays particular attention to the ways in which these sites are contributing to the promotion of greater opportunities for VET teachers and trainers to enhance flexibility in provision and engagement of diverse groups of learners. A brief discussion will be included on the replacement Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, the way its implementation is preceding at present, and the implications of the findings of the research study for the ways in which the new Certificate IV might be examined.

Record keeping and the Food Safety Program in Small Hospitality businesses in Victoria: Influences of workplace culture and training.

0034

J Eden-Jones

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Vocational Education and Training (VET) plays an integral role in providing the hospitality industry with the food safety skills and knowledge to operate their small businesses in the complex environment they face. However in Victoria VET has been criticised for not providing the relevant skills and knowledge needed in a business to put into practice food safety systems and processes so they can meet the Food safety regulations.

In particular record keeping for the food safety program in small hospitality businesses in Victoria is a problem. The training undertaken by the Food Safety Supervisor has been partially to blame for the low level of compliance to record keeping because the training lacks emphasis on record keeping, particularly in a practical, work specific context.

Workplace culture plays a significant role in both creating an environment which supports food safety program record keeping practices, and creating a workplace which values learning by providing opportunities for new and newly training staff to apply their food safety knowledge in the workplace. This paper provides an insight into the small hospitality businesses workplace culture and suggests that a lack of management skills in small hospitality businesses contributes to workplace cultures that do not specifically support practical application of skills and knowledge related to food safety compliance.

Record keeping for the food safety program in Victorian small hospitality businesses is contingent on the VET providing the correct skills and knowledge needed for compliance, the workplace culture supporting transference of these skills and knowledge and practical application in the workplace, and the business having adequate motivation to comply with the legislation through enforcement activities.

An Exploration of TAFE Institutes as Learning Organisations

0035

Jayne Pitard

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TAFE institutes operate in a world where the nature of work is changing rapidly, demanding flexibility, greater knowledge and a higher level of skills. Educational institutions are in the process of adapting to these demands with an acknowledgement that their graduate students must demonstrate the attributes of lifelong learning. The responses of TAFE institutes include research initiatives, a greater emphasis on outcome-based learning, a revision of assessment procedures and reviews of curriculum. TAFE institutes are also responding to the impacts of global change and the emerging knowledge economy by embracing the concept of the learning organization and making policy shifts to reflect their aspiration to move towards this concept. There is a convergence between the notion of 'lifelong learning' and the notion of 'the learning organization' in the recognition that workers and professionals need to learn and develop continually in the context of their workplace, rather than simply through a series of outside courses. However, whereas TAFE institutes are introducing policies in relation to learning organizations, and are beginning to focus training around the notion of lifelong learning for their students, there appears to be a gap between the idea and reality in relation to their own staff. Awareness of the shift in policy and the aspiration towards becoming a learning organization should infiltrate at every echelon of a TAFE institute for this policy shift to succeed. According to Marsick and Watkins, "No one person working alone ... can implement what is needed to create a learning organization" (Marsick and Watkins 1999). This paper draws on research as part of my PhD with data collected from senior and middle managers, and TAFE teachers at two TAFE institutes. Preliminary data analysis reveals a gap between the vision at the top and the reality in the wider teacher cohort. This paper seeks to describe the research being undertaken and to discuss the implications of preliminary data analysis.

*****Literacies @work: Professional development in an organizational learning system 0036**

R. E. Harreveld

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This paper explores the effects of changing technologies, demographics and community expectations at the learning-work interface. Over the course of the twentieth century, the economies of Western nations such as Australia have moved from a mass production, industrial workforce to a white-collar and service workforce. In the twenty-first century, 'knowledge' – its creation and its management – is evolving as a new currency for workers in global marketplaces. For new knowledge workers, the acquisition and deployment of multiple literacies is essential for their very survival.

To contextualize this engagement with the notion of literacies at work, emergent findings from research undertaken during the implementation of a recent workplace literacy course are presented. The course was conducted with a group of seven vocational educators working for an organisation in the health services sector. Operating as they do at the vortex of change within their organisation, these educators grappled with the changing knowledge and performance-based demands of curriculum documents, their colleagues-as-learners, themselves as learners and teachers, and community expectations.

The research project reported in this paper offers a futures-oriented approach to professional development that utilises conceptual and methodological tools related to knowledge management, action learning and discourse analysis. It engages with questions related to language, literacy and numeracy knowledge and skills utilised by the educators when designing learning activities for their colleagues-as-students. The main data gathering and analysis approach is interpretive and qualitative. The findings identify insights the educators bring to the development and enhancement of their colleagues' reading, writing, thinking, problem solving, critically analytic and interpretive abilities, as well as their mathematical, technical and technological understandings. Finally, the paper will discuss the ways in which this course could become integral to the policies and business practices of the organisation and thus fundamental to growing the workforce capabilities of health service professionals in new times.

*****Addressing the Workforce Performance Requirements of the Post-Industrial Workplace.**

0038

PT Brady

- NSW TAFE, NSW, Australia

This paper is part of a Ph.D. thesis undertaken at Macquarie University. A transformation of the Australian TEVT system took place in response to a perceived need for a highly skilled workforce to drive an internationally competitive economy. This transformation however has been undertaken without fully defining the performance requirements of the post-industrial workforce. Without such a definition, it is difficult to fully evaluate the effectiveness of the transformation and address improvement. This paper addresses what this performance is. A starting point was adopting a concept of performance. A range of concepts exist each of which leads to different definitions of performance. As significant criticism existed from many researchers about the behaviourist concept of performance generally called competence, this study adopted a concept of performance termed capability modified from a concept developed by Professor John Stephenson in the UK. The modified concept addressed a range of perspectives about performance. The study explored the nature of the post-industrial workplace from literature and deduced a set of attributes that are required by workers. Using a modification to a framework developed by Peter Kearns, the attributes required for the post-industrial workplace were arranged under the parameters of the framework. This framework was used to ensure that a definition of post-industrial capability was holistic in nature to satisfy the concept of capability. The overall framework produced is termed post-industrial capability. The definition of post-industrial capability provides a useful benchmark to measure not only the performance of the Australian TEVT system including its elements such as Training Packages but also any improvements to this system.

*****No Small Changing: VET Research Policy and Directions in Australia 1994-2005 0039**

P Kell

- University of Wollongong, NSW, Australia

This paper describes the development of VET research in Australia since the 1994 publication of No Small Change (McDonald et al). This report commissioned by the Vocational Education, Employment and Training Advisory Committee (VEETAC) identified the nature of VET research at the time and indicated a direction for VET research and development.

The paper documents and describes the development of national research strategy as a consequence of this report and reforms in VET in Australia. The role of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) and the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) in developing a national VET research agenda is discussed. The paper explores the

shifts and changes that emerged in the period from 1994-2005 when ANTA was abolished and the Federal government developed the Skilling Australia reform agenda.

The paper argues that the Australian VET research environment has featured strong direction and intervention from the Federal government in period of vigorous reform in VET sector generally. The paper describes the features of a "state driven" research agenda and makes some judgements on the successes and challenges that emerge from the Australian experience.

The paper also documents the emergence and the changing role of the Australian Vocational Education and Training Research (AVETRA) as a professional association of VET researchers and explores the role that AVETRA might occupy in the future.

*****Australian enterprises' use of apprenticeships and traineeships to meet specific labour shortages**

0040

E Smith

- Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia

When enterprises decide to employ apprentices and trainees they do so as alternatives to other forms of labour, such as already-skilled workers or unskilled workers who will not be offered contracts of training. In their decisions, particularly in the increasingly tight Australian labour market, they will consider specific labour shortages which may be at the entry level or may be at more senior levels, and they think about whether apprenticeships and traineeships may help to meet those shortages either immediately or in the future. This paper uses a number of case studies carried out as part of an international research project to examine this decision-making process and the reasons that employers give for placing their trust in the New Apprentice system to attract and develop the right sort of worker to meet their current or projected shortages.

Authenticity, identity and artistry: Practising VET in the Free Market Jungle.

0042

P J Waterhouse, R Townsend

- Workplace Learning Initiatives Pty Ltd, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Recent VET research calls for 'shifting mindsets' (Harris et al 2004); 'constructive alignment' for changing pedagogy (Chappell 2003); new 'hybrid forms of professional practice' (Waterhouse et al. 2005); new identities (Falk & Balatti 2003) and 'new social partnerships' (Seddon & Billett 2004). VET practitioners may feel they are being called upon to be all things to all people. The complex recipe for contemporary VET practice in Australia includes a mix of educational philosophies and theories; multiple sets of values and beliefs underpinning practice; government policies driving provision; and the economic and political imperatives of the 'free-market' shaping global, national and local identities. If we believe that an adequate vocation entails more than skills; that VET ought to be about building capacity, social capital and alternative futures; and that our work ought to be ethical and authentic; then how might we best navigate the field and construct our practice? How might research help, and what models, frames or guiding lights are there to show the way?

The authors are experienced VET practitioner-researchers. This paper draws on their practice and a substantial body of research, much of it their own, through both independent academic and commissioned studies. The paper explores the challenges and the potential for new identities of professional practice in VET and it invites dialogue about what constitutes good and authentic practice in the praxis of vocational education.

New Zealand Industry Training Organisations' contribution to the supply of and demand for skills

0043

T O Fraser

- Industry Training Federation, Wellington, New Zealand

New Zealand's Industry Training Organisations (ITOs) inherited a new legislative role in 2002. In addition to setting skill standards and arranging training, ITOs are now required to provide skills leadership for their industries. For many ITOs, this is seen as a formalisation of what they have already been doing, for others this has broadened their mandate.

The language of leadership provides ITOs with an opportunity to examine and have a say on how the education sector responds to the skill needs of their industries, and to influence individual workplaces to ensure New Zealand businesses are best able to use skills effectively.

Full Paper Presentations - by paper number as referred to in the program

ITOs are intimately involved in working with businesses to seek, develop and use skill within their industry context. ITOs are increasingly bundling education services with: industry recruitment services to overcome labour and skill shortages; good practice guides; networking business with the wider tertiary and secondary education systems; diversity enhancement programmes and other initiatives to attract and develop non-traditional labour sources for industries.

Each ITO has adopted a different approach to meeting their leadership mandate, depending on what their industries require. For some this involves extensive formal research, others combine informal consultation with trialling of new approaches. One of the implications of these activities is that the current policy settings are no longer well aligned with the role that Industry Training Organisations play for their industries. This presentation will focus on how Industry Training Organisations have interpreted their leadership role: how this is changing their contribution to the demand and supply of skills, and the implications for industry training policy.

*****Characteristics of Communities of Practice: Would the real Community of Practice please stand up!**

0044

IH Falk, J Guenther

- Charles Darwin University, Darwin, NT, Australia

This paper presents findings of research into teachers' vocational learning using professional development experiences in two schools in Darwin, Northern Territory. Part of the Northern Territory government's 'Building better schools' initiative is about establishing Communities of Practice they call 'Professional Learning Communities' (PLCs) to enable teachers to develop and share models of best practice through Territory-wide communities of practice. The paper explores teachers' perceptions of professional development (PD) in terms of what is effective for them. It attempts to determine whether these professional learning experiences include elements of professional learning communities. It therefore informs the discussion around the implementation of the 'Building better schools' initiative and for the theory and practice of the research about communities of practice by providing an indication of the breadth of PD experiences of staff and their likely acceptance of PLC models. For perhaps the first time ever, evidence is presented for the scope and nature of the characteristics that differentiate traditional models from PLC models, which may then be used as benchmarks for assessing the 'fit' of programs that may be recommended for funding. There are implications for the professional development of VET staff as well as for national and state policy bodies concerned with the effectiveness of PD in enabling change.

*****Partners in practice: Does the national VET rhetoric connect with community reality?**

0045

J Guenther, A Arnott, I Falk

- Charles Darwin University, Darwin, NT, Australia

The traditional views of Adult and Community Education (ACE) and Vocational Education and Training (VET) are such that the former is seen to be informal for personal and community benefit and the latter is considered to be more formal, accredited training with a vocational/employment outcome in mind. However, there is often an overlap between the two sectors and indeed partnerships often form around the two sectors for specific purposes.

A team from Charles Darwin University have conducted a project funded by NCVET that focuses on the ways in which ACE and VET sectors can and do work together for common outcomes in the northern Australian context. The outcomes could be described generally under the banner of 'community capacity building', which encompass a broad range of social, economic, and educational objectives—meeting the needs of industries, communities, organisations and individuals. In particular the emphasis of the project is on the impact of and potential for collaboration and cooperation between the two sectors with a particular emphasis on outcomes that result from partnerships formed.

The paper presents findings from two sites: the Bowen Basin in Queensland and West Arnhem in the Northern Territory. There is a strong indication that a number of practice principles apply to sustainable VET/ACE partnerships. These relate to leadership, the nature of relationships and partner roles, the determination of needs and resourcing of programs. While these general practice principles were found to apply to both sites, the unique context of each location also determined the outcomes of the VET/ACE partnerships that were found. This is not just a 'good news story' but rather illustrates, using specific case examples, how collaboration between VET and community/government/industry partners both succeed or fail depending on the nature of the partnerships.

*****Reframing adult literacy and numeracy: A social capital perspective**

0046

S Black, J Balatti, I Falk

- NSW TAFE, James Cook University, Charles Darwin University, Sydney, NSW, Australia

This qualitative study investigates the capacity of stand-alone adult literacy and numeracy outcomes to produce social capital outcomes and assesses the value of such outcomes. By social capital we mean 'networks, together with shared norms, values and understandings which facilitate cooperation within or amongst groups' (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] 2004, p.5). The study also identifies the pedagogical practices that seem to be the most relevant to social capital production and concludes with implications for both pedagogy and the framing of outcomes reporting. The study found that almost 80% of the students interviewed experienced social capital outcomes from participation in adult literacy and numeracy courses. These outcomes mainly came about from changes in network structures and from changes in network transactions. Among other findings, this paper reports that adult literacy and numeracy courses produce social capital outcomes as well as human capital outcomes. Student characteristics such as English speaking background, Indigeneity and age impact on the type of social capital outcomes experienced. In addition, technical skill outcomes often require social capital outcomes as a pre-requisite or co-requisite in order to be acquired and/or to be applied. Finally but importantly, social capital outcomes are found to have a role in the impact that participation in adult literacy and numeracy courses has on the socio-economic well-being of the participant and/or the community.

**Developing Learner Capability Through Action Research:
From Pedagogy to Heutagogy in the Workplace**

0047

S Hase, T Boon Hou, E Goh

- Southern Cross University, Lismore, NSW, Australia

There is a considerable body of evidence demonstrating that action research is an effective approach to creating change in organisations. What is less well described in a systematic way is the effect of the action research journey on the researcher. This paper is based on the experience of a number of doctoral students who were undertaking action research projects in their organisation which involved major change initiatives. We found that action researchers moved from being pedagogical learners through a stage of andragogical learning to finally become self-determined learners (heutagogical). In effect using action research helped these quite senior managers and consultants to become more capable learners. We hypothesise from these findings and the available evidence from these experiences that this may have very positive effects on their overall management capability. This three stage model of development also provides a structure that educators can use to develop the capability of action researcher.

*****Making choices: Exploring influences on post-school career pathways**

0048

AM Green, E Smith

- Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, Australia

Research into school students and their experiences of the world of work, both during their school years and the first few years post school, has offered some insights in to some of the factors influencing the decisions young people make about their career options and pathways. Qualitative findings suggest that each individual has a unique story and blend of circumstances which produce the outcome in terms of pathway choices. However, the research also offers some valuable insights into the types of experiences, guidance and support that young people could find more useful in terms of finding out more about the realities of career and study options and possibilities. This paper will explore some of the data from a series of three projects which investigated the nature and extent of school student's engagement in workplaces, one of which looked specifically at school-based new apprentices, whilst the third one followed participant volunteers two or three years after they had left school.

*****Following through: Longitudinal research into new VET in School teachers with an industry background**

0049

A M Green

- Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia

This paper will present some of the findings from a four year longitudinal study into a group of teachers who have made a career change from an extensive industry background to a career teaching technology subjects and VET in schools courses in rural and regional schools in NSW. The research explored the effects of the background and the accelerated teacher training program of these teacher's orientation to the world of schools. Are these teachers acting as agents of change in the schools to which they are posted? Many of the participants in the study expressed a desire to make a difference as their major reason for changing careers. Further down the track, is this vision becoming a reality or are they overwhelmed by the reality and demands of teaching, often in quite remote or 'hard to staff' schools? The researcher has used biographical data, phone and emailed conversations as well as school site visits to attempt to capture some of the realities of school life for these teachers, with a particular focus on their attitudes and approaches to learning and teaching.

*****Negotiating a VET Teacher Education Practicum in Rural and Isolated Areas.**

0050

P J Ellicott

- Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, Australia

Students enrolled in VET teacher education courses at Universities are required to undertake practicums as part of their study program. Practicums are a vital component in education courses and their role is explored through relevant literature, particularly in the VET area. Most students contact their local TAFE College, Community College or one of a number of Registered Training Organisations to organise a practicum placement. The biggest problem faced is negotiating suitable times and relevant classes to work with.

To Rural and Isolated students this presents a much greater challenge. To these students, an isolated area can mean any location where there are no TAFE facilities, or they operate on a part time basis, with very limited courses. There may be no Community College presence and no Registered Training Organisations.

This paper explores the options open to students and attempts to identify ways in which Universities can assist them to secure and undertake their practicums.

This issue was researched through a questionnaire sent to all rural and isolated students enrolled in the two practicum subjects in the VET teacher education courses at Charles Sturt University.

*****Globalisation, training packages and private providers: emerging tensions in national VET policy**

0054

DL Anderson

- Monash University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

As globalisation erodes the traditional powers of nation-states, governments have increasingly relied on education and training to bolster national comparative advantage. In Australia, governments have sought to enhance the productivity and international competitiveness of domestic enterprises by, inter alia, developing an industry-driven training system and national market for vocational education and training (VET), most recently via the creation of the National Training Framework (NTF) and standardised Training Packages. Through an examination of research on the impact of Training Packages and the NTF on Australian private fee-for-service providers, this paper explores emerging tensions between the conflicting forces and trajectories of globalisation and national VET policy. Such tensions raise questions about the logic and sustainability of national VET policy in the face of globalisation.

*****It's all about Relationships: how can institutions better support Indigenous students?**

0055

H Spiers

- Charles Darwin University, Darwin, Australia

This study, a doctorate in its final stages, describes both the institutional and community support structures and applied strategies considered essential by Indigenous students for their ongoing success at tertiary level. The study records the perceptions of Indigenous VET Health Worker students across three institutional case study sites in the Northern Territory. It is an exciting project because it is the voices of the students you will hear in this presentation.

The paper examines some of the results to date concerning personal relationships and how these will inform current institutional support policies and practice concerning Indigenous students. It is expected that the conclusions drawn from the study can be broadened and applied to Indigenous students in all avenues of tertiary study.

*****Transitional Learning in the workplace: a current white-collar indulgence or a future norm for all workers?**

0056

J. A. Willis, D Anderson

- Monash University, Clayton, Victoria, Australia

Managing change is an axiomatic reality in contemporary workplaces, as are the pressures to constantly improve corporate, and some may argue public sector, performance. Change management is a commonly used phrase which has its place, but also has shortcomings.

In this paper, I argue that there is a need to broaden the scope of change management from its narrow focus on the economic performance of a corporation to one that embraces the human element associated with change. I use the term 'Transition Learning' to develop a theme around the human factors associated with change. Transitional Learning embraces the psychological, economic and social well being of the individual during periods of transition, such as redeployment within an existing organization, redundancy, or indeed promotion or transfer across traditional functional boundaries. Currently, however, Transitional Learning is offered only to white-collar workers (typically managerial staff) in large organizations, such as multi-national corporations and the major banks, and generally takes the fairly narrow form of Outplacement Counselling.

This paper examines the effects of organisational change on individuals by way of a literature review and analysis of empirical evidence gathered during interviews with employees who have been affected by change over careers that often span twenty-five years. It argues that as the pace of change accelerates, a new mindset must be developed to accept change as the norm, and with it the need to support all workers affected by workplace change. In effect, Transitional Learning must become embedded in all organizational learning curricula, and available to all workers undergoing significant career-related transitions.

Research in the Middle: The link between issues and action in equity and access

0057

M Fernbach, H Kimberley

- Equity Research Centre, Melbourne, - Dr Madeline Fernbach & Dr Helen Kimberley, Equity Research Centre, Melbourne

Equity and access research, like other VET research, is commissioned for an assortment of reasons and purposes by a variety of sponsors. Arguably, its primary purpose is creation of change in government policy and in provider culture. The research itself occupies different positions and performs different functions on the journey from endoconcept to application. This paper explores a number of questions relating to why research is commissioned; what the relationship is between the research trigger and the speed of change; what happens to research when it is completed; who the gatekeepers of equity and access are; and how much research is enough (for change to be mandated). Through an analysis of research and implementation projects conducted by the Equity Research Centre over the last five years, this paper examines the role of research in bringing about changes in learner equity and access in VET policies, systems and practices in Victoria.

The 21st Century, the Competency Era and the Competency Theory

0058

H Azemikhah

- Central Queensland University, Rockhampton/Qld, Australia

This paper argues that while the 20th century witnessed the closing of the Contents Era, that placed more emphasis on the contents of the courses, the 21st century started during the early decades of the Competency Era in progressive education where the emphasis was stretched to include all the constituents of competence and not only the contents. This paper further argues that in the Competency Era new theories, such as Competency Theory, are required to provide the theoretical understanding for such a shift in emphasis.

In this context, the Competency Theory that is comprised of two stages was proposed in December 2005 at the 13th Annual International Conference in Post Compulsory Education in Australia. The paper by revisiting the Competency Theory explores its application to VET in 21st century.

Implementing Training Packages: Opening the black box on the Non-endorced component by Ronald Charles Barrow

0059

R Barrow, D Anderson

- 1 Swinburne University, Melbourne, Australia, 2 Monash University, Melbourne, Australia

Almost a decade since the introduction of Training Packages, training providers are struggling to implement them. Many of the difficulties that providers are experiencing can be traced to two problems; the inconsistency in the structure of different Training Packages and the impact that flexible delivery has on their management. Structural differences of Training Packages such as, the size and complexity of competencies and the construction of a qualification under the packaging rules, create problems for the administrative processes and procedures required to manage the delivery. ANTA's policy for Training Packages to be flexible means that providers must cater for different client demands which in turn demands very different methods of delivery. When delivery models are dissected such as RPL/RCC, workplace training and off-the-job training it becomes clear that they require distinctly different implementation and administration systems and support to ensure they are effective. The various flexible approaches require that individuals involved in implementation be multi-skilled as trainers, administrators, assessors, negotiators, and teachers. The structural differences between Training Packages from various industries, and the degree of flexibility expected of Training Packages, confuse implementers and create a complexity that is difficult to manage. Policy makers introducing further regulation serves only to contribute to the complexities of an already over regulated education system. The author suggests that for Training Packages to be successful, training providers are faced with compromises and a multiplicity of administration in order to implement them and provide the degree of flexibility required by ANTA's policies. This paper calls on previous research into the operation and implementation of Training Packages and, in the absence of published research presents the authors positioning as a critically reflective practitioner engaged in action research to present a training providers perspective.

Fasten seat belts! Armchair travelling through current issues in the economics of education and training.

0060

G Burke, c Shah, M Long, F Ferrier

- CEET, Monash University, Victoria, -

This symposium will explore current issues in the economics of education and training that are the subject of research in Australia and overseas. These issues include:

Financing and regulating VET

labour market change and its implications

Skilled migration, work and VET

Young people, education and work – transitions and combinations

Demographic change, older people, work and training

Papers will explore the latest Australian data, look to international comparisons, and highlight the significant issues for future developments in VET.

Papers will be presented by staff from the Monash University-ACER Centre for the Economics of Education and Training (CEET) and other contributors.

Generic Skills: What's the point?

0061

G Hawke

- OVAL Research, UTS, Sydney, NSW, Australia

Australia, like most of the world's developed economies, has been focused on developing "generic skills" in its workforce for most of the last decade. However, there has never been any serious discussion in Australia of just what these ideas encompass nor of what useful purposes — within an education and training system — these notions might have.

This paper examines the concept and concludes that it is used with a widely differing range of meanings and that many of these conflict. Moreover, it argues that some of these meanings might find useful application in employment contexts but have little or no useful value within education. The paper concludes by arguing that it is central to the purposes of vocational education that clarity is reached on what educational purposes the notion can, or should, serve.

*****The emergence of learning and development in Australian enterprises.**

0062

A Smith

- Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia

There is a strong and persistent belief in Australian training policy circles that Australia is a poor performer by international standards in the provision of training. This view is particularly strongly held in relation to enterprise training where it is commonly assumed that Australian employers chronically under invest in the training of their employees and show little inclination to increase their training effort in response to government initiatives. Much of this belief is based on the results of successive surveys of employer training expenditure in Australia and some notoriously unreliable international comparative data. This paper explores some of these assumptions about employers and employer training from the standpoint of the qualitative data that has been collected in three research projects over the last 10 years and questions the view that employers are in a state of flight from their commitments to training.

*****Adult learning for sustainable development: a review of current trends and future developments in work-related learning**

0063

C J Gallagher, D L Anderson

- Monash University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

Environmental damage, due to the effects of modern production and development practices and everyday human activities, is emerging as the overarching, critical issue facing all nations and societies around the world. Reliable and respected indicators of human impact on the natural environment suggest that the Earth's resources are being consumed at a faster rate than they can be replenished. An increasing array of prominent national and international bodies are initiating strategies, research agenda, and actions for environmentally sustainable development in an effort to establish and maintain a balance between environmental protection, economic development, and social equity. Research suggests that success in attaining that balance will require not just modified production practices and organisational change, but also fundamental and durable economic, political, and socio-cultural change.

This paper examines the influence that adult educators and trainers can, and do, have in facilitating such change, particularly in the critical area of work-related training, and considers the roles and responsibilities of adult learning and development as both an instrument and agent for education for sustainability (EfS). Based on extensive documentary research and critical analysis of policy statements and research reports, this paper synthesises material from a wide range of sources in order to assess and critique the current state of EfS with respect to work-related learning. The key principles guiding adult learning and development in EfS are discussed, and major trends, developments, issues and barriers concerning EfS in work-related learning are reviewed. In conclusion, the paper explores future implications for adult educators and trainers, and potentially fruitful approaches for promoting EfS in work-related learning.

*****The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning and young people in TAFE: A welcome challenge or weary acceptance?**

0064

B L Pritchard, D L Anderson

- Monash University, Melbourne, Australia

Over the past decade or so, federal and state governments have introduced a number of policies and programs to address the needs of early school leavers in an effort to increase retention rates in post-compulsory education and training, and improve young people's career and employment prospects. One such initiative is the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL), which was implemented on a statewide basis in the Victorian vocational education and training (VET) sector, including Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes, from 2003. The VCAL aims to provide potential early school leavers and disengaged young people with an attractive, vocationally-oriented alternative to the academic senior school certificate.

With the roll-out of the VCAL program, TAFE institutes have been experiencing an influx of young learners for whom most mainstream programs and teachers have not traditionally catered. Many of the young people entering VCAL programs in TAFE have had prior negative experiences of schooling, and have also often been disengaged from formal education and training for some time. Conversely, most TAFE teachers have had little, if any, prior experience of working with this new student cohort. To date, however, there has been little research into the impact and implications of VCAL implementation from the perspective of TAFE institutes and their staff.

This paper examines the introduction of the VCAL in TAFE, and the challenges and issues that it poses, in particular for TAFE teachers. It is based on an analysis of existing research and also new data drawn from interviews with teaching and support staff at a large metropolitan TAFE institute. The paper suggests that if the VCAL is to be delivered effectively on an ongoing basis in TAFE, a number of significant issues relating to funding and teacher support and development need to be addressed.

The new Tolpuddle Martyrs: VET practitioners and practice in the new industrial relations of training

0068

R.E. Pickersgill

- Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, Australia

The new (December 2005) WorkChoices Act will radically restructure the employment relationship in Australia from collectively negotiated agreements supported by the industrial powers of the Constitution to individual employment contracts under the Corporations powers. Given the linkage of VET to employment, this will have major but currently unrecognised implications. These include further occupational fragmentation and a new emphasis on firm specific training.

The current national system grew out of tripartite negotiations intended to link skill formation to structural reform. During 'award restructuring' the aim was to link a high skill/high wage labour force to national and portable credentials. By the early 1990s many of the original aims had been lost with the introduction of non-union enterprise bargaining and the imposition of quasi-market models, however the new industrial order will replace collective industrial law with contract law. This marks the de facto rejection by the federal government and large business of the high skill/high pay objectives of the original Training Reform Agenda.

The paper discusses the effect on the VET sector. First it examines the shift from an occupationally based skills development approach embedded in the industrial powers to the individualistic contract and job-based skills approach implied by the Corporations powers. Second, it discusses potential social and economic effects of a training system oriented to job- and task-based rather than occupation-based training demand. Third, it looks at the implications for VET institutions and staff of the likely funding and industrial pressure that will be imposed.

Given the strong correlation between permanent employment, training access and wage outcomes, further fragmentation of employment and training is likely exacerbate skill shortages and to increase income and opportunity dispersal between a new 'core' and an enlarged 'peripheral' workforce.

VET history has a past: does it have a future?

0069

R.E. Pickersgill, P. Rushbrook

- Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia

The historian Eric Hobsbawm once famously remarked that 'the first thing that historians learn is that no-one ever learns from history'. The statement was tongue-in-cheek, a wry observation of human behaviour and a caution against the application of simplistic historical analogy to explain events. The historical lesson is not narrative and explanation as a repetition of tragedy and farce, but rather that the present is a contingent product of the past. An historical consciousness supports deep understanding of our origins and supports a critical platform from which to address our futures.

This paper has two broad aims. The first is to raise questions and sketch areas of significance identified by a growing number of VET researchers interested in or directly involved with the writing of VET history. What, for example are the traditions associated with the purposes of VET? The amelioration of disadvantage? Nation building? Citizenship? Is VET restricted to instrumental outcomes? What has been involved in the provision of VET? How has the production and reproduction of skilled labour reflected the social and organisational division of labour? The Implications of VET organisation and administration? Engagement with local industry and communities? Indeed, does the recent invention of the term 'VET' itself limit our understanding of what is encompassed by technical, vocational, continuing and adult education and training?

Secondly we argue that the methods used by historians have much to offer VET researchers in the evaluation of evidence, the application of analytical reasoning and the presentation of outcomes to inform both education and training practice and policy formation.

We conclude with the need for a broad-based VET historical consciousness. Unlike the dominant areas of the history of education (primary, secondary and university), the many and varied stories of VET have yet to be told.

Review of delivery of the Certificate III Electrotechnology (Systems Electrician) program in order to improve pass rates in Electrical License assessment.

0070

P Roberts, W Cross, L Shang

- RMIT University, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

With Australia's workforce rapidly ageing, the cost to business and industry as a whole can become enormous, especially when the numbers of trained electricians becomes one of negative growth. An investment in the Industry's future was made with the advent and implementation of Training Packages however, government incentives and industry endorsement have only partially addressed critical issues related to the effective delivery of training programs, especially in the traditional trade area of Electrotechnology. In the Electrotechnology Industry, the demand for licensed Electricians is expected to remain high, well into the future. However, a significant number of apprentices fail the Licensed Electrical Mechanic (LEM) at their first attempt. This raises serious concerns from both employers and training providers. The research group from the School of Infrastructure, Electrotechnology and Building Services is overseeing a project that will provide a detailed analysis of the requirements and application of the external assessment for Licensed Electrical Mechanics (LEM). This information will support a process of improving delivery techniques, assessment tools and methods as applied to the Certificate III program for licensed electricians. The project grew from concerns raised about the poor performance (55% were unsuccessful at the first attempt) of individuals undertaking the licensing assessment at the end of their VET program.

The challenge of small business and VET: Evidence for policy and practice from NCVER's systematic review of research

0071

S. Dawe 1 A. Averis 2

- 1 NCVER, SA 2 NCVER, SA

Since 2004 NCVER has had a program of systematic reviews of research in vocational education and research (VET) in Australia. A systematic review identifies all available research, published and unpublished, and evaluates it systematically and transparently to establish the strength of evidence about a topical policy question. Judgments are made according to explicit research selection and quality criteria.

The questions for the NCVER reviews are developed by Australian, state and territory policy makers with broad consultation with researchers and other stakeholders. One of this year's topics was 'small business and training'. VET which meets the needs of small business is a challenge but essential if Australia is to maintain a highly skilled workforce in the international market place.

This paper describes the process and the outcomes from the review question developed for the topic of 'small business and training'. It will consider the research studies that were included in the review and the available evidence to answer the question. It will also describe areas where research is still needed to provide evidence for good practice: what works, when and for which group of small business managers or employees.

*****Based on experience: Teaching and learning on the factory floor**

0073

M.F. Kell

- University of Western Sydney, Penrith, NSW, Australia

Today's notion of multiskilling demands that workers are proficient in a range of workplace tasks. Skills are taught either in work-based classes or in the work site. Trained teachers teach generic skills such as the use of office technology, crane operation or forklift driving. However, as Dymock and Gerber (1999) demonstrate, the interpretation of these skills varies depending on the specific workplace context. Specialist operators on site teach the use of specialist heavy machinery.

In a recently completed study of workers who self-report literacy difficulties (Kell, 2005), two interesting cases of high quality workplace teaching emerged. In the first instance the teacher had neither completed high school nor gained any post school qualifications. The second was a case of a supervisor's determination to help a worker reach his workplace potential. This paper examines both cases, demonstrating how they extend Billet's (2001) concept of workplace affordances resulting in troublesome workers becoming highly productive and highly valued employees. In addition, it draws on these cases to illustrate how the constructivist concept of the zone of proximal development is expanded and functions in adult learning settings.

Developing innovative and sustainable pedagogies for vocational learning

0074

M Brown

- University of Ballarat, Victoria, Australia

This paper presents five cases involving VET practitioners and the development of innovative pedagogical practice for vocational learning. Interestingly not all of the cases are located within the bounds of the formal VET sector, some have had to step aside from the normalcy of their jobs in order to combine research, pedagogical practice and vocational learning. The paper provides an initial discussion drawing on contemporary thinking on innovation, sustainability and vocational learning. These concepts are connected together and further theorized. This leads to the outlining of an analytical lens and framework for facilitating, developing and refining innovative and sustainable pedagogies for vocational learning. In addition, the paper raises issues about practice and research, the nature of knowledge, the processes of knowledge production and who gets to produce legitimate knowledge, associated with vocational learning.

*****Learning safety: What next? The case for a learning circle approach.**

0077

P Wadick

- Work Safety and Training, NSW, Australia

This paper explores the concept of 'learning circles' in an attempt to construct meaningful occupational health and safety (OHS) learning experiences for construction workers. It envisions a training approach that actively engages the hearts and minds of the workers with the intent of creating a strong safety culture in the industry. Many of the subcontractors in the industry have not had positive experiences of classroom learning, and modern OHS training reinforces these sentiments. The learning circle is an attempt to validate the safety knowledge that these workers possess, and encourage their critical reflection process. A positive safety culture cannot be created without the willingness of the participants. Many construction workers have been put off side by safety enforcement that has not taken their years of experience into account, and that has privileged codified knowledge born of global discourses over embodied knowledge born of praxis.

Investigating 'Wellbeing' as a platform for development: outcomes from the WA Public Service professions.

0084

L. Barratt-Pugh

- Edith Cowan University, WA, Australia

This paper reports on the initial outcomes from a large ARC grant with multiple industry partners that is changing VET focus by investigating wellbeing within the police, teachers and nurses of WA. These professionals are significant subjects as they are instrumental within the community, dominate the public employee sector, and represent the complex role tensions associated with knowledge workers. The paper specifically focuses the implications for national VET in terms of managing workplace learning, rather than the functional organisation implications of the study.

The study proposes that much training and learning activity in organisations is functionally derived, focuses upon formal inputs, and excludes vital informal and social interactions. This traditional perspective largely ignores the pervasive nature of organisational culture and informal interactions in shaping learning, extending identity, and mediating subsequent performance. The paper asserts through metaphor and literature the relational nature of organisational performance and then models such instrumental relations as a conceptual framework underpinning this study.

This study involves the generation and distribution of a questionnaire to 21k police, teachers and nurses. In this paper, the focus of the analysis is upon the WA police. A review of the method indicates specific learning issues for researchers. The analysis indicates three specific issues that are informing subsequent developmental activity. The paper concludes by emphasising how understanding the key mediating influences of culture upon organisational actors is critically important when orchestrating learning and development within organisations and specifically professions who are instrumental in shaping our social standards.

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To all the conference presenters and participants.

I trust you have enjoyed this year's conference and will join us for our next event in 2007.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'PK' with a stylized flourish.

Peter Kell

AVETRA President - Conference Convenor 2006

