



The Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association

AVETRA Submission to the Productivity Commission:

Vocational Education and Training Workforce – Draft Report

The Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association (AVETRA), welcomes the opportunity to respond to the Productivity Commission draft report investigating the Vocational Education and Training Workforce.

AVETRA is the peak body for VET researchers within Australia. AVETRA has a diverse membership which benefits from the continual interaction between academic researchers, VET practitioner-researchers and policy makers. This ensures research studies conducted by VET researchers are well grounded, focussed on the nexus between policy, research and practice and directed to influencing practitioner as well as academic audiences.

VET is an academic sub-discipline which sits primarily within the Education discipline but also includes some academics from the business and economics disciplines. The majority of the scholarly output in VET research comes from those academics who also work in VET teacher-education courses. Their research is enhanced by the fact that they are in daily contact with VET practitioners, and of course their teaching is itself enhanced by their research. They are familiar with the field of VET research and update their knowledge regularly through their engagement with research.

DIISR (2010) recognised the special nature of education research in its recent case study of Education as part of its research workforce initiative. It recognises that Education researchers are usually people who have had a career as teachers in various sectors and who then move into academia, as opposed to becoming academics at an early age, which is more common in the other disciplines such as the sciences.

DEEWR, in its review of the NCVER in 2006, tasked NCVER with building research capacity in VET. This has been done primarily through initiatives to encourage practitioner-researchers (AVETRA has been fully involved as managers of the mentoring component of this scheme). While a certain amount of VET research is undertaken by VET practitioners and by academics from other disciplines, the deep knowledge of the sector and the scholarly insight that informs research, particularly that in VET teaching and learning, comes primarily from academics from within the sub-discipline who work at university level.

However, Universities can rarely employ people in research-only positions. Thus it is important to maintain the VET discipline within universities through delivering VET teacher- education. This is not only important in order to sustain research in the areas but also to sustain the significant contribution that VET teacher education can and will play in providing educators who can work in the schools in the newly emerging senior secondary pathways for young adults (for example the new SACE in South Australia) and the newly emerging tertiary sector described in the Bradley Report .

Over the years, VET academics' research been very important in informing both policy and practice within the VET sector, and VET academics have been instrumental in aiding the development of many senior VET practitioners and managers, through courses that are informed by research. Many senior practitioners go on to complete postgraduate qualifications and higher degrees by research to underpin their practice in the VET sector.

AVETRA has assembled from our member's work more than 50 papers that provide research- based evidence to inform the commission's response to the VET workforce. This submission provides an overview of those studies, an annotated bibliography, and a tabulation of the papers. They provide a body of work that is diverse, driven by multiple researchers and provide a considerable illumination of issues related to the VET workforce during the past decade. The extreme diversity of the sector and the nature of learning makes it difficult to it is difficult to produce definitive responses to overarching research questions. There is a wealth of evidence about the development of the VET workforce.

The evidence provided is critical of the Certificate IV (Cert IV), but suggest that when appropriately delivered and contextualised, it can provide an appropriate baseline learning experience for VET teachers. However, the evidence also suggests that development from this baseline qualification is necessary to deal with the increasingly complex challenges of diversity that face VET teachers and managers.

Increasing internationalisation, a wider age range of the workforce, a growth in cultural diversity and the fast change of technical requirements for jobs in the workplace will continue to problematise VET teaching, management and leadership. While effective and universal Cert IV qualification may set a base for this development, the challenges of the future will require increasing numbers of VET practitioners with the reflective capability to adapt and change their practices, their course delivery and their organisations. Strategic, contextualised and differentiated staff development programmes that are consistently and continually driven to develop VET organisations will be instrumental in gaining such capability. We would expect that degree-trained staff would also increasingly play an important role in such development activity. While there is no quantitative evidence to suggest that degree-trained VET professionals will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the VET workforce, VET professionals sit in the shadows of the degree based teaching profession and the degree based Higher Education sector. Due the importance of the VET sector for Australian business prosperity, and the increasing complexity of the sector, it would appear such enhanced capability should be available for the sector in terms of pedagogic and institutional management and that VET degrees should at the least be a professional and policy aspiration.

February 2011

AVETRA Executive – *on behalf of AVETRA members*

Prepared by: Dr Llandis Barratt-Pugh President, Professor Erica Smith Past-President, and Dr Ruth Wallace Vice-President.

An Overview of the AVETRA Research related to the Development of the VET Workforce.

The Challenge of VET workforce development

Seddon (2009) emphasises the disturbances and uncertainties of the previous decades that have been destabilising for VET teachers and asserts that what is required in the future is increasing recognition of their skills and the resourcing of programmes for professional renewal. Smith and Smith (1998) indicate the value of focused studies in providing the evidence to underpin such developmental change, rather than change being driven by lobby groups and often hastily performed commission studies.

Reinforcing this theme, several of the studies indicate the increasing complexity of VET teaching due to the diversity of participants that now includes a considerable international cohort, school based VET and a diversity of learning situations (Armstrong, 2007; Darwin, 2007, Smith, 2010; Pritchard and Anderson, 2009). Short (2010) and Smith and Lowrie, (1998) indicate there is therefore a need to contextualise learning for staff development so it is tailored to specific contexts. However, these intentions are often problematised by the difficulties of organising FE/HE based staff development for a casualised workforce (Smith, 2000).

The need for VET workforce development

Wheelahan and Moodie (2010) emphasise that Australia will need a larger VET workforce capable of facilitating learning with an increasingly diverse workforce. Smith et al (2009) specifically indicates the need for workforce development for trainers and assessors in the service industries. Wheelahan (2010) and Wheelahan and Curtin (2010) provide an overview of what knowledge, skills and qualifications VET teachers will need and how VET teachers perceive qualifications and learning experiences in relation to their teaching roles.

Certificate IV delivery

Moodie (2010) provides a review of the evidence that can inform the improvement of teaching quality in VET. Clayton (2010) indicates that Cert IV is widely accepted and well supported as an essential requirement for VET practitioners but may fail to provide the capability to meet diverse learner needs due to the uneven quality, and inconsistencies in the delivery of the Cert IV (Clayton, 2010b). Simons and Smith (2008) and Smith (2007) support the latter assertion by indicating that it is the mode of Cert IV delivery that determines the participant outcomes. Simons et al (2006) assert the need for teaching and learning practices of the Cert IV to embrace the learner-centred, work-centred and attribute-focused approaches that can maximize effectiveness of the delivery, while Cushnahan (2009) emphasises the need for self management skills to be integrated in delivery to maximize subsequent student engagement. A study by Walker (2010) indicates that customer satisfaction with the Cert IV appears to be correlated with effective pre-course information. Brennan and Smith (2002) note that while Cert IV may prepare teachers for VET interactions it is often the quality

frameworks that then play a significant role in regulating subsequent practice, impacting upon selection, assessment and delivery practices.

Smith (1999) indicates that it was the radical shift to CBT during the past decades originally instigated considerable reflection by facilitators about what they were doing and how they were doing it. While the Cert IV currently provides an appropriate teaching foundation for VET teachers, the development of professional critique and reflection requires a higher level or extended professional development programme (Robertson, 2008).

Staff development

Clayton et al (2005) assert the need for skill renewal in VET and TAFE to be resourced and be made into policy. Lowrie et al (1999) reviews concepts and models for staff development programmes. Harris and Clark (2008) emphasise the instrumentality of knowledge sharing and transfer within such staff networks for ongoing professional development. However, Harris, et al (2001) indicates the need for such staff development to be differentiated to accommodate the very different types of practitioners across the sector. Figgis (2009) asserts that the integration of authenticity, mentoring and work-based learning practices into such staff development networks are essential to achieve a change in facilitation to greater reflection, and improved responsiveness to learners.

Black (2009 & 2009b) illuminates the conflict for VET managers of being changed with leadership and yet inundated with regulatory routine administration. Staff development is needed to change the job role emphasis from compliance to development. Several studies indicate that the complexity and diversity of staff development provides a challenge that can benefit from profiling and capability frameworks that provide goals and personal learning paths to contextualize broad learning programmes to individuals needs (Harris et al, 2009; Salter and Bound (2009).

A Degree based profession as an aspiration

More formal staff development often involves placing degree programmes as an aspiration for longer term and achieving VET practitioners to develop reflective and managerial capabilities. The study by Guthrie and Clayton, (2010) indicates that more attention and resources needs to be devoted to work design and workforce development, while Smith (2005) focuses on the issues of moving towards a degree-based qualification for the VET workforce and indicates the complexity of such a challenge. Smith and Bush (2006) produce evidence of the complexity of integrating VET qualifications within university degree courses, while Brennan Kemmis, and Smith (2004) indicate how baseline Cert IV training and assessment qualifications *can be* integrated into University degree programmes. It is the depth of such programmes that can produce the capability for more 'transformative learning experiences' as current staff development practices need to be upgraded in terms of pedagogic levels to achieve such goals (Hodge, 2009).

Annotated Bibliography of AVETRA member's papers

- 1. Smith, E. & Lowrie, T. (1998). Staff development in the VET sector: Case studies of two providers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, 23:2.**

This paper presents the findings of a twelve-month research project that evaluated the effects that competency-based approaches have had on the role of instructors in the VET sector. Specifically, the project: (a) investigated the levels of understanding of CBT by instructors in the VET sector in a variety of settings across a range of locations; and (b) described the way in which instructors have adapted their practice to accommodate competency-based training, and how new practices have evolved. A range of techniques including a nation-wide survey, six case studies and two focus groups were used to gather data. Findings from the study revealed that the level of understanding of Competency Based Training (CBT) is consistent across the VET sector although there were differences in the way in which TAFE and non-TAFE providers worked in such a training environment. Some of these differences were dependent on the instructor's field of study and the extent to which CBT was considered appropriate to that field. As a result, a model for staff development in the VET sector was developed to take into account the diverse nature of providers and individuals within the sector. The model considered the provider context, the institutional context and the needs of individuals attempting to engage in innovations introduced by government in the VET sector

- 2. Smith, E (2007). Are we throwing away the TAA? *Campus Review*, 2 October, 14-15.**

Much of the literature on Vocational Education and Training (VET) professional development for teachers and trainers in Australia has been descriptive, outlining the development, construction and outcomes of a range of initiatives or analysing the nature and extent of initial and on-going professional development for teachers and trainers. There has been little critical analysis of curricula which led to the attainment of what has been the most common Australian initial VET teacher/trainer qualification - the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training, either in terms of the intended or enacted curricula as it was delivered in many hundreds of locations across Australia. This paper addresses this gap. It presents the outcomes of research that examined ways in which learners and processes of learning were constructed, understood and embedded in the delivery of the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (AWT). This qualification was delivered from 1998 until November 2006. In late 2004 a new Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA) was introduced, but there was a 'teach-out period' of two years on the old qualification. The study involved 16 case studies of registered training organisations that delivered the Certificate IV in AWT. The paper updates the study by examining how the changes associated with the new qualification may affect understandings of learners and learning.

- 3. Smith, E. (2000). Dinosaurs or horses to water? Engagement in staff development by teachers in further and higher education. *Learning together, working together: 8th annual international conference on post-compulsory education and training*. Centre for Learning and Work Research, Griffith University, Gold Coast, 4-6 December. Vol 1, 174-182.**

With an increased emphasis on quality, most educational institutions are paying more attention than in the past to staff development. While the devotion of increased resources to training is always to be applauded, the training of teachers in further and higher education (FE and HE) poses particular differences. Participation in staff development activities is often voluntary rather than compulsory; and even where it is compulsory it is difficult for the employing institution to force teachers to implement what they learned in staff development activities. What is more, the majority of teachers in both FE and HE sectors in Australia are employed on a casual basis. Such teachers (who come from very diverse backgrounds) often fall completely outside the net of any formal staff development activities. This paper uses a model of enterprise training to examine the reasons why further and higher education providers may offer staff development. Examples of staff development associated with the introduction of competency-based training (CBT) in the VET sector and online learning in the university sector are discussed. A model of engagement in staff development which was developed for a recent National Research and Evaluation Committee (NREC) project 'CBT: a staff development perspective' is then used to analyse the propensity of different groups of staff to engage in staff development opportunities which are offered by their employers.

4. Smith, E., Brennan Kemmis, R., Grace, L. & Payne, W. (2009). *Workforce development for service industries VET practitioners*. Sydney: Service Skills Australia.

Service Skills Australia (SSA) is investigating industry concerns about the quality of training and assessment within the national VET system. Through its Environmental Scan 2009, SSA was advised by industry and regulators to become more involved in the implementation of nationally recognised training to ensure the effectiveness and quality of training and assessment. Three main areas have been identified as key priorities to examine:

- a. · The ISC and industries' role in quality training and assessment.
- b. · Effective workforce development of trainers and assessors who work in the service industries.
- c. · Effectively and transparently recognising high quality training products, services and support materials

5. Brennan Kemmis, R. and Smith, E. (2004). *Report of workshop: Implementing the Training and Assessment Training Package across the sectors*. AVTEC. Melbourne, 22-23 November, 2004.

VET teacher educators met in Melbourne at the Atlantis Hotel on the 22nd and 23rd of November to discuss the implementation of Training and Assessment Training Packages. The courses offered by the Universities differ from one another. Some have a highly VET sector focus whilst others offer courses that deal strongly with the broader issues of adult education. The focus of the two days was on the ways in which the new Training Package qualification could be delivered within university courses and the particular articulation and credit transfer methods that could be legitimately used by those applying for University entry into VET programs. This is particularly relevant given the fact that a number of Universities have involved partnering arrangements with VET providers. The implications for the different areas of the VET sector are outlined.

6. **Smith, A. & Smith, E. (1998). *HRD and VET: Splitting the difference*. Paper presented at the 7th Annual NCVET VET Research conference, Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, July.**

The actual experiences of the group of people for whom entry-level training and school-to-work transition policy are devised indicate a number of flaws in current policy and practice. Although the scale of the research study was limited, the robustness of its findings is a strong argument for qualitative research, particularly in the identification of new variables (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Howe, 1988), the understanding of phenomena in context (Speedy, 1990) and the uncovering of participants' meaning and intent (J.K. Smith & Heshusius, 1986). Policy-makers may, however, prefer findings to be confirmed through larger-scale research. But smaller studies are important as a preliminary to establishing the variables for subsequent larger-scale research. On a more general level, this paper indicates the potential for research studies to enrich or critique existing literature, to evaluate current policies and practice; and to provide a springboard for further research. Although the links between research and changes in policy cannot always be traced directly, it is certain that without effective research, effective policy is unlikely to be implemented. The area of entry-level training has been subjected to continuous policy change through the 1990s (Smith & Keating, 1997), which has been informed less by empirical research than by insistent lobbying by a limited range of stakeholders. This study and its conclusions provide an example of how a carefully conceived and executed research project, underpinned by detailed study of relevant literature, can help to inform policy and practice. Many commissioned research projects, and even much research undertaken as a result of the award of competitive grants, are rushed in their execution.

7. **Smith, E. (1999). *How competency-based training has changed the role of teachers in the VET sector in Australia*. *Asia Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 27:1, 61-75.**

Most formal vocational education and training (VET) in Australia is now competency-based. When competency-based training (CBT) first became government VET policy in the early 1990s, there was heated and acrimonious debate about its desirability. During the last few years, debate about CBT has all but disappeared, and VET teachers and trainers have been struggling with the implementation of CBT with, often, little support, and certainly with little interest from the VET research community. A research project examined, in late 1996, the effects of CBT on teaching and learning. A number of creative responses to CBT were discovered, with a major effect of the change to CBT appearing to be an impetus for teachers to re-examine what they do with their students. Despite changes in teaching methods, CBT nevertheless allows teachers to exercise their skills, although the skills needed are in some respects different from pre-CBT teaching. This paper reports on the project findings, and looks at the changes in teachers' activities and roles using definitions of teaching propounded by Fenstermacher, and Miller and Sellar.

8. **Brennan, R. & Smith, E. (2002). *Australian Quality Training Framework: Impact of provisions relating to teaching and teacher qualifications*, *Australian Vocational Education Review*, 9:2, 8-23.**

This research project examined the effects on RTOs of the introduction of the Australian Quality Training Framework, and specifically of the RTO standards relating to teaching, assessment and teacher qualifications. The introduction of the AQTF has had an impact on the selection of teachers and trainers; their qualification

levels; and their assessment and delivery practices. The increasing levels of accountability and quality control implicit in the AQTF is a response to the criticisms raised in the Senate inquiry (2000) and is proceeding beside extensive TP reviews. Responses to the AQTF implementation vary across Australia and between providers, and it is clear that not everyone is pleased. Questions of quality improvement will be answered by rigorous and ongoing evaluation.

9. Smith, E (2005). A rich tapestry: Changing views of teaching and teaching qualifications in the vocational education and training sector. *Asia Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 33:3, 339-351.

This paper describes and critiques changes in the nature, status and qualification requirements of the teaching workforce over the past 15 years in the vocational education and training sector in Australia. Changes in the settings in which VET is delivered, expansion of the VET market, and new initiatives in qualifications for VET teachers have created a detailed tapestry. In this tapestry are woven together threads representing pedagogy, assessment, industry requirements and practitioner sophistication. The threads interact in complex and rich ways. The article draws on a number of data sources which illustrate the potential dangers of any assumption that improving the qualification levels of VET teachers might be unproblematic or even always desirable.

10. Smith, E. & Bush, A. (2006). The delicate dance: The assessment implications of awarding students vocational qualifications within university degrees. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 25:4, pp 387-402.

This paper explores the implications for assessment of embedding qualifications from the vocational education and training (VET) sector within university qualifications. As VET qualifications are now all competency based, assessment in the two sectors is quite different, since universities have generally eschewed competency-based training and assessment. A general discussion of the issues is followed by the results of a small-scale research study carried out in the VET discipline area itself, with participants drawn from the AVTEC list of VET teacher-educators. Telephone interviews were conducted with nine Australian university academics involved with such qualifications; and data were extracted from a broader study of students who had undertaken the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training embedded within degrees and graduate diplomas in VET at one of these universities. It is clear that there are many assessment challenges involved with the practice of embedding, which have not yet been systematically addressed.

11. Simons, M. & Smith, E. (2008). The understandings about learners and learning that are imparted in Certificate IV level courses for VET teachers and trainers. *International Journal of Training Research*, 6:1, 23-43.

This paper reports on a study designed to gather data to address this identified gap in the literature. The goal of the study was to explore the ways in which learners and the process of learning are constructed, understood and embedded in courses (learning strategies) leading to the attainment of the Certificate in Assessment and Workplace Training. The study aimed to:

- a. • examine understandings of learning and characteristics of learners as they were represented in documentation (the Training Package in Assessment and Workplace Training within which the Certificate IV was included) and

learning strategies, represented in RTOs' own documentation, leading to the attainment of the Certificate IV (the intended curriculum);

- b. • analyse ways in which a selected group of teachers and trainers delivering the Certificate IV understand learning and the characteristics of learners and how this is conveyed in their courses (the delivered curriculum); and
- c. • analyse understandings of learners and learning held by a group of recent graduates from Certificate IV courses (the received curriculum).

12. Lowrie, T., Smith, E. & Hill, D. (1999) *Competency based training: A staff development perspective*. Adelaide: NCVER.

This report examines the effect of competency-based instructional techniques on VET teachers and trainers both at national level and at specific sites. The report contains a comprehensive literature review of concepts and models of staff and professional development. It comprehensively reviews actual and desired forms of staff development in relation to CBT and develops a model of effective staff development practice.

13. Simons, M., Harris, R. & Smith, E. (2006). *Understandings of learners and learning embodied in the Certificate IV in Assessment & Workplace Training*. Adelaide: NCVER.

This study offers some significant empirical evidence about understandings of teaching and learning within the VET sector and how these are enacted in the delivery of the Certificate IV in Workplace Training and Assessment, which is centrally concerned with the preparation of teachers and trainers for the sector. Ideas about teaching and learning in VET as they are represented in the certificate IV courses that were a part of this study are eclectic in nature, drawing on perspectives from adult education, psychology and, to a lesser extent, sociology. Some of these ideas about adult learning and experiential learning conform to emerging understandings of learning as 'active individual and social construction of knowledge' (Chappell et al. 2003, p.15). What needs to be reworked is the tendency to view action and thought as discrete entities. Cognitive activity is an essential part of developing workforce capabilities appropriate for the needs of contemporary workplaces; understandings of learning need to reflect this perspective. Notwithstanding the range of sources detailing ideas about teaching and learning, there appeared to be a distinct lack of specific references to the demands of preparing workers for particular industries. The absence of approaches to teaching and learning which take into account specific contexts can leave the way open for simplistic technical approaches (such as the uncritical application of learning styles across all settings) to be applied where there is little existing empirical support to suggest that these interventions will promote quality teaching and learning. How teachers and trainers understand learners is important. How teachers and trainers understand not only the social context in which learners are embedded, but also the effect of 'positioning' certain groups of learners, will play a significant role in shaping ideas about best practice in teaching and learning for the sector. In order to promote debate and dialogue in relation to teaching and learning in the VET sector, policy-makers, teachers and trainers need to move beyond technical discussions on the latest version of the Training and Assessment Training Package. Discussions need to examine ideas on how teaching and learning might embrace the learner-centred, work-centred and attribute-focused approaches now acknowledged as important for the future of the VET sector. Discussions also need to consider more seriously the impact of characteristics such as gender, race and ethnicity on learning,

and the ways in which learning might best be understood and organised to take account of these learner attributes.

- 14. Harris, R., Simons, M., Hill, D., Smith, E., Pearce, R., Blakeley, J., Choy, S. & Snewin, D. (2001). *The changing role of staff development for teachers and trainers in vocational education and training*. Adelaide: NCVER.**

This study explored the changing role of staff development for vocational education and training (VET) teachers and trainers in Australian public and private registered training organisations. Substantial reforms in the VET sector over the past decade have had considerable impact on the work of teachers and trainers. In this context of rapid change, the nature, direction, delivery, access and funding responsibility of staff development are undergoing transformation. The purpose of this research, therefore, was to examine current staff development provision, research a range of issues relating to the staff development of VET teachers and trainers, and make recommendations in the light of the new education and training environment. It illuminates the changed structure of the VET workforce and the differentiation of the roles of practitioners across different types of registered training organisations and it identifies the implications of such changes for the future design of staff development.

- 15. Black, S. (2009). *Head teacher perspectives on their changing role in TAFE NSW*. Refereed paper presented at the 2009 AVETRA Annual Conference, Coogee, April.**

There has been a strong research focus in recent years on the changing role of VET practitioners (e.g. Harris, Simmons & Clayton 2005, Mitchell 2008) and the need for new leadership qualities at various management levels in VET (e.g. Callan, Mitchell, Clayton & Smith 2008, Mulcahy 2004). This paper reports on a research study which focuses on the head teacher role in TAFE NSW. Previous research has suggested that head teachers, known sometimes as ‘frontline managers’, occupy a key role as ‘discourse brokers’ at the interface between management and pedagogy (Black 2005) and that their educational leadership role is threatened by the increased volume of routine administration they are required to undertake (Rice 2005). This paper represents the voices of a state-wide cohort of current head teachers in TAFE NSW Institutes on their changing work role. 109 head teachers responded to an email survey questionnaire featuring open and closed questions. Questions focused on how their role has changed in recent years, their levels of job satisfaction, and their comments on a wide range of head teacher issues. These included their: changed responsibilities, use of electronic systems, overall workload, degree of autonomy in their work, professional development needs, levels of support from other TAFE staff, and how they think their work role can be improved. The survey findings have implications for current debates over the most effective role for head teachers in TAFE NSW. In particular, they suggest there is significant tension between the routine administrative workload involved in trying to ensure audit compliance and the current demands for head teachers to be educational leaders, innovative and commercially enterprising.

- 16. Black, S. (2009b). *Head teacher voices: Insights into the changing role of head teachers in TAFE NSW*, TAFE Teachers Association of the NSW Teachers Federation, Sydney.**

The research indicates how head teachers perceive changes to their role and in effect the research demonstrates how the ‘realities’ of the role of head teacher can make

problematic the assumption of new practitioner identities. These ‘realities’, according to the research respondents, include the following:

Over 90% of head teachers agreed there had been ‘considerable change’ in their work in recent years, and nearly 60% of head teachers indicated they were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their work. There is a burgeoning administrative workload, described by one head teacher as the “sheer amount of administration – often tedious and boring”. This mainly routine, systems-based administration appears to be a major factor causing dissatisfaction with their work. One head teacher said they had become “the best paid clerk in the section”. Another described a head teacher as the “chief cook and bottle washer”. This expanding administrative role meant many head teachers were spending enormous amounts of time in front of their computer screens each day and in unpaid overtime. This time was spent working with unwieldy and often not fully integrated electronic systems that were constantly changing. Electronic rolls (CLAMS), budget planning (e.g. TIPA), teacher payments (eECs) and online enrolments (MEVI) came in for particularly harsh criticism. One head teacher commented, “More than 80% of my time is spent on electronic systems, just to keep my head above water”. Audit compliance formed a key element in this administrative overload. Most head teachers had experienced internal and external audits and they felt their work was now being dictated to a large degree by auditors. It was an area of their work they felt they had little control over and compliance was undertaken largely out of fear of not meeting audit requirements. Staffing issues were taking up more head teacher time than previously such as the more formal monitoring of staff, including those teachers without the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, and the formal inductions of new teachers. Institute recruitment of teachers was ever more time-consuming and eligibility lists lasted for just 6 months.

17. Walker, J. (2010). *Training and assessment (TAA40104) in NSW community providers: Participant intent and outcomes*. NCVER: Adelaide

This paper reports that eighty per cent of respondents reported that they had achieved what they wanted from the course, despite only a third of respondents gaining a training job. Students gained social capital from the course, with respondents reporting that they had increased their confidence, expanded their professional networks, and made employment links with the college at which they undertook their training. Participants were more likely to report that the course met their expectations if they also reported that pre-course information was important to them in choosing their training organisations, suggesting that preconceived notions about course content may have a significant impact on satisfaction and received notions about course content may have a significant impact on satisfaction.

18. Wheelahan, Leesa (2010) *The quality of teaching in VET: literature review*, Australian College of Educators, Mawson ACT

Investment in, and the development of, VET teachers and the VET workforce more generally is becoming more urgent in the light of government policy objectives, and the anticipated growth of VET. Skills Australia (2010) has developed a national workforce development plan that seeks to raise workforce participation, increase skill levels, and improve adult language, literacy and numeracy skills. This plan operationalises the government’s objectives for educational achievement and participation, and it suggests that participation in both VET and higher education would need to increase 3% per annum to 2025. This requires a significant investment

in the tertiary education workforce and not just VET. The challenge is to increase the number of VET teachers, maintain those we have, and help them develop the knowledge and skills they need to meet new demands for a much wider range of students. This literature review has situated current and emerging demands on VET teachers within the new policy framework and it has problematised existing approaches. It asks about:

- The changing demands made of VET teachers;
- The differences and similarities between VET and the schools and higher education sectors, the differences and similarities between teaching in those sectors and VET, and what we can learn from the other sectors;
- The knowledge and skills that VET teachers need to support high quality learning and diversity of students, contexts and industries;
- Whether the industrial or disciplinary area should figure more prominently in VET teacher education and CPD;
- The kinds of qualifications that VET teachers need to support them on entry and as they develop as teachers, and the sort of CPD that is required to support them throughout their careers;
- How the quality of VET teaching qualifications and CPD can be evaluated;
- How the VET teaching profession can develop and how teachers can be supported to develop dual identities as industry experts and as teachers; and,
- The lessons we can learn from overseas.

19. Wheelahan, Leesa and Curtin, Emma (2010) The quality of teaching in VET: overview, Australian College of Educators, Mawson ACT.

The purpose of this project is to research and make recommendations on the quality of vocational education and training (VET) teaching; VET teacher qualifications and continuing professional development (CPD); the impact teaching has on the quality of the VET student experience and student outcomes; and how this can be evaluated. The project is funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR); managed by the Australian College of Educators (ACE) and implemented by the LH Martin Institute at the University of Melbourne. This report discusses stakeholders' perceptions about the nature of VET teaching, teacher qualifications and CPD. Interviews were held with key stakeholders in the VET sector and with senior managers and teachers in nine different types of registered training organisations (RTOs). In addition, a web survey attracted almost 1400 responses. A subsequent report will focus on evaluating the quality of VET teaching and teacher preparation, and this will be followed by reports that contain options and recommendations.

20. Wheelahan, Leesa and Moodie, Gavin (2010) The quality of teaching in VET: options paper, Australian College of Educators, Mawson ACT

Australia faces challenges in increasing workforce participation, the skills of its workforce and its level of social inclusion. All are needed for a competitive, productive, prosperous, resilient and inclusive Australia. The workforce of the future will be more highly skilled, more socially diverse and will include different forms of participation. Individuals will need to be supported to ensure they have the skills they require to participate in work and in their communities. The Council of Australian Governments has set ambitious targets for participation in education and training and attainment of qualifications to meet these challenges. Tertiary education will have to expand, and vocational education and training (VET) will need to grow significantly if

these targets are to be met. VET will be required to teach a wider range of students than ever before. This includes those who already skilled to gain higher level or different skills, young people entering the workforce, older people who want to stay in the workforce, those already in work and those who are not, and those who have the foundational skills they need for participation in work and their communities and those who do not. There will be more students from disadvantaged backgrounds requiring high levels of support to gain qualifications and to progress to higher-level qualifications. VET will need to increase the proportion of those in the population with a certificate III and above, and increase the number of high-level VET qualification completions overall. It must expand its scope for teaching VET in schools and higher education programs, and develop more effective relations with schools and higher education to support student pathways and transitions. VET teachers will make this happen, however, they require support to do so. Australia will have to increase the size of the VET workforce, and as many other countries have found, further professionalise VET teaching. Existing teachers must be supported to maintain and extend their expert industry and pedagogic knowledge. New teachers must be recruited to replace an aging teaching workforce and supported to develop expert knowledge and skills in teaching and learning to foster dual identities as industry experts and expert teachers. This paper presents a range of options for public consultation on the way we can support quality teaching in VET and quality student outcomes. It presents options on:

- a. The structure of the VET teaching workforce;
- b. Recruiting and retaining teachers;
- c. Preparing new teachers and supporting the continuing development of existing teachers. This includes options on VET teacher qualifications, mentoring new teachers, continuing professional development (CPD), and maintaining industry currency;
- d. Research on VET pedagogy and models of teaching;
- e. Registration and accreditation; and
- f. Ensuring the quality of VET teaching and evaluating its outcomes.

21. Moodie, Gavin (2010) The quality of teaching in VET: framework paper and evidence report, Australian College of Educators, Mawson ACT -

The first paper develops a conceptual framework for evaluating the quality of teaching in vocational education and training, teacher preparation and development programs, the experience of vocational education students and their outcomes. The report reviews the evidence available to inform the framework for evaluating the quality of Australian vocational education outlined in the previous report (also published on academie.edu) and recommends improvements and extensions of the measures currently available. It follows the framework by considering what evidence there is from the peer review of teaching, students' satisfaction, students' attainment, graduates' outcomes, graduates' performance, graduates' satisfaction and employers' satisfaction.

22. Wheelahan, L. (2010) Rethinking Equity In Tertiary Education – Why We Need To Think As One Sector And Not Two. Paper presented at AVETRA 13th Annual Conference VET Research: Leading and Responding in Turbulent Times Gold Coast

Equity policy in Australian tertiary education is differentiated by educational sector, with the higher education and vocational education and training sectors having different policies, and in some cases, different definitions of equity groups. This is

problematic because pathways from VET to higher education are meant to act as an equity mechanism by providing students from disadvantaged backgrounds with access to higher education. This presentation examines equity policies and definitions in both sectors, and it examines data on student pathways within VET and between VET and higher education. It finds that, apart from students with disabilities, students from disadvantaged backgrounds are over-represented in VET and under-represented in higher education. However, students from disadvantaged backgrounds are over-represented in lower-level VET qualifications and under-represented in higher-level qualifications, particularly in diplomas and advanced diplomas. This matters because diplomas are the 'transition' qualification which VET students use as the basis for admission to higher education. The presentation argues that the diploma is the key qualification for equity policy in both VET and higher education. Rather than separate VET and higher education equity policies and separate sectoral policies that mean pathways are of some importance only 'at the borders', a tertiary education policy framework will be needed that considers equity outcomes and pathways within and between sectors and places these outcomes as key concerns of both sectors. The paper first problematises the extent to which pathways are able to act as a mechanism to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access higher level studies. Second, reasons why we need to consider equity from a post-compulsory or tertiary education perspective are presented, and it argues that the diploma is the key qualification for pathways and thus for equity policy. This is followed by an analysis of the relative position of equity groups in VET. Finally, the presentation considers the implications for equity policy.

23. Cushnahan, M. (2009). Beyond Mayer: Learning from delivering and assessing generic employability competencies. Adelaide: NCVET.

The Australian vocational education and training (VET) sector is in transition in implementing a new policy for the employability skills of learning, self management, planning and organising, problem solving, communication, teamwork, initiative and enterprise and use of technology. These skills are being written into VET competency standards in training packages and their explicit development has been made a requirement from July 2008. This requirement is stimulating the exploration by VET practitioners of effective teaching, learning, reporting and assessment processes for the employability skills. This report, produced by the national training system's e-learning strategy, the Australian Flexible Learning Framework (Framework1), considers how technology (e-learning) can assist. to teach and learn.

- a. They are used in combination in an interlocking and overlapping manner to perform work tasks.
- b. They can be applied at various levels depending on the task.
- c. They are context dependent in their application but transferable to other contexts.
- d. They are developed in all aspects of life and throughout life. This characteristic is acknowledged in some of the other terms used for these skills, such as core skills, basic skills, life skills and key competencies.
- e. There is general recognition that active or 'hands on' learning is the most effective means of developing the employability skills given their characteristics. Moreover, those consulted for this study reported that using active learning strategies is driving learner engagement with VET, which aids learner achievement and retention. The educational experience is more

interesting, the jobs for which learners are heading are brought alive, and motivation for learning is raised by using active learning.

24. Salter, A. and Bound, H.I. (2009). Using a profiling instrument to design teacher professional learning. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 61 (1) pp. 53-66. (Please note that this instrument refers to VET teacher professional learning)

There is limited awareness and knowledge of how teacher pedagogical reasoning and practice develops when teachers use information and communications technology (ICT). This is particularly so in the vocational education and training (VET) sector, where there is only limited awareness and knowledge of this territory. As the VET sector moves increasingly to the use of ICT to address the policy shift to flexible delivery on and off the job, VET teachers are faced with huge challenges. The question is; in what ways can teachers be best supported to meet these challenges? This paper presents a teacher-profiling instrument that identifies teachers' strengths and professional development needs. The data gathered through the use of the profiling instrument was used to analyse professional learning needs for a group of trade teachers teaching in three regional areas in a public technical and further education institution. The profiling instrument is explained, and the following professional development is outlined to illustrate the value of the profiling instrument. With further redesign work attending to content knowledge and to providing better opportunities for reflection, the profiling instrument can be a sophisticated learning needs analysis instrument. Vella (2002) suggests that a learning needs analysis involves listening to the learners' wants and needs to shape a programme. Learners may not consciously be aware of relevant needs as required by the context in which they are working (Leach and Moon 2008). Focusing on learners' accomplishments and abilities, rather than deficits allows learners to articulate and display what they already know (Weddel and van Duzer 1997). What the profiling instrument adds to a self-designed learning needs analysis for teacher development is the theoretical framework of teacher knowledges necessary for effective teaching. In addition, the profiling instrument gives recognition to the increasing complexity and pedagogical reasoning required of teachers.

25. Bound, HI and Salter, A. (2007). Using ICT Resources in Project-Based Learning Within a Vocational Education and Training Environment. In J. Sigafos & V. Green (Eds.), *Technology and Teaching* (pp. 89-99). New York : Nova Science Publishers, Inc.

This paper provides a meta-analysis of a group of singular projects, each addressing a specific issue or set of issues related to Science, ICT, and Mathematics in rural and regional areas of Tasmania. The focus is on the school and TAFE sectors due to the aims of SiMERR National and DoTARS. The outcomes achieved and lessons learned, however, suggest wider involvement with community organizations and councils, business and industry, as well as other government departments dependent on education for skilled and critical thinking employees. Encouraging and fostering links between schools and their communities is integral to such moves. Further mentoring of those appreciating the value of evidence-based research and evaluation and working with policy makers to create opportunities, are future goals of the Hub. The hub is now in a process of developing connections and partnerships to develop new projects. The intention is to bring to this endeavour a wider understanding of the systemic issues and to design projects with collaborative relationships that can support embedding and co-research. The role of small projects able to be initiated at the "grassroots" level,

however, also has advantages in enabling innovation to be trialled without large startup costs or lead-in times. As long as outcomes emerging from such projects are shared, they can feed into larger understandings and possibilities. The process employed by SiMERR Tasmania has explored issues, contexts, needs, and outcomes, which continues as the members of the Hub consider other models of intervention for the future.

26. Hill, A., & Helme, S., (2005). VET In Schools For Indigenous Students: ‘Hands On’, ‘Default’, Or Promising? *International Journal of Training Research* , 3 (1), 1-22.

With the continued expansion of Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS) over the last five years, it is important for policy makers and educators to focus attention on the nature of participation and the experience of students undertaking this expanding curriculum area. While almost 95% of schools offer VETiS (MCEETYA, 2001) recent studies have noted the variations in patterns of participation (Johns, Kilpatrick & Loechel, 2004) and the different experiences of students within the programs. The motives for introducing VETiS range from providing greater curriculum breadth to re-engaging and supporting the retention of students in the post-compulsory years of schooling and providing pathways to employment. The introduction of VETiS is unlikely to immediately impact on these complex issues, but national policy agendas including the Australian National Training Authority’s strategic initiative ‘*Partners in a Learning Culture*’ suggest that VET has the potential to support Indigenous students to stay at school, through the development of more relevant and practical learning experiences. This paper reports data from two national studies, the *Young Visions* Survey, commissioned by the Education and Career Enterprise Foundation (ECEEF) and conducted in 2002, and *Hands on the Future*, a national qualitative study of Indigenous students’ experience of VETiS. *Young Visions* explored the participation patterns of Indigenous students in VETiS, their reasons for participating and made comparisons between the patterns of participation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students. A key finding of *Young Visions* was that Indigenous participation in VETiS was almost twice that of non-Indigenous participation. Boards of Study data for 2002 from all States and Territories confirmed this difference. Nationally, Indigenous participation was 60%, and non-Indigenous participation was 34%. In each State and Territory, participation rates were higher for Indigenous students than non-Indigenous students.

27. Hodge, S. (2009). Pedagogy matters: a research-based dilemma for Australian vocational education policy. *Proceedings of 39th Annual SCUTREA Conference, University of Cambridge 7-9 July, 2009.*

This paper draws on new research into ‘transformative learning’ in the context of vocational education, and spells out some implications for pedagogical practice and policy in the vocational field. Transformative learning refers to deep changes in the way adults see themselves and their world, and is more often found in discussions of adult and community education than in vocational education. The fact that in this kind of learning the process and experience is primary suggests that it would have little relevance to vocational education in Australia, where outcomes are primary and the process of learning itself receives scant attention in policy discourse. What this research reveals is that learning in some vocational programs may be intrinsically transformative. A significant implication of this research is for the area of pedagogy. The transformative learning research literature is replete with demonstrations of the

important role of pedagogy in this kind of learning. It stands to reason that guiding and supporting an adult through a deep change in how they see the world and themselves would call for a highly-skilled practice. However, in the context of Australian vocational education, the preparation of educators does not appear to be conducive to the development of the practice necessary to assist adults through the process of transformative learning. The paper reflects on the shortcomings of the preparation of vocational education teachers in Australia in relation to transformative learning, and puts the case for a shift in policy to ensure that practitioners in at least some vocational education fields receive the training necessary to understand and support transformative learning.

28. Brennan, R. & Smith, E. (1996). Workplace learning as part of university studies for experienced vocational education and training practitioners. *6th National Workshop on Vocational Teacher Education, Coffs Harbour, September, Conference proceedings, 114-127.*

The Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association's submission to the Productivity Commission outlines the key issues and concludes with a list of significant reports that have been undertaken by our members into the issues concerning the VET workforce. It is imperative for the continued performability of the VET workforce that the investment already made in the existing VET research structure is secured, consolidated and developed. The research base that exists is a significant foundation for the future development of the VET workforce. The VET workforce will need effective research to underpin future change. It is therefore important that resources are available to build the capability and capacity of the VET research community. Previous investment has constructed infrastructure that has produced one of the leading national VET research communities. There is a need to capitalise on this capability for the continual development of the VET workforce. The Commission's report will be a strategic circuit-breaker, indicating national direction. Continued VET research will be the tactical fuel for each subsequent year, growing reflective practitioners within the system and infusing the system with knowledge.

29. Guthrie, H. & Clayton, B. (2010). *Building capability in vocational education and training providers: the TAFE cut.* NCVER, Adelaide [Occasional paper]

This paper focuses on issues which affect the capability of technical and further education (TAFE) providers. It draws extensively on the reports of seven research activities conducted during a two-and-a-half-year program of research. The program examined a diverse range of issues: career pathways for VET provider staff, teaching and learning, organisational cultures and structures, learning through work, human resource development, leadership and workforce development. There is a gap between the 'rhetoric' of policy and the 'reality' of the operational constraints within which TAFE providers operate. TAFE providers need to be free of unnecessary central constraints to manage their human resources in ways which best meet their strategic business needs. This includes having more direct control of industrial relations. The professional nature of the work TAFE practitioners do is not sufficiently well understood or appreciated. More attention and resources need to be devoted to work design and workforce development.

30. Clayton, B. (2010). *Practitioner expectations and experiences with the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA40104).* NCVER, Adelaide.

The Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA40104) is seen as the standard entry-level teaching qualification in the vocational education and training (VET) sector. The qualification is widely accepted and well supported as an essential requirement for VET practitioners. However, it has been criticised in relation to its ability to provide the level of skills and knowledge required. This report turns to the newly qualified practitioners themselves and asks them whether they believe that the certificate has provided them with an effective foundation for the delivery and assessment of training in the VET environment. The findings show that when taught well, the certificate provides some if not all of the essential skills required of new practitioners, particularly if they already have some experience of training if they are supported by mentors and if they undertake further developmental activities after they graduate. Participants felt less well prepared to manage the needs of diverse learners, to undertake assessment, to use training packages and to manage classroom issues. These areas should be given more emphasis in the program. A more flexible program structure is needed to cater for the diversity of job roles and responsibilities of VET practitioners, as well as for the differing levels of experience of training and VET that participants bring to the program. The authors suggest this might be addressed through the introduction of differentiated qualifications, skill sets and an orientation program for those unfamiliar with VET when they embark on the certificate IV. Those delivering the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment must be appropriately experienced and qualified and capable of modelling good practice.

31. Clayton, B. (2010b). *Practitioner experiences and expectations with the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA40104): a discussion of the issues.* NCVER, Adelaide [Discussion paper]

Practitioner experiences and expectations with the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA40104): A discussion of the issues by Berwyn Clayton, Victoria University. The Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA40104) has become the standard teaching qualification in the vocational education and training (VET) sector. Therefore the extent to which it provides competency in training and assessment, arguably the key element of being an effective teacher, is a fundamental issue. This paper provides a history of the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and reviews the limited research on this qualification. The paper also outlines some of the key issues surrounding TAA40104, such as uneven quality, inconsistencies in delivery and the perceived inability to meet the skills and knowledge needs of trainers in workplaces or teachers in institutional settings. These issues provide the impetus for a review of TAA40104 being undertaken by the skills council, Innovation & Business Skills Australia (IBSA). A key message emerging from this background paper is that the position of TAA40104 as the key qualification for VET practitioners is under pressure. This is highlighted by the availability of other relevant qualifications now available to practitioners and by industry concerns about assessment approaches and assessment decision-making.

32. Clayton, B., Fisher, T. & Hughes, E. (2005). *Sustaining the skill base of technical and further education institutes: TAFE managers' perspectives.* NCVER, Adelaide.

Australia's technical and further education (TAFE) institutes have an ageing teaching workforce, whose impending departure endangers the institutes' skill base. This is at a time when workplace change demands (from TAFE and the broader vocational education and training [VET] sector) a more highly skilled teaching workforce than ever before. TAFE institutes greatly depend on the vocational competency of their

teachers-their technical competency and currency, comprehensive industry know-how, networks and high-level teaching skills-to maintain and build their credibility. Retaining, developing and renewing TAFE institutes' organisational capability involves planned recruitment, and the retention of key mature teaching staff through appropriate incentives and arrangements. More commitment is needed to targeted training and re-training, as well as to strategies which help share the critical knowledge that is otherwise lost as highly experienced teachers leave. TAFE institutes need to draw more upon similar experiences and processes used in other sectors and organisations to maintain their skill base. Such approaches need to be properly resourced, and supported by funding bodies, policy-makers, TAFE management and teachers.

33. Centre Undertaking Research in Vocational Education & University of Ballarat. (2003). *Doing it well, doing it better: Final Report of the ANTA Teaching and Learning Strategies Scoping Project.* Australian National Training Authority, Brisbane

VET practitioners are delivering in a range of contexts, using broad ranging strategies and various tools and technology to meet the needs of diverse learners. It has also found clear evidence that a considerable amount of effective and innovative teaching and learning is taking place. The examples of quality pedagogical practice can be characterised as having three distinct, interlinking features. These are:

- a. • A learner centred approach – with a focus on the needs and learning styles of learners with the teacher or trainer as facilitator.
- b. • Work place relevance – with a focus on teachers and trainers with good industry links who are knowledgeable about work practices and able to contextualise learning experiences regardless of the context of learning.
- c. • Flexibility and innovation in translating Training Packages into learning experiences – with a particular focus on customised and integrated learning and assessment strategies.

However, what some teachers and trainers are doing well continues to challenge some other practitioners. A good deal of the research literature has pointed to the skills and knowledge gaps that many practitioners have when working in the Training Package environment. In particular, translating competency standards into learning experiences, meeting the needs of diverse groups of learners and relationships with industry and peers have been identified as critical but also problematic. This scoping study provides further evidence that a number of pedagogical issues need to be addressed and VET practitioners supported to build their capabilities to take on the current and future challenges in VET delivery. There was ready acceptance of resources that include examples, models and templates which can be adapted to suit differing training contexts, learners and delivery modes. However a number of informants considered that there needs to be a greater emphasis on 'how to' guidance rather than on merely supplying more templates. Many informants pointed to the amount of time it takes to find existing resources, and the difficulty of keeping informed about what is available across the whole of the sector. Time constraints or access to the technology or a mixture of both of these appear to be major impediments for many practitioners. Therefore, it is important not to assume that automatic access to technology is available to all teachers and trainers. Concern was expressed, particularly by the VET experts and focus group participants, regarding the usefulness of resources that were not supported in their implementation.

34. Figgis, J. (2009). Regenerating the Australian landscape of professional VET practice: Practitioner-driven changes to teaching and learning. NCVER: Adelaide

This publication explores both the characteristics and examples of innovative teaching and learning practice in Australia. It is based on discussions with practitioners and vocational education and training (VET) managers responsible for teaching and learning. It examines why and how people are changing their pedagogy, and with what results. It found that improvements in teaching and learning practice arise from a perceived need to change. The imperatives to change are usually locally based and dependent for their success on a commitment by all those supporting the learner. Practice is best shared through effective mentoring and by using networks effectively. The key messages are the six trends in contemporary practice deserve further consideration: using authentic learning tasks as the basis for learning; encouraging peer learning; applying e-learning technologies; using the workplace as the primary site for learning and skill development; personalising learning; and devolving support for teaching and learning so that it is close to the practitioner. Practitioners who actively think about changing their practice generally possess four characteristics. They are: reflective; responsive to and respectful of learners; closely engaged with local enterprises; and reach out to learn from and share their own knowledge with other practitioners. Networks can help practitioners to foster better professional practice and help them exchange ideas and resources.

35. Harris, M., Cooper, R., Robertson, D., Clark, T. 2009. Creating sustainable competitive advantage and resilience in VET organisations: is capability building the answer? Australian Vocational Educational and Training Research Association (AVETRA) Conference, April.

VET organisations operate in an environment that is dynamic, diverse, complex and competitive. Their workforce requires the capabilities to meet clients' needs in a market where knowledge is an economic commodity as vital as goods and services. To examine this issue and contribute to the previous research by Callan, Mitchell, Clayton and Smith (2007), this article presents the results from a study of a large metropolitan Institute of Technology. The study explores the importance of creating core and specialised/strategic capabilities as a key driver to enhance VET quality. Through an analysis of qualitative and quantitative data, the authors developed a capability framework linked to the organisation's mission, vision and values. The article argues that the framework is intended to inform strategic human resource management practices for sustainable competitive advantage and organisational success. The findings offer a capability framework that is relevant and meaningful to employees, is responsive to the organisation's business needs and embraces organisational values. Lastly, the capability framework embraces the current and potential capabilities of VET practitioners, administration and support staff, and managers, providing a tool for organisational workforce development initiatives. The results strongly suggest that such a framework, constructed with meaningful input from the three main categories of VET staff and explicitly linked to organisational values, offers most staff a model for developing key capabilities in ways that enhance both organisational and personal performance. The organisation is now actively implementing a performance learning and innovation system linked to the capability framework. Throughout the project, respondents consistently expressed support for the opportunity to contribute to the framework that was afforded by the project's design and methods. Overall, this research model and fundamental capability framework is likely not only to aid VET

organisations to make informed decisions on how they develop core and specialised/strategic capabilities, but to also generate interest and debate, and facilitate future research.

36. Harris, M., & Clark, T. 2008. Knowledge sharing as a key driver of professional learning and development for an ageing VET practitioner workforce, Australian Vocational Educational and Training Research Association (AVETRA) Conference, April.

This paper reports on one section of a larger research study conducted in 2007 in a major metropolitan TAFE Institute. The focus is the professional learning and development environment of an ageing vocational education and training (VET) practitioner workforce. Recent literature indicates that knowledge sharing is a key driver for maintaining professional and industry currency leading to quality educational outcomes in VET. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods including focus groups, semi-structured interviews and questionnaires. Contributions were received from approximately 60% of the Institute's teaching staff. Key outcomes showed willingness to share, linkage to organisational culture, values and goals, and collaborative knowledge sharing to enhance teaching and learning quality. The findings also reveal barriers to and strategies used for knowledge dissemination that underpins a strength-based approach to workforce capability building. The findings confirm critical elements of success in contemporary best practice models for knowledge sharing and transfer in knowledge based and service industries. They also indicate options for VET organisations responding to the multiple challenges of an ageing workforce operating in a competitive and dynamic environment.

37. Seddon, T (2009) The Productivity Challenge in Australia: The case for professional renewal in VET teaching *International Journal of Training Research* Vol 7 No 1

This paper was prompted by the call for submissions to the Rudd government's 2020 Summit in April 2008. It analyses the impacts of VET reform on the VET workforce in order to identify strategies that might inform an agenda to build the workforce capacity to support economic and innovation. The paper argues that VET reforms since the 1990s created disturbances and uncertainties in VET teachers' and managers' work, and working lives. In particular, these reforms failed to recognise and endorse teaching expertise that sits at the heart of VET practice. Top-down reforms and funding constraints, coupled with lack of recognition of VET occupational expertise, created perverse behaviours. These contradictory trends prompted occupational boundary work that drove innovations in the character and reach of VET teaching, yet without establishing the terms and conditions necessary to sustain such occupational expertise. Consequently these innovations continue to be vulnerable because new initiatives-identities cannot compete with established identities in the competition for recognition and resources. These trends run counter to government efforts aimed at engineering change in VET to support skill building in an innovative Australia. This model of reform is not followed by other countries, which recognise and deploy teaching expertise in productive ways to build capacities for innovation amongst young and older worker-citizens. The paper concludes by suggesting that VET teaching expertise is an unacknowledged resource in the productivity challenge that could be mobilised in sustainable ways through professional renewal.

- 38. Pritchard , B. and Anderson, A (2009) The Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning in TAFE: Challenges, issues and implications for teachers *International Journal of Training Research* Vol. 7, No. 1, 2009 pp 19-37**

In recent times, governments have introduced new policies and programs to address the needs of early school leavers. One such initiative is the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL), which aims to provide a vocationally-oriented alternative to the academic senior school certificate. Since the implementation of VCAL in the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector from 2003, TAFE institutes have been experiencing an influx of young learners for whom most teachers have not traditionally catered. To date, however, there has been inadequate research on the impact and implications of the VCAL in TAFE. This paper begins to address this gap by examining the challenges posed by the VCAL in TAFE from a teacher perspective. Based on a small-scale research study at one TAFE institute, the paper draws primarily upon data from in-depth interviews with key teaching and support staff. It finds that TAFE teachers face a number of significant issues which need to be addressed if the VCAL is to be delivered effectively in TAFE on an ongoing basis.

- 39. Robertson ,I. (2008) VET Teachers' Knowledge and Expertise *International Journal of Training Research* Vol.6, No.1, 2008 pp 1-22**

In an environment characterised by increasing complexity where teachers need to make sophisticated pedagogical decisions the minimum requirement for teaching in Australian Vocational Education and Training (VET) is a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (CIV TAA). This paper asks: Does the CIV TAA provide opportunities for participants to develop the knowledge bases required of professional teachers? Competency outcomes of the CIV TAA and nationally endorsed learning resources are compared with twelve knowledge bases proposed by Turner-Bisset (2001) to conclude that the cognitive levels of knowledge development are consistent with description and application. There is an absence of critique, and, strong theoretical or conceptual foundations. VET teachers bring some knowledge bases to their practice and are provided with varying levels of opportunity to develop other knowledge bases in completing the CIV TAA. It is concluded that the potential for the development of pedagogical content knowledge that differentiates the novice from the expert is doubtful.

- 40. Simons, M. and Smith, E. (2008) The understandings about learners and learning that are imparted in Certificate IV level courses for VET teachers and trainers *International Journal of Training Research* Vol 6, No.1 pp 23-43**

Much of the literature on Vocational Education and Training (VET) professional development for teachers and trainers in Australia has been descriptive, outlining the development, construction and outcomes of a range of initiatives or analysing the nature and extent of initial and on-going professional development for teacher and trainers. There has been little critical analysis of curricula which led to the attainment what has been the most common Australian initial VET teacher/trainer qualification - the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training, either in terms of the intended or enacted curricula as it was delivered in many hundreds of locations across Australia. This paper addresses this gap. It presents the outcomes of research that examined ways in which learners and processes of learning were constructed, understood and embedded in the delivery of the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training (AWT). This qualification was delivered from 1998 until November 2006. In late 2004 a new Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (TAA)

was introduced, but there was a ‘teach-out period’ of two years on the old qualification. The study involved 16 case studies of registered training organisations that delivered the Certificate IV in AWT. The paper updates the study by examining how the changes associated with the new qualification may affect understandings of learners and learning.

41. Armstrong, S. (2007) Factors impacting upon the performance of Workplace Assessors: A Case Study *International Journal of Training Research* Vol. 5, No. 1, pp 1-20

This paper reports on the findings of a research project that elicits the main factors impacting on the performance of workplace assessors in the oil and gas industry. The purpose of the paper is to reveal the significance of the role of workplace assessors and the subsequent impact upon workforce engagement. One model of employee competency assessment currently utilised in the Australian workplace, is performed by suitable employees who have been identified and trained as internal workplace assessors. This qualitative action research project aimed to discover the scope of the internal workplace assessor role beyond the primary focus of technical skills assessment. The selected cohorts for this project were employed in the upstream oil and gas industry working in a variety of geographically isolated locations. Through questionnaires, face-to face interviews and focus groups, the data gathered have been utilised to gain further insight into the role of the internal workplace assessor in the oil and gas industry by gathering perceptions from the assessors and of those currently being assessed. “Workplace assessment the gathering and judging of evidence during normal work activities in order to determine whether a required standard has been achieved. Workplace assessment usually involves observation of work in progress, checking the product(s) of a work activity, and receiving oral responses to questions posed while work is in progress” (National Training System, Glossary, 2006).

42. Darwin, S. (2007) The changing contexts of vocational education: implications for institutional vocational learning. *International Journal of Training Research* Vol. 5, No. 1, pp 71-87

With the rapidly transforming nature of vocational work, it is increasingly challenging for vocational teachers in institutional environments to develop learning that is relevant and sustainable. Although it has been widely observed that new pedagogies are essential in this changing vocational environment, little guidance is emerging for both vocational teachers and teacher educators on what new approaches will enhance institutional vocational learning. This creates the clear need for focussed research to guide potential frameworks for future vocational teaching and learning practice. This paper investigates the challenges of designing effective and sustainable vocational learning environments in institutional settings. In particular, it focuses on what Chappell and Johnston (2003) have described as the ‘zone of maximum disturbance’: the contemporary TAFE system that increasingly has to confront conflicting expectations of its role as a public institutional provider of vocational education. It is apparent that innovative pedagogical frameworks need to emerge within these growing institutional and political constraints to enhance the ability of teachers to create meaningful learning experiences in institutionally-based vocational education.

43. Smith, E. (2010) Pedagogy Not Political Pointscoring: How Training Providers Teach International Students Paper presented at AVETRA 13th Annual Conference *VET Research: Leading and Responding in Turbulent Times* Gold Coast.

2009 was a bad year for Australia's international vocational education and training (VET) industry. Racism affecting international students on the streets and in the national media discouraged students from applying to study in Australia and made international education the centre of political controversy. In such an environment it has been easy to lose sight of the teaching and learning processes that are at the heart of VET for international students. This paper reports on part of a research project, funded by Service Skills Australia that examined VET practitioners in the service industries. As part of that project the author carried out case studies in two Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) that delivered training to substantial numbers of hospitality students and interviewed senior managers from four other RTOs. Staff and students alike reported on the benefits of having international students enrolled in their courses, and reported instances of good practice in pedagogy that have implications well beyond the international student cohort.

44. Walls, S. (2010) Preparing To Teach In TAFE: A Case Study Of Initial Teacher Education In The Victorian Technical And Further Education System Paper presented at AVETRA 13th Annual Conference VET Research: Leading and Responding in Turbulent Times Gold Coast.

This study aims to investigate initial Technical and Further Education (TAFE) teacher education in Victoria and determine methods and models for best preparing teachers for today's Victorian TAFE system. It is a case study of initial TAFE teacher education in Victoria and will pursue responses to the following research questions:

- Accounting for their unique roles and identities how are teachers best prepared to teach in contemporary TAFE?
- What model of teacher preparation best provides for teaching in the Victorian TAFE system today?

This study answers these questions firstly by reviewing the existing literature on the role and identity of a contemporary TAFE teacher; secondly by analysing the current initial teacher preparation for TAFE teachers in Victoria and existing and possible models for TAFE teacher education. Thirdly the study will undertake empirical research to explore the ways teachers are best prepared to teach in contemporary TAFE and their unique roles and identities and finally it will aim to establish a possible good practice model for initial teacher education for the Victorian TAFE context. The research aims to provide an interpretation of the role and professional identity of TAFE teachers as informing the initial teaching preparation that is and could be provided to Victorian TAFE teachers. Specific issues to be explored in the empirical research will be based on the themes and issues that emerge from the literature review.

45. Short, T. (2010) Leadership Development In A Moving Context Paper presented at AVETRA 13th Annual Conference VET Research: Leading and Responding in Turbulent Times Gold Coast.

The success of workplace training initiatives is increasingly connected with how programs of learning are aligned with, and take account of, the organisational context. This is especially true in the area of leadership and management development where Currie (1999) concluded that unless there was congruence between the context of the organisation as perceived by the participants and the development initiative being introduced, the initiative was likely to be unsuccessful. Using selected findings obtained from a two-year research project within the Australian Rail Industry, as part of the CRC for Rail Innovation, this paper draws insight on how leadership and

management capability are being developed in an era of changing contexts. In this setting, context is defined by external characteristics of the rapidly changing environment in which rail organisations operate. Drawing information from the literature on leadership, a selection of rail reports, interview data and a content analysis of learning materials taken from rail organisations, this paper evaluates if current management training programs are developing rail leaders with the knowledge and skills to cope with a selection of ever-changing contexts.

46. Dimitrio, Y. (2010) VET Value Chain –Tasmania Paper presented at AVETRA 13th Annual Conference VET Research: Leading and Responding in Turbulent Times Gold Coast

The Skills Tasmania Service Provider Committee sought to develop an academically and intellectually defensible framework to analyse the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system, which the Committee believes needs to become more outcome-focused rather than process-focused. Value Chain analysis, which is rapidly gaining currency in production and manufacturing, was selected as the tool for this analysis. Value chain analysis looks at the activities and processes of a supply chain to determine where value is created for the consumer. Although the value chain concept was developed for the manufacturing industry, its principles can also be applied to the service sector. However, there is a lack of literature on the application of value chain analysis in the service sector and particularly in the VET sector. The VET Value Chain project commissioned by the Service Provider Committee of Skills Tasmania will map a value chain for VET with the purpose of identifying activities, actions and policy decisions which will enhance value for the consumer. There are three consumers of VET in Tasmania: learners, employers, and Skills Tasmania who is a major purchaser of VET. In the first instance research focuses on the value chain for apprenticeships and traineeships. As part of the project, surveys of employers and individual learners were undertaken in late 2009. The surveys identified the value that these consumers associate with various aspects of apprenticeships and traineeships. A summary of results of these two surveys is included in this paper. The results of the consumer research will be used in the second stage of the project which will involve approaching entities in the chain and investigating possibilities for the improvement of existing value-adding activities or the introduction of new value-adding activities.

47. Black, S. and Reich, A. (2010) ‘The Elephant In The Room’1: Audit Culture And TAFE Teachers. Paper presented at AVETRA 13th Annual Conference VET Research: Leading and Responding in Turbulent Times Gold Coast

Much has been written about the unparalleled changes in Australian VET in the past decade or more, especially as they relate to the work of TAFE teachers and how these teachers respond to aspects of change such as training packages, competition, technology, competency-based training and flexible delivery (e.g. Chappell & Johnston 2003, Harris, Simon & Clayton 2005). More recently, there has been the call for ‘advanced VET practitioners’ with attributes that represent, ‘a new hybrid mix of educational and business thinking’ (Mitchell 2008: 3). Similarly, TAFE corporate policy statements indicate the need for entrepreneurial, innovative and creative teachers, completely in tune with the needs of industry and the market generally (TAFE NSW 2007). However, recent research on the work of head teachers in TAFE NSW (Black 2009a, 2009b), has indicated the problematic nature of teachers adopting the new workplace identities required of them, especially given the excessive time spent on “paperwork” related to compliance (see also Rice 2005). This increased

paperwork has been generated largely in response to the need to comply with new regulatory regimes using audits as a key mechanism for assuring quality of the systems - what could be described as an 'audit culture' (e.g. Apple 2007, Strathern 2000). This paper is an initial exploration of the audit culture in TAFE and its effects on teachers and their identities. It indicates that such is the dominating influence of the audit culture that it has transformed the work of TAFE teachers.

48. Wheelahan, L. (2010) Rethinking Equity In Tertiary Education – Why We Need To Think As One Sector And Not Two Paper presented at AVETRA 13th Annual Conference VET Research: Leading and Responding in Turbulent Times Gold Coast

Equity policy in Australian tertiary education is differentiated by educational sector, with the higher education and vocational education and training sectors having different policies, and in some cases, different definitions of equity groups. This is problematic because pathways from VET to higher education are meant to act as an equity mechanism by providing students from disadvantaged backgrounds with access to higher education. This paper examines equity policies and definitions in both sectors, and it examines data on student pathways within VET and between VET and higher education. It finds that, apart from students with disabilities, students from disadvantaged backgrounds are over-represented in VET and under-represented in higher education. However, students from disadvantaged backgrounds are overrepresented in lower-level VET qualifications and under-represented in higher-level qualifications, particularly in diplomas and advanced diplomas. This matters because diplomas are the 'transition' qualification which VET students use as the basis for admission to higher education. The paper argues that the diploma is the key qualification for equity policy in *both* VET and higher education. Rather than separate VET and higher education equity policies and separate sectoral policies that mean pathways are of some importance only 'at the borders', a *tertiary* education policy framework will be needed that considers equity outcomes and pathways within and between sectors and places these outcomes as key concerns of both sectors. The paper first problematises the extent to which pathways are able to act as a mechanism to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access higher level studies. Second, reasons why we need to consider equity from a postcompulsory or tertiary education perspective are presented, and it argues that the diploma is the key qualification for pathways and thus for equity policy. This is followed by an analysis of the relative position of equity groups in VET. Finally, the paper considers the implications for equity policy.

49. Davids, J. (2010) Teacher Leadership In VET Paper presented at AVETRA 13th Annual Conference VET Research: Leading and Responding in Turbulent Times Gold Coast

Change is a constant and volatile feature of the VET sector; in fact, it is 'a sector that needs saving through effective leadership' (Kelly et al. 2005 p.6). In 2005, the role of Lead Vocational Teacher (LVT) in TAFE Queensland was created. In return for extra pay, LVTs perform extra duties commensurate with their skills and experience. There are currently 983 LVTs (DETA 2008) employed in TAFE Queensland and as yet, the role remains ill-defined. The name Lead Vocational Teacher itself implies leadership in teaching and in fact teachers are expected to take a leading role in the development of product, business partnerships and teaching and assessment practices. Much has been written on the nature of leadership in the school and higher education sectors. However, little is known about teacher leadership in the VET sector. Questions remain

as to ‘the place of leadership in less exalted positions—in the “engine room” of educational change’ (Simkins 2005, p.16) and the influence exercised by all staff, not solely senior leaders, on the culture and direction of an organisation (Lumby 2003, p.284). The lack of substantive power exercised by teachers has meant that there is a paucity of research into the role of teacher leadership, particularly in VET. As the first stage of doctoral research, a series of focus groups was held to explore the way in which the LVT role is currently being deployed within various TAFE Queensland institutes. Lead Vocational Teachers were asked to discuss their current duties and functions, teacher leadership in VET and the potential of the Lead Vocational Teacher role. This paper presents the findings of the research and examines the role that LVTs can play in influencing the direction and development of a TAFE organisation.

50. Balatti, J., Goldman, M, Harrison, P, Elliot. B, Jackson, Smith, G. (2010) A Model of Professional Development Delivery For VET Teachers by VET Teachers: An Evaluation Paper presented at AVETRA 13th Annual Conference VET Research: Leading and Responding in Turbulent Times Gold Coast

Professional development (PD) can be costly with the outcomes often difficult to measure and sometimes, even intangible. Training and education organisations are seeking new ways of responding to the challenge of developing the expertise of their teachers to teach effectively in times characterised by changing student profiles and changing government and community expectations and demands. This paper reports on an 18 month long action research project involving three Queensland TAFE institutes that trialled a grassroots PD model. Three features characterised the model; the PD was planned, prepared and delivered by teachers for teachers. The project included a formal evaluation of the trials. This paper explains the rationale for this model to PD delivery and reports on the results of its implementation. It discusses how and why the model evolved in different ways in the three sites and it analyses the strengths and weaknesses of such an approach to delivering professional development in TAFE institutes. The paper concludes with some insights that the trial offered on how PD fits or can fit in the organisational life of 21st century TAFE institutes.