SPONSORS & EXHIBITORS

AVETRA is grateful to the following, who at the time of publishing this document, have given their support in many different ways:

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Exhibitors:

AVETRA 2011 Conference programme is endorsed by: Australian Government
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“Leaders must be close enough to relate to others, but far ahead enough to motivate them”
J.C. Maxwell

The School of Enterprise, Victoria University and the Chair Academy (USA) are pleased to announce the 2011 Chair Academy leadership Development Program. Registrations are now being accepted for the program commencing in May.

This highly effective program now in its fourteenth year in Australia is built on a foundation of current leadership research and best practices which today’s leaders need to lead their business units in a complex and dynamic workplace.

The Chair Academy Leadership Program has been carefully researched and designed to meet the professional development needs of the current and aspiring academic and administrative managers in the tertiary education sector.

The one year practicum consists of two one week residential which is supported by a structured workplace mentoring program. On successful completion of the one year program participants may apply for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) into the Graduate Certificate in Leadership in Education and Training 21948VIC.

Residential Week: Sunday 15 May to Friday 20 May 2011
Venue: Peppers The Sands Resort, Torquay

Applications close: 15 April 2011

For details of the program and registration, contact:
Virginia Wiggins
Email: virginia.wiggins@vu.edu.au
Phone: 03 9919 7859
AVETRA PRESIDENT’S WELCOME

A very warm welcome to the heart of Melbourne and the apt grandeur of the Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne, which will wrap the Victorian heritage around us during our conference.

Our thanks must go to the AVETRA conference committee who has spent their precious time organising the speakers, venues and papers reviewing for this event.

While it is always an experience to travel across the distances of this land to come to the Annual Conference and meet the diverse members of our Association, this year we should especially welcome nearly thirty visitors from overseas, making our gathering have a very international flavour.

I would urge all conference delegates to meet as many people as possible and especially our international guests. A short conversation often makes some personal links. Those links can prove invaluable when we search for advice, collaboration and critique to develop our research. Chance meetings can be career changing.

This has been a very big year in terms of VET research. AVETRA has made national responses to the VET investigations by the Productivity Commission and Skills Australia citing your research as AVETRA members and drawing on the now major resource of papers from 13 years AVETRA conferences and journal publications. Your contributions to this conference form the backbone of VET research in Australia. From here we build towards VET journals and national grant applications to try and make a difference through influencing policy and practice.

Finally, my greatest thanks go to Berwyn Clayton, the NCVER VET researcher of the year, for making this conference possible by taking on the convenor role.

Dr Llandis Barratt-Pugh
President – AVETRA
AVETRA

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

BERWYN CLAYTON, AVETRA 2011 Conference Convenor, Director, Work-Based Education Research Centre, Victoria University, Footscray, VIC
MIKE BROWN, Senior Lecturer, LaTrobe University, Bundoora, VIC
BARRY GOLDING, Acting Deputy Head of School of Education, University of Ballarat, Ballarat, VIC
LAURI GRACE, Senior Lecturer, Deakin University, Geelong, VIC
STEVEN HODGE, Lecturer, Deakin University, Geelong, VIC
MARK O’ROURKE, Senior Educator, Victoria University, Melbourne, VIC
JOE PAGNOCCOLLO, Teacher, Swinburne University, Hawthorn, VIC
LOUISE PALMER, General Manager, People and Organisational Development, Kangan Institute, Broadmeadows, VIC
GERI PANCINI, Research Fellow, Victoria University, Footscray, VIC
IAN ROBERTSON, Senior Lecturer, RMIT University, Melbourne, VIC
STEFAN SCHUTT, Senior Educator, Victoria University, Footscray, VIC
HELEN SMITH, Senior Research Fellow, RMIT University, VIC
SANDRA WALLS, Executive Director, Learning & Academic Affairs, Box Hill Institute, Box Hill, VIC

VENUES

Pre-conference workshops and Welcome Reception will be held at:
Victoria University
300 Flinders Street
Melbourne VIC 3000 AUSTRALIA
The pre-conference workshops will be held on level 9 and level 10 of the University.

The AVETRA 14th Annual Conference will be held at:
Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne
328 Flinders Street
Melbourne VIC 3000 AUSTRALIA
Tel: +61 3 9250 1888

CONFERENCE SECRETARIAT

Aurélie Favennec
AVETRA 2011 Conference Secretariat
C/- Conference Action Pty Ltd
PO Box 576
Crows Nest NSW 1585 AUSTRALIA
Tel (Main): +61 2 9431 8699
Fax: +61 2 9431 8677
Email: avetra@conferenceaction.com.au
SPEAKER PREPARATION AREA

PowerPoint presentations sent to the Conference Secretariat before the conference will have been passed on to the audio-visual technicians.

However, all speakers are asked to check their audiovisual material before presenting. We ask that you check-in with the audiovisual technicians at the break preceding your presentation, or one hour before, whichever is the greatest, at which point you can hand over your PowerPoint presentation if you haven’t sent it to the Conference Secretariat in advance.

A technician will be at the back of the Ballroom, where the plenary session and concurrent sessions will be held.

PAPERS

Papers annotated with three asterisks have been refereed to comply fully with HERDC (Higher Education Research Data Collection) verification requirements for a conference publication, full written paper refereed. An anonymous refereeing process has been used. Please note that even with papers that are peer-reviewed in this way, AVETRA can accept no responsibility for the quality or veracity of the content.

Note: all papers and PowerPoint presentations will be available on the AVETRA website at the conclusion of the conference (http://avetra.org.au).

REGISTRATION DESK

• Pre-conference Workshops
  The Registration Desk for the workshops on Wednesday will be located on Level 9 at Victoria University.
  Opening hours:
  Wednesday, 27 April 2011 1100 – 1600 hours.

• Welcome Reception
  The Registration Desk for the Welcome Reception on Wednesday will be located on Level 17 at Victoria University.
  Opening hours:
  Wednesday, 27 April 2011 1730 – 1930 hours.

• Conference
  The Registration Desk for the AVETRA 2011 Conference will be located in the Vestibule on the ground floor of the Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne.
  Opening hours:
  Thursday, 28 April 2011 0730 – 1730 hours
  Friday, 29 April 2011 0730 – 1645 hours
Abstracts

Abstracts can be found at the end of this document. Abstracts, PowerPoint presentations and/or full papers will be available on the AVETRA website after the conference (http://avetra.org.au). Delegates will be notified by email when the papers are ready to be viewed online.

Accommodation

- **Room Account:**
  All delegates are reminded to pay their room account prior to departure from their accommodation venue. Please note that the deposit you have paid to the AVETRA 2011 Conference Secretariat has been credited to your room account, however, each delegate is responsible for the payment of incidentals and any further room costs upon departure from the hotel.

- **Check Out & Concierge**
  Check out is requested before 1000 hours at all venues. It is advised you check out before the conference starts on Friday, 29 April 2011 and leave your luggage at concierge at the Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne. This will facilitate your departure. No bags will be kept at the Registration Desk.

Audio/Video Taping of Sessions

Audio or video taping of any of the conference sessions is strictly forbidden.

Credit Cards

Credit cards accepted at the Registration Desk are MasterCard and Visa. Please note that American Express and Diners cards are not accepted.

Dress Code

Dress code during the conference and social functions is smart casual.

Evaluation

Your feedback on the conference and suggestions for the 2012 event will be solicited by an electronic survey shortly after the conference.

Lost & Found

The AVETRA 2011 Conference Secretariat is not responsible for any damaged, lost or stolen articles. Items found during the conference should be handed in to the Registration Desk where they may be claimed.
**Mobile Phone and Pagers**

Delegates are requested to turn off mobile phones and pagers during sessions as they may interfere with the audiovisual equipment in the rooms.

**Name Badges**

All delegates will be given a name badge at registration. For security reasons, we ask you wear your name badge at all time. This name badge is also the official entrance pass to all conference sessions, exhibition area, and teas and lunches each day.

**Non Smoking Policy**

The hotel operates a non-smoking policy in all its accommodation and conference rooms.

**Notice Board**

A notice board will be placed near the Registration Desk where messages received for or between delegates can be displayed. Messages regarding the conference and exhibition will also be placed here.

**Trade Exhibition**

A trade exhibition will be held in the Vestibule and the Atrium, ground floor of the Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne. Arrival tea & coffee, morning tea and afternoon tea refreshments will be served in these areas to enable you to visit the exhibitors whose support to the conference is much appreciated.

**Disclaimer of Liability**

The Organising Committee, including the Conference Secretariat, will not accept liability for damages of any nature sustained by participants or loss of or damage to their personal property as a result of the conference or related events.
Arrival Tea/Coffee, Morning/Afternoon Teas and Lunches

Arrival tea/coffee, morning and afternoon teas will be served in the Vestibule and Atrium, ground floor of the Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne.

Sit down buffet lunches will be served in the Grill Restaurant and the Atrium at the Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne.

Welcome Reception

Sponsored by:

Room: Level 17 Artspace
Venue: Victoria University
Date: Wednesday, 27 April 2011
Time: 1800 – 2000 hours
Cost: Included in Full and One Day Registration Fee
Complimentary for guests

It is hoped all delegates and partners will be able to attend this evening as this is a great opportunity for networking. This evening has been put together and is kindly sponsored by Victoria University.

Pre-Dinner Drinks and Conference Dinner

Room: Atrium and Ballroom, Ground Floor
Venue: Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne
Date: Thursday, 28 April 2011
Time: 1930 – 2300 hours
Cost: $95.00 per person

This year, entertainment has been planned for the enjoyment of all! We hope all delegates and their guests will join us on this occasion to make it a memorable evening of the event. Come and catch up with friends, colleagues and acquaintances and meet with new people while enjoying good food and wine.
IBSA is the Industry Skills Council representing the Business, Telecommunications, Information Technology, Financial Services, Culture and Creative Industries, and Education sectors.

IBSA's principal role involves providing integrated industry intelligence and advice to Skills Australia, government and enterprises on workforce development and skills needs. In particular, this involves actively supporting the development, implementation and continuous improvement of high quality training and workforce development products and services including training packages.

In the education context, IBSA is the sponsor of the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, the entry level qualification for practitioners in the VET sector.

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) is Australia's principal provider of research and statistics about vocational education and training (VET) in Australia.

NCVER's website www.ncver.edu.au is a 'one-stop-shop', providing access to NCVER's latest research, statistics, news and events. It offers access to NCVER's extensive catalogue of publications, which can be downloaded free of charge and the VOCED database www.voced.edu.au.
The TDC is a public company based in Melbourne. Established in 2005, the TDC has been committed to raising the professional standing of the VET workforce through the design and delivery of high quality professional learning programs to meet the strategic needs of VET providers and the emerging practice priorities of VET professionals. The range of programs provided by the TDC address high quality initial and ongoing teacher education, development of VET specialist or non-teaching staff, and leadership and management capability. Through the development and delivery of high quality programs, the TDC targets key issues emerging as VET market dynamics change with new policy directions.

TVET Australia is committed to:
- facilitating reform for vocational education and the creation of an integrated tertiary education sector by 2013.
- fostering quality, equity and innovation.
- engaging participants – industry, providers, governments, regulators, research bodies, and students in all their diversity.

A company owned by all Australian governments, TVET:
- assists the implementation of the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment’s (MCTEE) reform agenda.
- connects vocational education participants through the Councils it serves.
- provides a neutral forum for discussion and balanced advice to ensure informed decisions are made for continuous improvement of vocational education.
Victoria University (VU) is a multi-sector institution (higher education and TAFE) with excellence in teaching, training, research and scholarship. We offer short courses, as well as qualifications in vocational education (TAFE) and higher education. Our learning pathways enable you to move from a certificate course through to an advanced diploma, degree, or postgraduate qualification by coursework or research.

We have more than 50,000 students enrolled at our local campuses and international sites. We operate primarily at campuses in the western suburbs of Melbourne (Australia), Melbourne city centre and locations provided by our partners in Asia and Europe. As the primary university in Melbourne’s western region, we are proud to deliver courses, research and engagement activities that are locally relevant and globally significant.
EXHIBITORS

Britannica Digital Learning
Contact: Linda Wright
Address: Level 1, 90 Mount Street
North Sydney NSW 2060 Australia
Tel: +61 2 99235600
Fax: +61 2 9929 3753
Email: lwright@eb.com.au
Website: http://edu.britannica.com.au

International Journal of Training Research
Contact: James Davidson
Address: PO Box 1027
Maleny QLD 4552 Australia
Tel: +61 7 5435 2900
Fax: +61 7 5435 2911
Email: sales@e-contentmanagement.com
Website: www.e-contentmanagement.com

NCVER
Contact: Colleen Young
Address: Level 11, 33 King William Street
Adelaide SA 5000 Australia
Tel: +61 8 8230 8400
Fax: +61 8 8212 3436
Email: colleen.young@ncver.edu.au
Website: www.ncver.edu.au
EXHIBITORS

RMIT PUBLISHING
Contact: Mark Ly
Address: PO Box 12058 A’Beckett Street
         Melbourne VIC 8006 Australia
Tel:    +61 3 9925 8153
Fax:    +61 3 9925 8134
Email:  mark.ly@rmit.edu.au
Website: www.informit.com.au

TDC LEADING VET WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
Contact: Carol Gellard
Address: Level 1, 478 Albert Street
         East Melbourne VIC 3002 Australia
Tel:    +61 3 9250 6003
Fax:    +61 3 9663 6674
Email:  cgellard@tdc.vic.edu.au
Website: www.tdc.vic.edu.au

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY
Address: PO Box 14428
         Melbourne VIC 8001
Tel:    +61 3 9919 4000
Website: www.vu.edu.au
Pre-conference workshops are being held on
Wednesday, 27 April 2011 at Victoria University,
300 Flinders Street, Melbourne, VIC 3000.

Registration for the workshops will open at 1100
hours on Wednesday, 27 April 2011.

The Registration Desk will be on Level 9 at Victoria
University.
Introducing VOCEDplus: The Tertiary Education Research Database
Rose-Anne Polvere, NCVER, SA

Room: Computer Lab, Level 10
Time: 1130 – 1230 hours

During 2009-10, NCVER undertook a major rebuild of the VOCED database and website to take advantage of the potential of new technologies. In addition, relevant higher education content has been expanded to complement the existing VET focus. Consequently, VOCED has been rebranded to reflect its coverage of tertiary education as it relates to workforce needs, skills development and social inclusion.

The session will begin with an overview and demonstration focusing on:
• New search functionality, filters and sorting options to allow the user to see where full text content is available, and to refine results in a number of useful ways, e.g. by date, by author, by subject, by country or region, and peer review status
• Permanent access to the digitised resources in the VOCEDplus collection
• Browsing of collections, e.g. new titles, VET landmark reports, journals, and other special collections
• ‘Self-serve’ options, such as RSS feeds to provide a ‘favourite’ subject or new titles alert
• Bookmark and share tools

This will be followed by a hands-on session where participants can try the product for themselves and ask questions.
Quality Frameworks for Qualitative Research
Dr Roslyn Cameron, Southern Cross University, QLD

Room: C903, Level 9
Time: 1330 – 1700 hours

Workshop participants will be given a general overview of the development of quality criteria for quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research. Participants will then be introduced to the quality criteria frameworks that have been developed for qualitative research. There appears to be three positions taken within the qualitative research community on the use of quality criteria and these three positions will be explored. Workshop participants will then be asked to critique samples of published international VET based qualitative research and encouraged to explore the prospect/notion of embedding self reflexivity in the conduct and reporting of qualitative research through the application of specific quality criteria.

Ultimately, research is judged on sets of agreed and/or contentious criteria related to the overall rigour, soundness and congruence of reported research within various research traditions. This workshop will benefit AVETRA members and AVETRA conference delegates by exploring this aspect of research with particular reference to qualitative research. The workshop will provide benefits to HDR students, early career researchers and established researchers alike.
Researching Learning and Wellbeing: What Has It Got to Do With VET?
Prof. Barry Golding & Dr Annette Foley, University of Ballarat, VIC

Room: C904, Level 9
Time: 1330 – 1700 hours

This pre-conference workshop draws on insights from recent research, policy and practice initiatives in Australia and Europe that seek to bridge the gap between vocational and adult learning and wellbeing. It seeks to open up some wellbeing aspects of learning that include formal vocational learning, but that also include less formal pre-and post-vocational learning. The workshop draws its inspiration from four main sources.

Aside from these sources, participants will be encouraged in the workshop to share their own insights of researching learning and wellbeing in workshop-style discussion. The workshop will provide participants with insights to counter the widespread (and erroneous) perception that a concern with wellbeing in VET is only about people not in work and that it is necessarily welfarist. On the contrary, diminished wellbeing is also one of the main factors that affect engagement in learning by people of all ages as well as the productivity of people already in work. The workshop poses two overarching questions: ‘Do adults have identities and needs other than as workers?’ and ‘How can these identities and needs be enhanced through learning that promotes health and wellbeing across the lifecourse?’
Looking for Needles in Haystacks? Doing Historical Research
Prof. Tanya Fitzgerald, LaTrobe University, VIC

Room: C905, Level 9
Time: 1330 – 1700 hours

Conducting historical research is often a challenge, as it requires the bringing together of a wide range of sources in order to come up with as accurate an impression of a given moment in time as possible. At times, searching for the clues among a myriad of documents, acts, and facts can be like looking for a needle in a haystack. Looking into the past for patterns and understandings about contemporary educational issues can be highly illuminating and exciting. Historical research can shed light on whether past solutions have been workable, and can be a starting point from which to begin to address these problems. In this workshop the following will be covered:

1. What makes a project historical? And what does this mean for my research?
2. How might I frame historical research questions?
3. What are the steps involved in historical projects?
5. Methods?
6. Data management and data analysis?
7. Where might I publish my work?

This workshop will be highly interactive and engaging. Participants can expect to be challenged and leave with a sense of excitement about the possibilities of historical research. In addition, practical advice will be offered about publishing your work.
Pre-Conference Briefing and Discussion for New Researchers in VET
Dr Sarojni Choy, Griffith University, QLD & Ms Geri Pancini, Victoria University, VIC

Room: C906, Level 9
Time: 1330 – 1700 hours

This workshop is designed specifically for new researchers in the VET field and has several objectives.

1. To provide a forum for new VET researchers to form a network prior to the conference so that the network conversation can continue about the issues raised over the next two days of the conference.

2. To provide an opportunity for new researchers to voice the form of their current projects and gain feedback from and relational with other members of the network.

3. To provide a pre-conference environment where new researchers can raise the issues and dilemmas that they are encountering and gain collegiate feedback.

If you are a first time VET research conference participant, currently engaged in a higher research degree, or in the NCVER Community of Practice for new researchers, this is the workshop for you.
Changing Places: Reflections on 18 Months in the UK Further Education System and What Might Be Coming Our Way
Ms Sue Thompson, Central Institute of Technology, WA

Room: C1049, Level 10  
Time: 1330 – 1700 hours

In this workshop, Sue Thompson will share her recent experiences of working as a Vice Principal at Westminster Kingsway College in central London. In particular, she will discuss her observations and reflections on the quality system; the funding methodology and senior management culture, with particular reference to those aspects of the UK Further Education scene which are influencing developments here in Australia.

Sue believes that the UK's respond to the global economic crisis and current major funding cuts have already created a major shift in priorities within the FE college sector, away from community and adult learning in particular. Sue's observations about how the funding mechanism there leads decision making about curriculum in the UK will be controversial for some but likely to promote lively debate. The area of management culture within senior teams and its flow-down within colleges is also likely to initiate robust conversation at this workshop.
KEYNOTE Speakers
KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Prof Roger Harris
Professor in Adult and Vocational Education, University of South Australia, SA

Roger Harris is Director of the Centre for Research in Education, Equity and Work, and a professor in Adult and Vocational Education within the University of SA. He has had extensive experience in VET teacher education and VET research, with a particular focus on national training reform, and published widely in this area. During 2005-08, he was Director of the national research consortium, Supporting VET providers in building capability for the future, and for the past three years, coordinated the NCVER-funded academic program for Building VET Research Capacity. Current professional activities include serving as a member on the academic boards of two private providers, editor of the Australian Journal of Adult Learning, and Program Leader of the Education and Training Program within the CRC for Rail Innovation. Roger’s research was recognised in 2006 with the inaugural award from AVETRA for “Distinguished Service to Quality VET Research”, in 2008 with the inaugural award at the Australian Training Awards for “VET Researcher of the Year”, and 2010 with a three-month Visiting Research Fellowship at the Institute for Adult Learning in Singapore.

Dr John Rice
National Centre for Vocational Education Research, SA

John Rice joined the National Centre for Vocational Education Research in July, 2010, from the University of Adelaide Business School. Prior to joining NCVER, his research focused on strategic management and innovation issues, with a focus on the organisational (rather than external) drivers of these issues. He is co-author of two text books in the strategy area, and has published more than 30 refereed journal articles in journals including Research Policy, Technovation, the International Journal of Human Resource Management, Economic Modeling and Behaviour & Information Technology. His PhD, in the area of strategic management, was awarded by Curtin University of Technology in 2004. At NCVER he leads the internal research team and works to improve the quality and quantity of NCVER’s research efforts. John lives with his wife and three young children in Largs Bay, Adelaide.
KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Dr Gary Willmott OAM
Visiting Research Fellow and former Executive Director, Institute for Adult Learning Singapore, Singapore

Gary Willmott started his career as a teacher at Broken Hill High School and has worked as a teacher, academic and vocational educator in Canada, South Australia, NSW and Singapore. He has a Masters in Educational Administration from the University of Alberta, Canada and a PhD from Flinders University, Australia. Dr Willmott was Director and CEO of the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA) prior to moving across to the VET sector in NSW in 1994 where he was an Institute Director and Assistant Director General in DET and TAFE NSW. He accepted the position of Deputy Chief Executive of the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) in 2003 and later became the founding Executive Director of the Institute for Adult Learning (IAL) Singapore in 2008 from which he retired in July 2010. He is currently a Visiting Research Fellow at IAL. In 2007 Dr Willmott received and OAM for services to education and training.

A/Prof Leesa Wheelahan
LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Management, University of Melbourne, VIC

Associate Professor Leesa Wheelahan works at the L.H. Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Management at the University of Melbourne. She is interested in tertiary policy, relations between VET and higher education and student equity. She has taught in tertiary education for approximately 17 years, which includes time as a TAFE teacher, in policy development, as an academic developer, and as a teacher of VET teachers. Her current focus is on higher education in TAFE, and she led an NCVER project on this topic. She is leading a similar NCVER project on private providers that offer both VET and higher education, and universities that offer some VET. Leesa led a recently completed project on the quality of teaching in VET, and VET teacher education programs and continuing professional development.
Mr Neil Edwards  
Chief Executive Officer, TVET Australia, VIC

Neil Edwards was appointed to the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO), TVET Australia in May 2010. Immediately prior this appointment, Neil was CEO, Chifley Business School, a position he held since July 2005.

Neil has over 30 years experience in the private and public sectors, having held senior executive positions in both State and Federal government departments. Neil holds directorships on a number of key advisory boards.

Prof Erica Smith  
Dean of Graduate Studies and Professor of Education, University of Ballarat, VIC

Erica Smith is Professor of Education at the University of Ballarat where she leads the VET teacher-training program and is Chair of the University’s Curriculum Committee. Erica has had a seventeen-year career as a VET academic and has also worked in the VET sector as a TAFE teacher, State ITAB Director and RTO manager. Erica’s main research areas currently are apprenticeships and traineeships, VET policy, VET teachers and students’ part-time working. She is co-chair of INAP, the international apprenticeship research network.

Dr Llandis Barratt-Pugh  
Senior Lecturer, Edith Cowan University, WA

Llandis Barratt-Pugh has been a manager, consultant, lecturer and researcher in the Vocational Education and Training sector in both the UK and WA for more than 30 years. Currently a senior lecturer involved in VET, HRD and Leadership for over 18 years at ECU, he has won a number of teaching awards including the inaugural Vice Chancellors award for teaching excellence. His specific research focus is to explore, develop understanding, and conceptualise, the orchestration and management of workplace learning, with specific emphasis upon manager learning. He led the evaluation of the Frontline Management Initiative producing the NCVER reports ‘Paradise nearly Gained’ that have been downloaded over 12,000 times. He is currently President and an executive member of the Australian Vocational Education and Research Association (AVETRA) and Directed the NCVER/AVETRA mentoring network initiative.
**Wednesday, 27 April 2011 — Pre-Conference Workshops — Victoria University**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1030</td>
<td>Registration for Pre-Conference Workshops</td>
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<tr>
<td>1130 – 1230</td>
<td><strong>Workshop 1</strong>  &lt;br&gt; Computer Lab, Level 10  &lt;br&gt; Introducing VOCEDplus: The Tertiary Education Research Database  &lt;br&gt; Rose Anne Polvere, NCVER</td>
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<td>1230 – 1330</td>
<td><strong>Workshop 2</strong>  &lt;br&gt; C903, Level 9  &lt;br&gt; Quality Frameworks for Qualitative Research  &lt;br&gt; Dr Roslyn Cameron, Southern Cross University, QLD</td>
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<td><strong>Workshop 4</strong>  &lt;br&gt; C905, Level 9  &lt;br&gt; Looking for Needles in Haystacks? Doing Historical Research  &lt;br&gt; Prof. Tanya Fitzgerald, LaTrobe University, VIC</td>
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<td><strong>Workshop 5</strong>  &lt;br&gt; C906, Level 9  &lt;br&gt; Pre-Conference Briefing and Discussion for New Researchers in VET  &lt;br&gt; Dr Sarojni Choy, Griffith University, QLD &amp; Ms Geri Pancini, Victoria University, VIC</td>
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<td>1500 – 1700</td>
<td><strong>Workshop 2</strong>  &lt;br&gt; C903, Level 9  &lt;br&gt; Quality Frameworks for Qualitative Research  &lt;br&gt; Dr Roslyn Cameron, Southern Cross University, QLD</td>
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<tr>
<td>1500 – 1700</td>
<td><strong>Workshop 3</strong>  &lt;br&gt; C904, Level 9  &lt;br&gt; Researching Learning and Wellbeing: What Has It Got To Do With VET?  &lt;br&gt; Prof. Barry Golding &amp; Dr Annette Foley, University of Ballarat, VIC</td>
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<tr>
<td>1500 – 1700</td>
<td><strong>Workshop 4</strong>  &lt;br&gt; C905, Level 9  &lt;br&gt; Looking for Needles in Haystacks? Doing Historical Research  &lt;br&gt; Prof. Tanya Fitzgerald, LaTrobe University, VIC</td>
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<td>1500 – 1700</td>
<td><strong>Workshop 5</strong>  &lt;br&gt; C906, Level 9  &lt;br&gt; Pre-Conference Briefing and Discussion for New Researchers in VET  &lt;br&gt; Dr Sarojni Choy, Griffith University, QLD &amp; Ms Geri Pancini, Victoria University, VIC</td>
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<td>1500 – 1700</td>
<td><strong>Workshop 6</strong>  &lt;br&gt; C1049, Level 10  &lt;br&gt; Changing Places: Reflections on 18 Months in the UK Further Education System and What Might Be Coming Our Way  &lt;br&gt; Ms Sue Thompson, Central Institute of Technology, WA</td>
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<td>1800 – 2000</td>
<td><strong>Welcome Reception</strong>  &lt;br&gt; Victoria University, Level 17 Artspace  &lt;br&gt; Welcome  &lt;br&gt; Launch of the final report of the study on the Quality of Teaching in VET — undertaken by Leesa Wheelahan (LH Martin Institute) and Gavin Moodie (RMIT)  &lt;br&gt; Vice Chancellor Professor Peter Dawkins</td>
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### Thursday, 28 April 2011 – Day 1 – Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne

**0730** Registration and Arrival Tea & Coffee – The Vestibule and The Atrium, Ground Floor

**0815 – 0845** Welcome and Conference Opening  
*Dr Llandis Barratt-Pugh, AVETRA President*  
Ballroom, Ground Floor

*Prof Roger Harris, University of South Australia, SA*  
Chair: Llandis Barratt-Pugh, AVETRA President  
Ballroom, Ground Floor

**0930 – 0955** Morning Tea – The Vestibule And the Atrium, Ground Floor

**0955 – 1225** Concurrent Session 1

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| Tertiary Sector – Rethinking Pedagogies & Pathways  
Chair: Kevin Heys  
Rendezvous 3, Ground Floor | VET Work & VET Workers  
Chair: Barry Golding  
Ballroom B, Ground Floor | Reflecting Back… Lessons for the Future?  
Chair: Erica Smith  
Ballroom A, Ground Floor | Access & Success – Learner Engagement  
Chair: Mike Brown  
Rendezvous 4, 1st Floor | Skilling for Sustainable Future  
Chair: Geri Pancini  
Heritage Lounge, 1st Floor | Interactive Session  
Chair: Helen Smith  
Rendezvous 2, Ground Floor |

**0955 – 1025** Abstract 2***  
*VET in Higher Education: Rethought Pathways, Pedagogy or Pragmatism?*  
*Sophia Arkoudis*

**Abstract 15***  
*VET and VET Educators: Understanding Teacher Dilemmas in Providing Quality Educational Experience to International Students in Brisbane*  
*Sonal Nakar*

**Abstract 3***  
*The Pathology of Imagination and its Cure*  
*Kenneth Meyer*

**Abstract 4**  
*Investigating the Measurability of the Generic Skills of Apprentices in the Traditional Trades*  
*Joe Pagnoccolo*

**Abstract 10**  
*How Do We Know Our Chinese Teaching Partners are Doing a Good Job? A Project to Determine Good Practice in Supervision of Offshore TAFE Teachers and in Moderation of Courses*  
*Kate Dempsey*

**Abstract 80***  
*Fruitful Learning Ecologies: Building Effective Partnerships*  
*Jude Cooke, Nola Randall-Mohk*

**1025 – 1035** Change room
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<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>1035 – 1105</td>
<td>Abstract 100</td>
<td>UQ College – Opening Up New Pathways</td>
<td>Gerry Corcoran</td>
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<td>Abstract 24</td>
<td>Upskilling VET Practitioners: Technical Currency or Professional Obsolescence</td>
<td>Berwyn Clayton, Regan Harding, Melinda Toze</td>
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<td>Abstract 5</td>
<td>A Methodological Scan of NCVER Funded Research 1992–2010</td>
<td>Rodyn Cameron</td>
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<td>Abstract 8</td>
<td>Sustaining E-Tech Innovations – What Are the Success Factors for Australian Organisations?</td>
<td>Victor Gallan, Melanie Wonall</td>
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<td>Abstract 13***</td>
<td>Motivating Apprentice Chefs to Stay the Course: Understanding Expectations</td>
<td>Richard McDermott</td>
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<td>Abstract 80*** (continued)</td>
<td>Fruitful Learning Ecologies: Building Effective Partnerships</td>
<td>Jude Cooke, Nola Randall-Molik</td>
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<td>1105 – 1115</td>
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<td>1115 – 1145</td>
<td>Abstract 28</td>
<td>Measuring the Socioeconomic Status of Young People</td>
<td>Patrick Lim</td>
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<td>Abstract 26***</td>
<td>Management of Knowledge in Transnational VET: Diversity of Practice in Three Transnational Models</td>
<td>Mohammad Ali Rahimi</td>
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<td>Abstract 11***</td>
<td>Change and VET – Thinking the Unthinkable</td>
<td>Don Zoellner</td>
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<td>Abstract 49***</td>
<td>Teaching VET in Victorian Secondary Schools</td>
<td>Mike Brown</td>
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<td>Abstract 14***</td>
<td>Lessons from an Evaluation of &quot;TrainingPlus&quot;: An Attempt to Bridge a Cultural Divide through a Training and Employment Initiative</td>
<td>Keith Castle, John Guenther</td>
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<td>Abstract 70</td>
<td>Improving Qualification Outcomes – Successful Socially Inclusive Teaching and Learning Strategies</td>
<td>Carol-Anne Blecich, Jane Kelly</td>
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<td>1145 – 1155</td>
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<td>1155 – 1225</td>
<td>Abstract 33</td>
<td>Allowing the Tail to Wag the Dog: Practical Strategies for Promoting an Integrated Tertiary Education Sector</td>
<td>Brian Knight</td>
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<td>Abstract 29***</td>
<td>&quot;Do You Want VET With That?&quot; Some Implications for Lifelong and Lifewide Learning in an Era of Universal VET</td>
<td>Annette Foley, Barry Golding</td>
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<td>Abstract 21***</td>
<td>Demand for Apprenticeships and Traineeships: What Are the Implications for the Future?</td>
<td>Erica Smith</td>
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<td>Abstract 62***</td>
<td>Beyond Deficit Approaches to Teaching and Learning: Literacy and Numeracy in VET Courses</td>
<td>Stephen Black, Keiko Yasukawa</td>
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<td>Abstract 20***</td>
<td>Management Practices and Innovation Capacity in Enterprises</td>
<td>Andy Smith</td>
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<td>Abstract 72</td>
<td>Completing for Success @ SWSI</td>
<td>Carol-Anne Blecich, Rosemary Lasaro</td>
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<td>1225 – 1315</td>
<td>LUNCH – THE GRILL RESTAURANT, LOWER GROUND FLOOR AND THE ATRIUM, GROUND FLOOR</td>
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<td>13:15-16:25</td>
<td>Tertiary Sector – Rethinking Pedagogies &amp; Pathways Chair: Michele Simons Rendezvous 3, Ground Floor</td>
<td>VET Work &amp; VET Workers Chair: Beryn Clayton Ballroom B, Ground Floor</td>
<td>Reflecting Back... Lessons for the Future? Chair: Santini Choy Ballroom A, Ground Floor</td>
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Abstract 39*** Two Faces Have I – Knowledge in the “Mixed Sector” Vocational Curriculum Chris Corbel</th>
<th>Abstract 36 VET Leadership: Context, Characteristics and Capabilities Justin Brown</th>
<th>Abstract 50 Storming the Walls: Re-Engaging Students in Vocational Education Stuart Middleton</th>
<th>Abstract 34*** Getting Senior Schooling to Work: Work Based Learning in a Senior Secondary School in Hong-Kong Peter Kell</th>
<th>Abstract 56*** Communication is Key: An Examination of the Development of Communication Key Skills in Vocational Education in China Ann Harris</th>
<th>Abstract 6*** Quality Frameworks and Procedural Checklists for Mixed Methods Research Roslyn Cameron</th>
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<td>1515 – 1545</td>
<td>Abstract 53*** Rethinking Pathways: Comparing the Career Capital of Knowledge Workers in Australia and Singapore. Roger Harris</td>
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<td>1555 – 1625</td>
<td>Abstract 64 Supporting Successful Learning Pathways Using E-Portfolios and Mobile Devices. Allison Miller</td>
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<td>1625 – 1650</td>
<td>Afternoon tea — The Vestibule and the Atrium, Ground Floor</td>
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<td>1650 – 1735</td>
<td>Keynote 2: The Role of the Market in Transforming Training and Knowledge to Superior Performance. Dr. John Rice, NCVER, SA. Chair: Melinda Waters, Business Development Manager, TDC</td>
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<td>1735 – 1815</td>
<td>AVETRA AGM</td>
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<td>1930 – 2300</td>
<td>Pre-Dinner Drinks, Dinner &amp; Awards Presentations. The Atrium and Ballroom, Ground Floor</td>
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Friday, 29 April 2011 – Day 2 – Rendezvous Hotel Melbourne

0730 – 0830  IBSA Breakfast Session (attendance upon invitation only)
Tony Cusack, Innovation and Business Skills Australia, VIC
Rendezvous 2, Ground Floor

0800  REGISTRATION AND ARRIVAL TEA & COFFEE – THE VESTIBULE AND THE ATRIUM, GROUND FLOOR

0830 – 0845  Welcome
Ballroom, Ground Floor

0845 – 0930  KEYNOTE 3: Skills, Jobs, Productivity, Growth: An Asian Perspective on the Research and Policy Agenda
Dr Gary Willmott OAM, Visiting Research Fellow and Former Executive Director, Institute for Adult Learning Singapore, Singapore
Chair: Llandis Barratt-Pugh, AVETRA President
Ballroom, Ground Floor

0930 – 0955  MORNING TEA – THE VESTIBULE AND THE ATRIUM, GROUND FLOOR

0955 – 1225  CONCURRENT SESSION 3

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<td>Chair: Mike Brown Rendezvous 3, Ground Floor</td>
<td>Chair: Laura Grace Ballroom B, Ground Floor</td>
<td>Chair: Mark O'Rourke Ballroom A, Ground Floor</td>
<td>Chair: Louise Palmer Rendezvous 4, 1st Floor</td>
<td>Chair: Ros Brennan-Kennis Heritage Lounge, 1st Floor</td>
<td>Chair: Ian Robertson Rendezvous 2, Ground Floor</td>
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0955 – 1025  Abstract 87***
Mine! No Mine! A Critical Analysis of Cross-Sectoral Design
Barbara Cram

1025 – 1035  Change room

0955 – 1025  Abstract 66
Paths to Promotion
Annette Bonnici, Linda Simon

1025 – 1035  Abstract 31***
A Systems Design Approach for Investigating Australian TAFE Design Education
Christopher Klimek

1025 – 1035  Abstract 18***
Modeling of Vocational Excellence: An International Perspective
Helen Smith

1025 – 1035  Abstract 92
Indigenous Models of Workforce Development and Training in Northern Australia
Ruth Wallace

1025 – 1035  Abstract 96
AVETRA Annual Conference Papers, 1998-2009: Trends and Implications
Ian Robertson
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<td>Pedagogical Practices Across the Tertiary Sector: Summarising the Literature on the Pedagogical Support for Students Moving from VET into Universities</td>
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<td><strong>Abstract 88</strong>*</td>
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<td>Pedagogical Practices Across the Tertiary Sector: Summarising the Literature on the Pedagogical Support for Students Moving from VET into Universities</td>
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<td><strong>Abstract 77</strong></td>
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<td>The Value of Evaluating Teaching Practices for Continuous Improvement</td>
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<td><strong>Abstract 103</strong></td>
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<td>Sizing-Up Offshore VET: The Data-Policy Nexus</td>
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<td><strong>Abstract 9</strong>*</td>
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<td>VET Assessment: A Student Perspective</td>
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<td>Living and Learning in a Company Town: Social Inclusion, Sustainability and VET</td>
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<td><strong>Abstract 96 (continued)</strong></td>
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<td>1115 – 1145</td>
<td>The Ignored Pedagogical Dimension in VET Delivery of the Training Packages</td>
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<td>The Ignored Pedagogical Dimension in VET Delivery of the Training Packages</td>
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<td>The Textual Coordination of Front Line Work in VET</td>
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<td><strong>Abstract 35</strong>*</td>
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<td>Legitimising Evaluation for Vocational Learning: From Bastard Sibling to Equal Brother</td>
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<td>My Point of View: Using E-Learning to Improve Trades-Based Learning Experiences for Students and Their Teachers</td>
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<td>The Aque Dux Project at Harvester Technical College: An Approach to Evidence Based Sustainability Curriculum Development and Applied Learning</td>
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<td>TAFE Development Centre (TDC) Model — VET Practitioner Framework</td>
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<td>Reflecting Back… Lessons for the Future?</td>
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<td>Challenges, Risks, Good Practice in Offshore Delivery of VET</td>
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<td>Perspectives on TAFE Teachers’ Professional Identity: Dualities and Dilemmas</td>
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<td>Exploring the Role of Australian Trade Unions in the Education of Workers</td>
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<td>Technical and Vocational Education Voices for Sustainable Economies — Are We Really Listening?</td>
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### CONCURRENT SESSION 4

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<td>Skilling for Sustainable Future</td>
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<td>Chair: Annette Foley</td>
<td>Chair: Alicia Boyle</td>
<td>Chair: Ruth Wallace</td>
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<td>1315 – 1345</td>
<td>Abstract 94***</td>
<td>Abstract 74***</td>
<td>Abstract 48***</td>
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<td>Challenges for Continuing Professional Learning: Singapore’s Trainers</td>
<td>New Tools for Old Hands: E-Portfolios for Career and Professional Development in Remote Education Workforces</td>
<td>Tracking the Key Policies on Sustainability, VET and Transition to a Low Carbon Economy</td>
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<td>Helen Bound</td>
<td>Alicia Boyle</td>
<td>Mike Brown, Damon Cartledge</td>
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<td>Paving a Better Path: Improving Transition to University for VET Students</td>
<td>The Transferability of Vocational Education and Learning from the Military Context to the Civilian Context</td>
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<td>Janelle Davis</td>
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<td>KEYNOTE 4: What, Only Two Heads? The Hydra of VET Research</td>
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<td>A/Prof Leesa Wheelahan, LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership &amp; Management, University of Melbourne, VIC</td>
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<td>Chair: Anne Jones, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Director TAFE, Victoria University</td>
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<td>1450 – 1530</td>
<td>PANEL SESSION: How Research Can Inform and Support the Tertiary Education System of the Future</td>
<td>Mr Neil Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, TVET Australia, VIC</td>
<td>Sponsored by: Victoria University</td>
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<td>Respondents: Prof Erica Smith, Immediate Past AVETRA President &amp; Dr Llandis Barratt-Pugh, Current AVETRA President</td>
<td>Chair: Anne Jones, Deputy Vice Chancellor and Director TAFE, Victoria University</td>
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<td>Chair: Ruth Wallace, Vice President AVETRA</td>
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<td>Council of International Students Australia (CISA): The Process and Importance of a National International Student Representative Body Formation — Arfa Noor, General Member VET/TAFE — CISA National, VIC</td>
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AVETRA 2011

Abstracts

(Research papers abstracts are listed in numerical order and come after the Keynote speakers’ abstracts)

*** Refereed papers – Papers annotated with three asterisks have been refereed to comply fully with HERDC (Higher Education Research Data Collection) verification requirements for a conference publication, full written paper refereed. An anonymous refereeing process has been used. Please note that even with papers that are peer-reviewed in this way, AVETRA can accept no responsibility for the quality or veracity of the content.

Note: all papers will be available on the AVETRA website at the conclusion of the Conference

Presenter: Names that are underlined are authors presenting the session.
ABSTRACTS

Keynote Speakers
Professor Roger Harris, University of South Australia, Adelaide, SA, Australia

In an early source on Australian VET research, Butterworth (1992) argued that there needed to be a significant increase in the volume of research. He highlighted the need for more focal points for research, enhanced levels of funding and improved quality, and lamented the lack of an overall research culture and ethos in the sector. Two years later (1994), he entitled his next paper: ‘VET research in Australia: a long way to go’, and still by 1997 VET research was labelled (Fooks) the ‘missing link’ as a base to underpin VET policy formulation. Since then, there have been publications on VET research that embrace its governance, commercialisation, improvement, R&D issues, dilemmas, quality and diversity, directions and future, as well as the lessons learnt, whether its past constrains it, whether it’s worthwhile, how it might be advanced, and its impact. So how far have we come? This 2011 conference has been designed to reflect and to project on VET research: I have been invited to look back. In doing so, I am mindful of what happened to Orpheus. Dare we look back? In the 1990s, our VET research was necessarily tentative, exploratory and descriptive: it had to develop a knowledge base. I believe we have come a long way in a relatively short period, particularly since No Small Change (McDonald et al., 1993), and we can be proud of our progress. Now we have a very solid foundation upon which we can all build in increasingly sophisticated ways. It is a critical stage in the unfolding of VET research in Australia. What lessons, therefore, are we to learn in looking back? Have we merely travelled the path from cocky ignorance to miserable uncertainty (Mark Twain)?
KEYNOTE PRESENTATION 2:
1650 – 1735 hours

THE ROLE OF THE MARKET IN TRANSFORMING TRAINING AND KNOWLEDGE TO SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE
Dr John Rice, NCVER, SA, Australia

Training and development of employees increases the value and breadth of employee capabilities and knowledge, although this improvement, we suggest, cannot drive improved competitive performance in the absence of effective commercialisation of these capabilities. We propose and test a model of training and organisational performance, mediated by effective market engagement and transformation by firms.

We find, as we anticipate, no direct link between training and performance, although a significant and positive path between training and performance when mediated through effective and contemporaneous market engagement.

Dr John Rice is sponsored by:
SKILLS, JOBS, PRODUCTIVITY, GROWTH: AN ASIAN PERSPECTIVE
ON THE RESEARCH AND POLICY AGENDA

Dr Gary Willmott OAM, Visiting Research Fellow and former Executive Director,
Institute for Adult Learning Singapore, Singapore

As the major developed economies emerge from the Global Financial Crisis new issues and challenges are being confronted by the vocational and continuing education and training sector. In several countries, Singapore and Australia among them, these include the sustainability of the labour market, the imperative of productivity growth, widening skills & income disparities and maintaining the international competitiveness of key industry sectors where jobs are increasingly trans-nationally mobile. How does the vocational and continuing education engage with this agenda? To what extent is training and skills formation an effective response to these issues? What is the emerging learning agenda for adult educators? And what is the emerging research agenda? This presentation will address these questions drawing upon the recent experience of Singapore as an example and with some comparative analysis from the UK and Australia.
WHAT, ONLY TWO HEADS? THE HYDRA OF VET RESEARCH

A/Prof Leesa Wheelahan, LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Management, University of Melbourne, VIC, Australia

The rapid change that is reshaping tertiary education in Australia shows no signs of slowing. While government policies influence and help shape change, economic, social and cultural changes are more fundamental. Martin Trow’s famous 1974 typology of elite, mass and universal higher education systems can help us understand the magnitude of these changes. Trow describes an elite higher education system as one where less than 15% of the population participate, while between 15 – 50% participate in a mass system, and more than 50% in a universal system. Australia has a universal tertiary education system, and it is on the cusp of a universal higher education system. New institutional types are emerging while the sectoral divide is being reworked. As a consequence, new opportunities arise, but so do new divisions and problems. In particular, the role of vocational education and training and its relationship to higher education will need to be considered. This paper will draw together findings from several research projects to consider how tertiary education in Australia is changing, the new institutional types that are emerging, and the impact of government policy on tertiary education in general and on emerging new institutional types in particular. The challenges are many. The move to universal higher education poses challenges for curriculum and pedagogy, and consequently for governments, institutions and teachers. VET institutions that offer higher education face challenges as they diversify their provision. Policy attention on teacher development and institutional capacity will be needed to ensure the quality of Australia’s education system and student outcomes.

A/Prof Leesa Wheelahan is sponsored by:
PANEL SESSION:
1450 – 1530 hours

HOW RESEARCH CAN INFORM AND SUPPORT THE TERTIARY EDUCATION SYSTEM OF THE FUTURE

Mr Neil Edwards, Chief Executive Officer, TVET Australia, VIC, Australia

Respondents:
Prof Erica Smith, Dean of Graduate Studies and Professor of Education, University of Ballarat, VIC, Australia
Dr Llandis Barratt-Pugh, Senior Lecturer, Edith Cowan University, WA, Australia

The immense opportunity for individuals and the economy of the coming of the integrated tertiary system will not be realised unless the special disciplines of vocational learning and assessment are recognised properly in the standards which will govern the system. That will require better distinguishing vocational disciplines from higher education disciplines so they are not ‘colonised’ by higher education in the process of integration, while at the same time demonstrating how the disciplines are commensurable to support credit transfers. This is rich territory for VET research, but policy makers, standard-setters and regulators need to have it sorted out quickly. The research effort will be made tricky by the fact that the language of research is the language of higher education, while the language of vocational education is the language of work. At the same time, the new design model for Training Packages illustrates that it is feasible.
This presentation reports on the preliminary findings from a project funded by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research to investigate the provision of vocational education and training by higher education institutions. The project involved a review of the literature, an analysis of the sketchy statistics available on enrolments in Australian mixed sector tertiary institutions and interviews with 61 people. The study found that higher education institutions offer vocational education for a variety of reasons: as a historical legacy, as a result of a merger or acquisition, to broaden the institution’s role and source of students, and as a part of vertical integration – incorporating the sources of baccalaureate students such as preparatory colleges and senior secondary colleges as well as vocational education colleges. The study also found that while sectoral designation was very important for TAFE institutes offering higher education programs, it was of far less importance to mainly higher education institutions offering vocational programs. Of far greater importance for public and private providers of vocational education were the different funding arrangements from governments. The findings from the study seem to indicate that Australian mixed sector institutes of tertiary education are developing partly for pragmatic reasons and partly to improve student pathways from vocational to higher education and to desirable occupations. Distinctions in pedagogy develop from differences in curriculum, field, industry orientation and teachers’ response to students, which seem to be indirectly related to sector.
**Theme: Reflecting Back… Lessons for the Future?**

**CONCURRENT SESSION 1C**  
**Time: 0955 – 1025 hours**  
**Room: Ballroom A, Ground Floor**

**THE PATHOLOGY OF IMAGINATION AND ITS CURE**  
**Kenneth Meyer**  
NSW TAFE Wagga & Charles Stuart University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia

Imagination is often not valued by adults and is often seen as a sign of immaturity. Many in the education community, and wider, view imagination as something we need to grow out of so that we can face facts and behave as adults. As we reflect back, imagination is seen as escapism and described metaphorically as a disease, that is, something that needs to be eliminated or cured. During this presentation I examine a children's story book as an indicator and commentary on the pedagogical culture generally and its treatment of imagination (pun intended). I will then show that imagination has been at best marginalised, if not eliminated from much of education today, particularly in my domain of Vocational Education and Training (VET). This diminution of the importance of imagination results in a corresponding decrease in the quality of learning which comes from our underpinning assumptions about life or our ‘world view’. The implications for this critique is to encourage all educators and students alike to know and understand their own world view, how it will affect their pedagogy and in the end their teaching and the learning skills of their students as a lesson for the future. This perspective has emerged from research in the domain of electrical physics as the relationship between imagination and the learning of electrical physics was explored. The research approach was ethnographic in nature using a blended approach of participatory action and narrative research. The research participants were a class of eighteen full time Diploma of Electronics and Communications students over three TAFE terms during 2009/10. The students expanded their imaginative skills as a way of expanding their conceptual skills in electrical physics. The result, for this presentation is a better understanding of imagination within the culture generally and VET education specifically.
INVESTIGATING THE MEASURABILITY OF THE GENERIC SKILLS OF APPRENTICES IN THE TRADITIONAL TRADES

Joe Pagnoccolo
Swinburne University, Hawthorn, VIC, Australia

(Work In Progress)

This [presentation] will focus on the measurability of an apprentice's individual generic skills and the relationship between these skills and their behaviour.

Generic skills are important as they influence the productivity of an organisation and are transferable when change is required. The transferability of generic skills depends on the quality of those skills and this in turn influences the supply and demand of skills needed in the workforce.

Skill shortages in various sectors of the economy, namely the traditional trades, have an impact on the nation's economy. Some of the drivers of the skills shortage include the ageing workforce, the attrition rate of Australia's apprentices, and technological advancements that have resulted in the workforce needing to up skill to retain employment.

A review of the literature found that generic skills are difficult to quantify and therefore there is still a lack of agreement regarding a definition. This [presentation] will discuss why generic skills are important, what definition will be used for the study, and what benefits it can have for stakeholders involved with apprentices.

As this is the first stage of the research, data was collected from apprentices using quantitative methods. The methodology used will be discussed including how the self report instrument used in this study was designed. It will also draw from examples of quantitative test instruments for comparison and use case studies to bring together the project's aims.

This [presentation] will present on the work so far and explain how it is part of the research project titled “Emotional Intelligence and Generic Skills Of Apprentices in the Traditional Trades”.
Abstract 5

Thursday, 28 April 2011

Theme: Reflecting Back… Lessons for the Future?

CONCURRENT SESSION 1C
Time: 1035 – 1105 hours
Room: Ballroom A, Ground Floor

A METHODOLOGICAL SCAN OF NCVER FUNDED RESEARCH 1992-2010
Roslyn Cameron
Central Queensland University, Gladstone, QLD, Australia

The National Council for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) is a not-for-profit company owned by state, territory and federal ministers responsible for training which has been funding VET research in Australia since 1992. The aim of the study is to provide a retrospective methodological map of government funded VET research as reported by NCVER for a nineteen year period (1992-2010). The aim of the study is not to judge research usage or impact but to investigate possible trends over time in respect to research quality and levels of methodological innovation and rigor. The methodology employed to conduct this study has been content analysis of qualitative secondary data publically available online through the NCVER webpage. The sample includes research report descriptions of NCVER funded research projects (managed research projects and in house research projects) conducted from between 1992 to 2010 (n=332). Data collected from the research project descriptions includes basic identifying demographic information on authors (number, gender, affiliations), research theme, along with data on research design, research methods, data sources, sampling and sequencing. The preliminary findings will be discussed within the context of recent research on the increasing use of mixed methods and interdisciplinary teams in commissioned research in the US and UK. The [presentation] concludes with some insights and thoughts on VET based research methodologies and approaches for the future.
QUALITY FRAMEWORKS AND PROCEDURAL CHECKLISTS FOR MIXED METHODS RESEARCH

Roslyn Cameron
Central Queensland University, Gladstone, QLD, Australia

Procedural checklists and quality frameworks for research are very useful pedagogic tools for teaching new researchers foundational aspects of research process and final product reporting. They are also very helpful to established researchers in assisting with the review of research papers and articles submitted to conferences and journals as well as for the examination of research dissertations. The purpose of this [presentation] is to provide an overview of research quality criteria in quantitative and qualitative research before presenting a synthesis of quality frameworks and procedural checklists emerging from the field of mixed methods research. Cameron (2010) studied the methodological incidence of research approaches utilised in Australian vocational education and training (VET) based research and found that qualitative (45%) and mixed methods research (15%) were dominant. The recent development of mixed methods research quality frameworks is presented and compared to those used in quantitative and qualitative research paradigms. The quality frameworks emerging from the mixed methods research movement include: a set of four criteria developed by Sale and Brazil (2004); quality prompts from Bryman, Becker and Sempik (2008) and; a six item framework developed by O’Cathain, Murphy and Nicholl (2008) referred to as, Good Reporting of a Mixed Methods Study (GRAMMS). The [presentation] concludes with some future projections on research training for new VET researchers.
Theme: Access & Success – Learner Engagement

CONCURRENT SESSION 1D
Time: 1035 – 1105 hours
Room: Rendezvous 4, First Floor

SUSTAINING E-TECH INNOVATIONS – WHAT ARE THE SUCCESS FACTORS FOR AUSTRALIAN ORGANISATIONS?
Annie Fergusson², Victor Callan¹, Kaye Bowman³
¹University of Queensland, St Lucia, QLD, Australia
²The Australian Flexible Learning Framework, Adelaide, SA, Australia
³Consultant, Sydney, NSW, Australia

In Australia, there is little evidence of prior examinations into the sustaining and embedding of e-learning. At the same time, the VET sector has led the way, and in drawing from the experiences of VET organisations and their partners, the current research is among the first Australian examinations of our success in sustaining e-learning innovations.

The research conducted in 2010 brings together, and reviews, evidence for the sustained impact of various e-learning initiatives in Australian organisations that at some time have been funded by the Australian Flexible Learning Framework.

In summary, this report addresses two critical questions:
Q1. What is the evidence around how Australian organisations are sustaining e-learning?
Q2. Going forward, what factors might guide the achievement of more sustainable e-learning innovations in the future?

Three research methods were used to investigate these questions:
1. A review of past research around sustaining e-learning to identify critical success factors
2. A meta-analysis of Australian Flexible Learning Framework funded initiatives to examine their contributions to initiating and sustaining e-learning innovations, and to provide a rationale for the choice of the case study organisations
3. An examination of 10 Australian cases around their e-learning journey and the role of seven key factors in determining their success to date around the implementation and embedding of e-learning

Following a rigorous selection process, 10 organisations were identified that differed in size, industry and location. Case studies were conducted for each organisation, with each case organised around the findings from the application of a seven factor diagnostic tool.

Senior leadership support, organisational strategy, often a dedicated e-learning strategy and a strong business case of the benefits to learners, staff and industry partners are highlighted as critical drivers in sustaining e-learning. Major barriers to sustaining e-learning for most organisations include the lack of a strategic plan, a lack of funding and a lack of access to IT expertise or support.
**VET ASSESSMENT: A STUDENT PERSPECTIVE**

Larry Smith¹, Berwyn Clayton²

¹University of New England, Armidale, NSW, Australia
²Victoria University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

This [presentation] provides insights into the perceptions and perspectives of vocational education students regarding the relevance and quality of the assessment processes they have experienced in the VET sector. It is based on a series of semi-structured interviews (Borg&Gall 1989) conducted over a two year period with 132 vocational learners. The focus of the interviews was on what the students were actually thinking and feeling about the assessment process as they experienced it. Purposive sampling was used, with the final sample generally representative of the Australian vocational education and training student population with respect to training provider, geographic location, gender, cultural background, age and industry sector. A thematic approach (Leedy 1997) was used to analyse the data, with the focus on the common ‘themes’ (sets of related issues, suggestions, perspectives) that emerged from an holistic analysis of the data. The reporting of the findings in the [presentation] includes actual comments made by students. Key findings include: quality assessment processes are seen to be essential for giving industry credibility to the qualification; the nature and quality of the assessment process is closely linked to student self-perception as a learner; current assessment processes are frequently seen to focus on the quantity rather than the quality of the evidence collected; written tests and examinations are seen to significantly disadvantage learners with inadequate literacy skills, and generally are not believed to be a powerful way of validating the outcomes of learning; assessment standards and processes are seen to exhibit marked inconsistencies across providers for students undertaking the same programs of study or for adults seeking recognition of their prior learning; ungraded competency-based assessment processes are not perceived to provide a strong motivation to students to achieve excellence; and there are widespread concerns among students about the educational and industry-based credibility of some assessors.
HOW DO WE KNOW OUR CHINESE TEACHING PARTNERS ARE DOING A GOOD JOB? A PROJECT TO DETERMINE GOOD PRACTICE IN SUPERVISION OF OFFSHORE TAFE TEACHERS AND IN MODERATION OF COURSES

Kate Dempsey
Victorian TAFE International, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

One of the ways in which VET providers are strategically positioning themselves for sustainability in future is to engage in international education. Recent estimates suggest Australian TAFE has more offshore students than it does onshore international students (NCVER estimates there are around 44,000 students offshore enrolled in Australian TAFE courses and AEI figures indicate around 33,000 international students are studying at TAFE in Australia).

However operating offshore is complex and ensuring partner teaching staff members have qualifications in their field as well as a teaching qualification is problematic to both assess and supervise. Victorian TAFE International (VTI) is an incorporated association of TAFEs in Victoria that work internationally and it has produced a Discussion Paper called ‘Supervision and Moderation for Offshore Delivery: VTI Guide to Good Practice in Transnational Education’.

The aim of the 12-month project was to provide VTI member institutes with a set of options to draw upon in order to meet the AQTF requirements in relation to ‘qualified teachers’ as they apply to overseas delivery.

The Discussion Paper highlights the practical difficulties of working with teachers who may be qualified in a different system and yet still require the Certificate IV in Training & Assessment. It raises questions regarding the lack of flexibility of current AQTF requirements in relation to operating offshore. It asks: what makes a good TAFE teacher overseas? How do we evaluate current competency of teaching staff that are based in China? How do we supervise local teaching staff? How do we ensure that the outcomes of our courses are equivalent in China to what a student would receive here in Australia?

It is financially and practically challenging to provide the Certificate IV in TAE offshore. This [presentation] will summarise the Discussion Paper and its key findings. In addition, it will speak to the process of developing the Discussion Paper collaboratively amongst 16 independent TAFE institutes and dual sector universities in Victoria.
Theme: Reflecting Back… Lessons for the Future?

CONCURRENT SESSION 1C
Time: 1115 – 1145 hours
Room: Ballroom A, Ground Floor

CHANGE AND VET – THINKING THE UNTHINKABLE
Don Zoellner
Charles Darwin University, Alice Springs, NT, Australia

The story of Vocational Education and Training is guided by a grand narrative which consists of five elements. This [presentation] will explore the most commonly cited element – the notion of relentless, disruptive change. If the future of VET is being created on a foundation built upon an uncritical acceptance of turbulent change – what are the consequences if the widely held view is not accurate? The theoretical perspectives of Michel Foucault and their further adaptations by Peter Miller, Nikolas Rose and Ian Hacking as to how governments operate in advanced liberal democracies and the importance of the use of statistics will guide the exploration of change in the VET sector. After a brief overview of the ubiquity of the change theme in VET, the paper will compare three landmark documents: The Kangan Report 1974, John Dawkins’ Improving Australia’s Training System 1989 and the most recent Skills Australia discussion paper Creating a Future Direction for Australian Vocational Education and Training in 2010. The results of this comparison through the use of both narrative and auto-ethnographic methodologies by a former senior education and training bureaucrat will invite participants to think the unthinkable and open new ways of conceiving of the role and place of VET.
Theme: Reflecting Back… Lessons for the Future?

CONCURRENT SESSION 2C
Time: 1435 – 1505 hours
Room: Ballroom A, Ground Floor

INTRODUCING MANDATORY TRAINING SYSTEMS: INVESTIGATING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COMPSULSORY PRE-SITE CONSTRUCTION TRAINING
Llandis Barratt-Pugh, Sue Bahn
Edith Cowan University, Perth, WA, Australia

There can be no more effective learning than that achieved by training systems to reduce death and injury. In such cases the imposition of a mandatory course would appear justifiable, especially where there is a history of unfortunate incidents and current rapid workforce growth. Installing learning as an imperative within a vibrant industry requires considerable negotiation between stakeholders to turn evidence into policy, industry intent, regulatory curriculum and subsequent workplace practice. This [presentation] reflects back and reviews the introduction of such training within the construction industry in Western Australia as it is adapts to the additional pressures of the development boom. This [presentation] reviews the impact of such training on the commercial sector of the industry, the training organisations, and the employees, using a mixed methods study reviewing both stakeholder perceptions and accident statistics. The study presents a landscape of construction workplaces where the culture is in a state of change. The final discussion projects forward, tracing the complex relationships between research, policy formation and implementation that underpins the development and embedding of such national programmes.
Theme: Skilling for Sustainable Future

CONCURRENT SESSION 1E
Time: 1035 – 1105 hours
Room: Heritage Lounge, First Floor

MOTIVATING APPRENTICE CHEFS TO STAY THE COURSE:
UNDERSTANDING EXPECTATIONS
Richard McDermott
University of Technology, Sydney, NSW, Australia

This [presentation] draws upon new data compiled from interviews with successfully completed apprentice chefs and their nominated supervisor or vocational trainer as to the experience of their apprenticeship and training. The starting point of the research was developed through the analysis of data taken from a research project on early attrition in hospitality industry and training and the consequent skills shortages. One of the key findings supported by the empirical evidence was that their learning experience and relationship with their supervisor and workplace is foremost when choosing to either stay or drop out from their apprenticeship.

The research proposes that successfully completed apprentices were afforded learning and work experiences that met both their intrinsic and extrinsic needs. This was affected, in no small part, by a clearer understanding from their trainers and supervisors that current apprentices are now more knowledgeable of the industry, than their predecessors, prior to commencing an apprenticeship. This has been affected primarily through the electronic media, vocational courses in hospitality at school and far more exposure to a broader range of food and dining experiences than at any time in history. Therefore it would stand to reason that a young individual now entering the industry would bring a lot more ideas and expectations as to the content and structure of their apprenticeship when choosing it as a career.

Vroom’s Expectancy Theory of Motivation has been utilised to explicitly link the qualitative responses of ten successfully completed apprentices and responses from their elected supervisor/trainers to Vroom’s model to effect a comparative analysis of the work motivation and job satisfaction of the apprentices.
LESSONS FROM AN EVALUATION OF ‘TRAININGPLUS’: AN ATTEMPT TO BRIDGE A CULTURAL DIVIDE THROUGH A TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT INITIATIVE

John Guenther¹, Keith Castle², Nick Raymond³, Karin Bersch³
¹Cat Conatus, Alice Springs, NT, Australia
²Desert Peoples Centre, Alice Springs, NT, Australia
³Centre for Appropriate Technology, Alice Springs, NT, Australia

This presentation draws on the lessons learned from an evaluation of a program designed to support Indigenous people into employment. The program (TrainingPlus), managed by the Desert Peoples Centre (DPC) in Alice Springs, uses vocational training offered by the Centre for Appropriate Technology (CAT) and the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (BIITE) as a vehicle for achieving employment outcomes. What makes this program different from a plethora of others trying to do the same is the intentional use of a case management approach where Indigenous cultural brokers support learners through a transition in their identity from being ‘unemployable’ through to becoming ‘employable’.

While the evaluation highlighted a number successes associated with the TrainingPlus approach, it also highlighted a number of tensions that arise for DPC as it attempts to straddle the space between mainstream and Indigenous cultural contexts. The paper problematises the issue of training for employment outcomes in Indigenous contexts. The evaluation found that VET as a tool designed for employment outcomes (at least in this context) is not as effective as might be expected. That said, the findings suggest that the training space is a useful place for creating meaning and for engaging at the interface between the mainstream and Indigenous culture. Another finding from the evaluation reinforces the need for cross-cultural skills for trainers that go beyond basic cultural awareness programs. Ultimately, the evaluation concludes that the integrated case management process is effective compared to more conventional approaches to training in the employment services industry. However it is an approach that requires considerable resources to be sustainable. The policy and practice implications of these issues are discussed in the paper.
In the past fifteen years, increasing attention has been given to the role of Vocational Education and Training (VET) in attracting large numbers of international students and its contribution to the economic development of Australia. This trend has given rise to many challenges in vocational education, especially with regard to providing quality education that ensures international students' stay in Australia is a satisfactory experience. Teachers are key stakeholders in international education and share responsibility for ensuring international students gain quality learning experiences and positive outcomes. However, the challenges and needs of these teachers are generally not well understood. Therefore, this [presentation] draws on the dilemmas faced by teachers of international students associated with professional, personal, ethical and educational aspects.

[The] Paper reports on a Masters Research project that is designed to investigate the dilemmas that teachers of international students face in VET in Australia, particularly in Brisbane. This study uses a qualitative approach within the interpretive constructivist paradigm to gain real-life insights through responsive interviewing and inductive data analysis. While the data collection has been done, the analysis of data is in progress. Responsive interviews with teachers of VET with different academic and national backgrounds, ages, industry experience have identified particular understandings, ideologies and representations of what it means to be a teacher in today's multicultural VET environment; provoking both resistances and new pedagogical understanding of teacher dilemmas and their work environment through the eyes of teachers of international students.

The [presentation] considers the challenges for the VET practitioners within the VET system while reflecting on the theme for the 2011 AVETRA conference, “Research in VET: Janus – Reflecting Back, Projecting Forward” by focusing particularly on “Rethinking pedagogies and pathways in VET work through the voice of VET workers”.
MODELING OF VOCATIONAL EXCELLENCE: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Helen Smith¹, Mohammad Ali Rahimi²

¹RMIT, Melbourne, VIC, Australia
²Deakin University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

This [presentation] provides an overview of the findings from a Skills Finland sponsored project called ‘Modeling of Vocational Excellence’ (MoVE) and an Australian application and adaptation of this research: ‘MoVE Australia’. The Finnish MoVE research project, conducted by the Research Centre for Vocational Education at the University of Tampere, Finland explored WorldSkills as a site for the development of expertise and pursuit of excellence; asking about the abilities and attributes of competitors, and the factors which interested them in their chosen skill area. The Australian project administered the Finnish MoVE survey to the Australian international WorldSkills team which will compete in London in October 2011 and introduced a second survey about competitor experience, designed to give voice to the young people involved in WorldSkills. This survey was administered to competitors, trainers and judges participating in the WSA National Competition held in Brisbane in May 2010, and later to employers and families. The Australian extension of the Finnish research has generated a rich source of experiential data, providing fresh insights into career choice and training. The findings of the research offer opportunities for reviewing elements of trade training and raise questions about the role of a competitive community of practice in quality skill formation and about the current level of research on this aspect of Australia VET practice.
This [presentation] reports on a project which seeks to identify the role of human capital formation in promoting innovation in Australian enterprises and the ways in which enterprises can improve their human resource management and learning and development practices to improve their innovation performance. There are a number of factors that affect enterprises’ ability to innovate. These include internal factors such as the ability to detect technological changes in the environment, the development of core competencies from which innovation can develop and external factors such as the maturity of the market which the enterprise serves and the impact of government policy to stimulate innovation. A range of studies have suggested that human factors within the enterprise are critical to innovation. However, these studies have not established exactly what practices enterprises need to put in place to improve their “innovation capacity”. This [presentation] reports the results from the research. The research method involved a survey of over 2,500 business enterprises and 7 case studies drawn from the manufacturing, ICT and finance industries. The paper will discuss the major findings from the research.
Theme: Reflecting Back… Lessons for the Future?

CONCURRENT SESSION 1C
Time: 1155 – 1225 hours
Room: Ballroom A, Ground Floor

DEMAND FOR APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINEESHIPS: WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FUTURE?

Erica Smith¹, Tony Bush²
¹University of Ballarat, Ballarat, VIC, Australia
²Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia

While the Australian apprenticeship and traineeship system is currently strong, the overall strength belies some areas of weakness. One of these areas is the uneven nature of demand from applicants for positions as apprentices and trainees, which means that some industries, occupations and employers struggle to find enough applicants while others are over-subscribed. While apprenticeships or traineeships in some occupations are attractive to applicants and companies are over-subscribed, other occupations and/or companies offering positions within those occupations find it difficult to attract applicants of a suitable calibre. This [presentation] reports on a research project undertaken during 2010, with 21 employers who employed apprentices and trainees. The different recruitment strategies and outcomes of the companies are described and the possible reasons for companies’ apparent success or failure to attract suitable applicants are discussed. Some suggestions for future policy and practice at company, regional and national level are offered.
JANUS OR CLIO: NARRATIVE HISTORY AND ITS PLACE IN VET RESEARCH

Peter Rushbrook
Charles Sturt University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia

The [presentation] argues that it is to the Greek goddess Clio and not the Etruscan and Roman god Janus that we should turn when reflecting back, projecting forward in VET research. After all, it was Clio, Zeus’s daughter, who served as muse to humankind’s first attempts to narrate and understand the events of the past. Janus, though a symbol of change and transition, and credited with simultaneously seeing the past and the future, is, unlike Clio, rarely considered an interpreter and critic of those pasts and presents. It is through Clio’s legacy of the discipline of history, then, that we must examine the assumptions and methodologies that offer hope for productively examining the past for kernels of future action. It is suggested that narrative history, as an honoured form of the discipline, with its emphasis on investigating and explaining the specific (the ideographic) in contrast with ‘conventional’ social science’s search for universal hypotheses (the nomothetic), offers a powerful and accessible approach to researching VET’s particular and often idiosyncratic pasts, both for their own sake and for the ‘lessons’ they may reveal for future VET practice. The [presentation] suggests several such idiosyncratic lenses and briefly narrates their contribution to explain current trajectories in VET policy making and practice; for example, the philosophy of British banausism (separation of hand and eye); the influence of the Australian Constitution and its failure to include a clear statement on education; the 1942 tax Act, which empowered forever a formerly fiscally weak national government; post-WWII scientific management or Taylorism, which shaped a generation of industrial organisation and workplace training; post-1950s higher education reform; and, of course, the 1975 Kangan report, which gave the VET sector a name, identity and much needed funding. The [presentation] concludes with suggestions for future VET research trajectories.
Under the Federal Government’s productivity agenda, there is a requirement for the VET sector to deliver up to 1.15 million VET course completions nationally over the next three years. A key factor in achieving this target is the capability of the VET workforce to deliver high quality teaching and learning. Keeping practitioner competencies current and avoiding professional obsolescence is therefore a key imperative for VET training providers and the industries they serve.

Management of professional obsolescence, defined as the ‘degree to which professionals lack the up-to-date knowledge and skills necessary to maintain effective performance in either their current or future work role’, is the focus of this paper. The first of a three part NCVER-funded research project into the upskilling of VET practitioners and approaches to managing professional obsolescence, it investigates what professional obsolescence means in a VET context, the policy drivers and imperatives that make managing this important, current approaches and barriers to addressing the maintenance of vocational competency in the sector and the implications of this for policy and practice. Six case studies, or models, for addressing professional obsolescence in both knowledge-based organisations and professional associations across the fields of engineering, allied health and human resource management are also provided.

This paper then describes the final two stages of the proposed research. Firstly, a series of in-depth semi-structured interviews with individuals from knowledge-based organisations and related professional associations to further examine how they actively manage professional obsolescence amongst the employees in their professional workforce. Secondly, a focus group of human resource or organisational development managers from public and private training providers to explore how such approaches might inform the management of professional obsolescence in the VET sector. That is, in what ways can broader approaches to the challenge of professional obsolescence be applied strategically in VET organisations?
Trained volunteers make a significant contribution to society, communities and a nation. However volunteers have a choice of whether to engage in vocational education and training. Research conducted among emergency management volunteers identified barriers which may inhibit training participation or completion and how these barriers may be overcome.

The research considered whether there were ways in which training delivery could be improved. In order for the research to generate useful recommendations for future training, it was important to understand the motivations for volunteering, and the outcomes volunteers themselves expect.

The research considered training in a wider context of skill distribution, and as a complement to other interventions. Understanding why people volunteer and why organisations use volunteers as well as the social and economic trends that affect volunteering, have been important in determining the interventions to be piloted. The research also provided information on the role of training within a service delivery organisation.

The findings of the research have informed the development of qualifications that meet adult educational needs and provided insight into the skill development required to respond to national emergencies. Consequently, a number of training initiatives have been considered and are being piloted. These initiatives, which also consider the vocational education being undertaken by volunteers in their career, will be outlined in this [presentation].

While most obviously relevant to industries that use volunteer labour, this study may also be of interest in considering:

- an outcomes-focused research approach to understanding training needs
- the role of training as a complement to other ways in which service delivery might be improved.

The success of these initiatives will be considered from both the individual perspective and cross organisational requirements.
Theme: VET Work & VET Workers

CONCURRENT SESSION 1B
Time: 1115 – 1145 hours
Room: Ballroom B, Ground Floor

MANAGEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE IN TRANSNATIONAL VET: DIVERSITY OF PRACTICE IN THREE TRANSNATIONAL MODELS
Mohammad Ali Rahimi¹, Helen Smith²
¹Deakin University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia
²RMIT University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

This [presentation] draws on a two-year research project aimed at addressing the issue of the mechanisms, strategies and tools employed to enable Australian VET ‘know-how’ to be responsive to host contexts’ needs or the needs of a specific group of individuals in a non-Australian context. It focuses on the transfer of the Australian VET regulatory arrangements into non-Australian contexts and follows the adaptation of Australian regulations when they are used in the skill formation processes in the host contexts through different mechanisms. Three models are introduced upon three different case studies to explain the interactive roles of the parties involved in each model. The cases include a Chongqing-AUSAID project in China, a partnership VET project in the Middle-East, and a training project in a mining site in Laos.

The transnational dimension of the transfer mechanisms of the Australian VET approaches are discussed in this study according to the theories of globalization of business regulatory arrangements and the management of knowledge in transnational transfer. Some different aspects of the mechanisms that are used for the transnational transfer of the Australian VET knowledge are studied and used as a foundation for classification of transnational Australian activities under these three suggested models.

Data for this research was collected between 2008 to 2010 from interviews with project managers and educators involved in these projects. On the basis of the empirical data analysed in each model, a classification of transnational activities is proposed according to six dimensions of transfer activity: mechanism; drivers; key actors; purpose; context and outcomes. The findings of this [presentation] would be of value to VET workers and project managers who are involved in transnational projects, and also to scholars in the field of transnational education.
Many apprentices are in an important transitional phase as they move from school to work. If not negotiated successfully these transitions may be associated with increased risks for poor health and/or mental health outcomes. Apprentices’ personal life skills and the available support systems are important factors in assisting them to successfully negotiate these transitions and complete their apprenticeship. The focus of findings reported here are on construction industry apprentices. Blue-collar workers, such as those in the construction industry, comprise a significant proportion (32%) of the Australian working population. However, construction industry apprentices face high levels of attrition – with up to 40% of apprentices nationwide not completing their apprenticeships (Ball, 2004; BICCIAB, 2008). This has significant implications for apprentice retention in an industry where there are current and predicted future skill shortages (DEEWR, 2010).
MEASURING THE SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Patrick Lim, Sinan Gemici
National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide, SA, Australia

Developing an accurate measurement of individual socioeconomic status (SES) is important, particularly because of current policy interest in increasing educational participation among those from a low SES background. Typically, we do not have data on all the underlying characteristics that make up the concept of SES. Consequently, SES is usually measured indirectly, such as through the Socioeconomic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) or through parental occupation or education. The issue is how well these proxies do in measuring ‘true’ SES.

Using the 2003 cohort of the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY), this [presentation] focuses on measuring the SES of young people aged 15 to 25. We create a measure of individual SES that captures the impact of cultural and educational resources, as well as parental education and occupation.

The results of this paper show that:
• SEIFA greatly misclassifies SES at the individual level (40% of individuals are wrongly classified as high or low SES)
• SEIFA composites result in only a marginal improvement in classification accuracy
• SEIFA and SEIFA composites perform reasonably well when reporting participation in higher education at aggregate levels

The implications are that SEIFA is satisfactory when determining aggregate relationships, but performs very poorly when classifying individuals. This is problematic for programs which direct resources to individuals – use of an area-based measure of SES will result in the misallocation of resources. We demonstrate this using a simple experiment in which we increase higher education participation for low SES individuals by 25 percent.
Theme: VET Work & VET Workers

CONCURRENT SESSION 1B
Time: 1155 – 1225 hours
Room: Ballroom B, Ground Floor

‘DO YOU WANT VET WITH THAT?’ SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR LIFELONG AND LIFEWIDE LEARNING IN AN ERA OF UNIVERSAL VET

Barry Golding, Annette Foley
University of Ballarat, Ballarat, VIC, Australia

Our [presentation] seeks to explore what might have been lost with the gains as vocational education and training (VET) in Australia has tended to become a universal part of lifelong and lifewide education and training transactions. The idea for our [presentation]’s rhetorical title, ‘Do you want VET with that?’ comes from a service catchcry in a fast food chain that seeks to ‘add value’ to the sales transaction by adding the option of ‘French fries’. In exploring the question and its presuppositions about the value of ‘added VET’, it critically examines a range of recent Australian and international policy and research literature. The paper addresses several AVETRA conference themes, including the work of VET and its workforce, learner success and skilling for Australia’s future. Our [presentation] critically examines the extent to which ‘value adding with VET’ has permeated contemporary education and training discourses in all sectors. It seeks to deconstruct some of the prevailing presuppositions about the universal utility of vocational learning. We use some of our previous research around community learning contexts to examine how some of the important links between learning and a range of non-vocational outcomes, such as benefits to health and wellbeing have been lost, as VET has become part of most sectors and pathways from secondary school onwards. Our [presentation] provides evidence from the literature examined to challenge the notion that learning for vocational outcomes alone is sufficient for lifewide and across the life course. In doing this it draws on critical insights from recent research from Europe and its component states that confirms how learning can produce outcomes that benefit people’s lives and self-esteem beyond work. We argue that there is room in contemporary VET discourse/s for an expanded discursive field where health and wellbeing might be acknowledged, enhanced and valued as an important ‘outcome’ of learning alongside vocational skills development.
The outcomes of training are commonly evaluated using conventional qualitative and quantitative techniques that include surveys, interviews and focus groups. These techniques rarely allow in-depth self-reflection by the participants. The Most Significant Change approach to evaluation is participatory and collects stories on the impact of the training experienced by the individuals or groups of participants. It relies on deep self-reflection and captures diverse outcomes including those beyond the objectives of training, yet having major impact on the participants or their life worlds.

This [presentation] reports on the use of the Most Significant Change technique to collect supplementary data to evaluate a leadership capacity building course. Eighteen participants completed a Master of Education course over a period of two years. Each semester the conventional Learning Experience Surveys provided quantitative and qualitative data on the students’ experiences and satisfaction with teaching and learning. Their reflective journals supplied valuable data on the Most Significant Change they experienced and explained why these changes were significant.

The findings highlight the value in using the Most Significant Change as a tool for a richer evaluation of capacity building programs. The findings offer potential for VET practitioners to extend their evaluation techniques and tools.
Theme: Reflecting Back… Lessons for the Future?

CONCURRENT SESSION 3C
Time: 0955 – 1025 hours
Room: Ballroom A, Ground Floor

A SYSTEMS DESIGN APPROACH FOR INVESTIGATING AUSTRALIAN TAFE DESIGN EDUCATION
Christopher Klimek, Elivio Bonollo
University of Canberra, Canberra, ACT, Australia

This [presentation] explains how a systems design approach has been used to develop a model of a design education system within the Australian Vocational Education and Training context, and with respect to the views and aspirations of design teachers. It uses empirical data to identify important model parameters (and their related constituent variables) that can be employed to describe the characteristics of the TAFE design education system. This model provides a useful tool for obtaining relevant, empirical system performance data which, in turn, can be applied to refine the model. Moreover, it may be adapted in future research to obtain the views of other important stakeholders within the context of design and perhaps other related vocational education fields. The paper begins with a literature survey and a brief outline of the research and data analysis methods employed. This is followed by system modelling, a summary and conclusions.
ALLOWING THE TAIL TO WAG THE DOG: PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING AN INTEGRATED TERTIARY EDUCATION SECTOR

Brian Knight
National Centre for Vocational Education Research, Adelaide, SA, Australia

This [presentation] starts from the premise that neither vocational education and training (VET) nor higher education (HE) is well defined. Many HE courses use a practical, competency-based approach and many VET programs – particularly at diploma and advanced diploma levels – have a substantial theoretical component and are akin to HE programs. Note too that a number of VET registered training organisations – the so-called dual-sector institutions – already offer HE degrees, and the great majority of universities are already VET registered training organisations. In reality, the existing separation between the sectors is based more on practical than theoretical aspects. These include funding and accountability arrangements, traditions in the sectors, who has ownership and responsibility for the institutions and their operations, and government administrative arrangements.

Achieving a connected or integrated tertiary education sector needs to address these issues and use them as levers for removing the barriers that currently separate the two sectors. This will involve common funding frameworks and accountability arrangements, the same or equivalent quality assurance standards and systems, common data standards and collections, and expanding the scope of operation of providers in both existing sectors to allow them to offer post-compulsory programs at a wide range of levels and for students to move between them. The decision of the Council of Australian Governments to implement a unique student identifier will be an important element. It will be argued, in effect, that allowing the ‘tail to wag the dog’ is the strategy that will lead to a connected tertiary education sector. NCVER’s research has revealed a number of countries where a connected or fully integrated tertiary education system operates successfully, Finland and Switzerland, for example.
The Hong Kong senior secondary school system is currently involved in a major reform process. The reform process involves expanding access and offering a broader range of curriculum choices for students including options for vocational education. This is a major challenge in a society where there is an emphasis on examination based academic studies and where vocational education is assigned a low status.

This [presentation] explores the initiatives of CCC Kung Lee College, an independent high school in Hong Kong, in introducing work based learning as part of the new reforms to senior schooling.

The College in partnership with the Centre for Lifelong learning Research and Developments at the Hong Kong Institute of Education successfully applied for a Quality Education Funds to implement vocational education programs using based learning in hospitality and tourism, IT and business studies.

The [presentation] using data from participants in schools and industry describes the processes of introducing work based learning. The key challenges of introducing vocational education into schools in Hong Kong as well as the dynamics of change and reform in secondary schooling is described in this presentation.

This [presentation] describes the introduction of work based learning into a Hong Kong High School and provides evidence of the benefits of work based learning and some of the challenges for it.
LEGITIMISING EVALUATION FOR VOCATIONAL LEARNING: FROM BASTARD SIBLING TO EQUAL BROTHER

John Guenther¹, Allan Arnott²
¹Cat Conatus, Ulverstone, TAS, Australia
²Charles Darwin University, Alice Springs, NT, Australia

Within the world of systematic inquiry in the field of education the tacit distinction between research and evaluation has been such that the latter is subsumed by the former. There are a number of reasons for this. First, evaluation generally follows research in acronyms and publications (e.g. National VET Research and Evaluation Program). Second, the unstated assumption in much of the theory and practice literature is that evaluation is aligned with assessment and judgement while research is about the creation of new knowledge. Third, there is sometimes an obfuscated assumption that evaluation looks back at the particular while research looks forward to the general.

This [presentation] explores the proposition that evaluation as a discipline within the field of vocational learning in Australia is undervalued, underutilised and misunderstood. This is confirmed by a quick review of Australian conference papers and journal articles in recent years, which reveals relatively few examples of papers based on evaluations. The authors’ experiences are reflected in two case study illustrations from practice that demonstrate how the methodologies and learnings of evaluations can be used in much the same way as research outputs can.

We argue that while there are distinctions between evaluation and research, as disciplines they may be used for the same purpose (e.g. to improve practice or develop policy), use similar methodologies (e.g. empirical data driven processes), and result in the creation of new knowledge (particular or general). Further, one strength of evaluations is that they benefit from working within programs and are often integrated within a program. The authors contend that the perceived worth of vocational learning evaluations can and should be elevated to the same status as research programs. For this to happen, evaluators need to promote their work more actively and demonstrate the outcomes in terms of new knowledge, improved practice and policy development.
VET LEADERSHIP: CONTEXT, CHARACTERISTICS AND CAPABILITIES

Justin Brown
Australian Council for Educational Research, Camberwell, VIC, Australia

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) in collaboration with the LH Martin Institute has conducted research to investigate the factors and challenges impacting on VET leaders, the influences and support mechanisms shaping their roles, and how they judge effective performance in their role. This paper, composed for the AVETRA 2011 conference, shines light on the personal and interpersonal capabilities required to perform particular roles effectively in an increasingly complex and diverse operating environment.

The target group for the study were VET workers who are directly and indirectly concerned with effective quality and change management in registered training organisations. A diverse range of providers participated in the research through interviews, surveys and workshops. The findings highlight the changing, at times conflicting, expectations on those working in the VET sector. Most importantly, the research shines light on practicable solutions and provides a framework for future discussion and research.

Supplementary online resources are being developed to provide a basis for reviewing the many 360 degree performance tools in use, but which are not typically underpinned by VET research. These resources will enable validation of existing leadership tools and practices being used for leadership performance management and development.

To assist those who find themselves leading large and complex training organisations, this study paints a picture of what VET leaders do, and of how they can do it best.
EAT YOUR WORDS: AN INVESTIGATION INTO FOOD LITERACY AS A MEANS OF STIMULATING AN APPETITE FOR LEARNING AND ENGAGEMENT

Helen De Campo
Monash University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

This [presentation] is based upon a research project investigating whether a broader understanding of food – food literacy – helps to foster not only an increased interest in what is grown, cooked and eaten, but stimulates a wider interest in learning and engagement in their lives.

The literature review examines the effect when food centred spaces such as kitchen gardens, school canteens and cookery programs are used as educational backdrops, and the effect this has on student learning and development. Current research suggests that academic, health and social issues are potentially simultaneously addressed.

The field research aimed to ascertain whether practitioners had observed a causal relationship in student’s performance when food literacy was incorporated into the curriculum, environs and philosophy of the school. Using a qualitative approach, interested staff from the participating sites were interviewed to ascertain whether they observed an overall increased interest in food, learning and the wider world in their students, as a consequence of exposure to food rich programs.

The implication for this research is that if an increase in personal food literacy is shown to have the potential to improve engagement in any of these areas, then such programs within curricula may be one positive way to address the current health crisis of poor nutrition in children and the prevalence of disengaged youth.
Theme: VET Work & VET Workers

USING VETCAT™ AND CURCAT™ TO RECONCEPTUALISE AND REVITALISE VET WORK AND WORKERS

John Mitchell¹,², John Ward², Anne Dening³, David Kemp⁰
¹John Mitchell & Associates, Pyrmont, NSW, Australia
²JMA Analytics, Pyrmont, NSW, Australia
³TAFE SA Regional, Nuriootpa, SA, Australia
⁰TAFE NSW – New England Institute, Armidale, NSW, Australia

Work in the vocational education and training (VET) sector is becoming more complex: there are increasing demands from students and industry clients that learning not only be customised but where possible personalised. Are VET practitioners involved in training and assessment capable of providing this level of flexibility and customisation?

In the six months from June 2010 ten TAFE Institutes around Australia implemented either one or both of the following tools that assess the capabilities of their VET practitioners: VETCAT™, the vocational education and training capability analysis tool and CURCAT™, the industry currency tool for VET practitioners. This paper focuses on the way two of the ten responded to the findings: TAFE SA Regional and TAFE NSW – New England Institute.

The findings at both Institutes provided cause for optimism and encouraged the Institutes to carefully unpack the full meaning of the data. The VETCAT™ research at TAFE SA Regional found that practitioners do have a raft of capabilities, mapped to the categories of novice, established, specialist and advanced. They also have a clear idea of their skill gaps and many aspirations about what they would like to learn. The CURCAT™ survey at both Institutes found that some VET practitioners use strategies to directly engage with industry while others use strategies to research their industry, and some use both sets of strategies.

In response to the quantitative data collected and the findings, the two Institutes crafted a range of different approaches to assist VET practitioners to further grow their capabilities and maintain their industry currency. Such targeted capability building is essential if VET is to meet the new demands on its services. This paper focuses on the action learning approach – of experiencing, reviewing, concluding and planning – taken at both Institutes in implementing initiatives stemming from the findings.
TWO FACES HAVE I – KNOWLEDGE IN THE “MIXED SECTOR” VOCATIONAL CURRICULUM

Chris Corbel
AMES, Alphington, VIC, Australia

This [presentation] examines the role of knowledge in the vocational curriculum of higher education courses in tertiary institutions, with a particular focus on “mixed sector” (Moodie et al. 2009) TAFE institutes in Australia. The [presentation] begins by outlining the reasons why the “voice” (Young 2009) of emergent disciplinary knowledge is missing in curriculum debate in general. It presents a social realist position that provides a principled argument for a central curriculum role for emergent disciplinary knowledge. The position of disciplinary knowledge is particularly complex in the vocational curriculum, especially in contexts such as Australia’s VET sector with its industry-developed, competency-based curriculum. The vocational curriculum has a Janus-like quality. It is the ‘skills’ face, as opposed to the face of knowledge, which is dominant in the vocational curriculum in the VET sector in Australia. This [presentation] argues, however, that the emerging mixed sector in Australia provides an opportunity to begin to bring the voice, and the face, of knowledge back into the vocational curriculum.
As with any contract of employment, the mutual expectations of the employer and the apprentice/trainee are very important. Apprenticeships and traineeships have greater expectations than other employment contracts of employment because of the training component of the contract. This [presentation] reports on some of the findings of a major NCVER-funded national project examining mutual expectations in apprenticeships and traineeships through the concept of the psychological contract. The [presentation] focuses on the differences between employers and apprentices/trainees, in the expectations each party has of the other and in the extent to which the expectations are perceived to have been met.
Theme: Access & Success – Learner Engagement

CONCURRENT SESSION 2D
Time: 1555 – 1625 hours
Room: Rendezvous 4, First Floor

TOOLBOX FOR SUCCESS
Stuart Sadler, Sandra Cotton
Polytechnic West (PWA), Midland, WA, Australia

The paper to be presented at the AVETRA 2011 conference addresses the theme of Access & Success – Learner Engagement and presents a pilot study the "Champion in the System" at Polytechnic West (PWA). The Champion in the system, in line with themes of learner success and participation, presents a toolbox of learning and assessment strategies to assist lecturers in the provision of assessment and training to students who experience disadvantage. Under the AQTF these learning strategies are referred to as reasonable adjustments. This pilot project builds on and enhances a study conducted by a member of the Community of Practice with NCVER “Breaking down the barriers: Strategies to assist apprentices with a learning disability which envisaged the pilot of a toolbox of adjustments to be used with success by lecturers and students. PWA and other registered training Organisations have expressed an interest in implementing the toolbox and associated resources at the completion of the trial.
**Abstract 43**

**Thursday, 28 April 2011**

**Theme: New Researchers**

**CONCURRENT SESSION 2F**

**Time: 1355 – 1425 hours**

**Room: Rendezvous 2, Ground Floor**

**MUSIC MENTOR: THE ACTION RESEARCH PROJECT 2010**

**Ross Stagg**

Western Sydney Institute of TAFE, Penrith, NSW, Australia

How do the bad boys and girls of rock and pop fit into the formal VET training sector without losing their identity? The idea of training for participation in the modern music industry was once criticised by industry stalwarts as bound to fail. These graduates from the ‘school of hard knocks’ could envisage no other path than their own. The research data looks at the realities of VET training today in the sector and examines the unique take on ‘music based’ training, found in one TAFE college. The obsession with instrumental mastery encountered in conservatoriums of music is contrasted with training experiences, routinely pursued in a TAFE college, which indicate that it is ‘adaptability’ rather than narrow ‘mastery’ that is the truly required skill for best potential success in the contemporary music world. Just as conservatoriums of music are now attempting to visit issues of employability and business skills for their students, TAFE VET is attempting to tackle the issue of large teacher to student ratios in areas of training where conservatoriums once routinely provided one-to-one tuition. In Music Mentor: The Action Research Project 2010 the proposition that peer mentoring might in part alleviate the effects of large teacher / student ratios was examined utilising a pilot mentoring scheme. Students of all different levels of musical accomplishment routinely present at TAFE. Accommodating this diversity is a key challenge for teaching staff. High level semi-professional industry practitioners in one class with virtual musical neophytes? The challenge was and is to see if it is possible to turn the mismatch from a potential burden into a positive for the training. The data suggests peer mentoring is a natural for consideration in this scenario. A key finding from the research is that students, would rather be mentored one-on-one, by their peers than by a college teacher, no matter how highly and broadly regarded that professional may be. What are the social aspects of the discipline of music that should make this so?
Delivering Australian VET qualifications offshore is a growing area of activity for public and private VET providers. It is also an area of significant risk to their reputation, that of the Australian VET system and Australian qualifications more broadly.

The research involved data collection across Australia through consultation forums with public and private providers, desktop reviews, interviews, workshops with providers for resource testing, resource testing with state and territory authorities and feedback from critical friends. The process identified 18 challenges faced by Australian providers in delivering accredited Australian Qualifications Training Framework (AQTF) VET qualifications in offshore contexts. The challenges include commercial and reputational issues, which can adversely affect providers’ ongoing activity both offshore and in Australia. Not to address these challenges constitutes potential exposure to risks.

The research explored the nature of these risks and how providers, with experience and expertise in offshore VET delivery, have managed their operations to reduce the impact of potential risks. The experience of these providers in effective risk management provides models of good practice that providers may draw on as they plan and execute quality delivery offshore.

The model of ‘challenges/risks/good practice’ is consistent with the commonly used ADRI (Approach-Deployment-Results – Improve) quality framework. It synthesises the strategies described by public and private VET providers who operate offshore. The model does not provide a ‘recipe’ or ‘rigid lock-step’ approach, but it will provide a useful guide to the major generic tasks that need to be undertaken in any offshore project to ensure that delivery organisational, reputational and compliance risks are minimised.
Abstract 47

Thursday, 28 April 2011

**Theme: Reflecting Back… Lessons for the Future?**

**CONCURRENT SESSION 2C**

**Time:** 1355 – 1425 hours

**Room:** Ballroom A, Ground Floor

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**LOOKING BACK ON VET THROUGH A CLASS HISTORY OF THE WORKER EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (WEA) IN AUSTRALIA**

**Grant Banfield**

**University of South Australia, Adelaide, SA, Australia**

This paper is a part of a larger research project that intends to examine the relationship between worker education and the history of class struggle in Australia. The particular focus of the [presentation] centres on the formation of the Worker Education Association (WEA) in Australia and its tenuous relationship over time with working class aspirations. Drawing on existing historical research in the field the paper charts the organisational beginnings of the WEA in early twentieth century England to its adoption in Australia. Through the presentation of selected case studies, it is argued that the evolution of the WEA has been animated by the ideological tensions between liberalism (with its emphasis on consensus and political neutrality) and social radicalism (that stresses class conflict and the necessity of overtly political education). However, in the context of such tensions, the [presentation] further argues that liberalism has been the historically predominant ideology of the WEA. It is against and from outside such consensual and apolitical impulses that, for example, working class theatre and folk music of the inter-war years developed. The paper presents these as both alternative educational forms and cultural expressions of class struggle. In its conclusion, the paper returns to the theme of the larger project that implicates contemporary vocational training and worker education within the liberal (and, more recently, neo-liberal) drive to deny worker-centered and class conscious education.
Abstract 48***

Friday, 29 April 2011

Theme: Skilling for Sustainable Future

CONCURRENT SESSION 4C
Time: 1315 – 1345 hours
Room: Heritage Lounge, First Floor

TRACKING THE KEY POLICIES ON SUSTAINABILITY, VET AND TRANSITION TO A LOW CARBON ECONOMY

Mike Brown, Damon Cartledge
LaTrobe University, Bundoora, VIC, Australia

This [presentation] reports on the early stages of research in progress. It is a research project being funded by the Institute for Social and Environmental Sustainability at LaTrobe University to research sustainability, VET and the transition to a low carbon economy. With governments at all levels putting in place targets, policies, infrastructure and projects to initiate more sustainable living, this [presentation] identifies and tracks some of the key policies. In the international arena, the United Nations has instigated and facilitated substantial work in these fields. While amongst the policies and plans being put in place at a federal level are the National VET Sector Sustainability Policy and Action Plan 2009-2012, the Green Skills Agreement, and The Green Skills Agreement Implementation Plan 2010-2011. All of these policies are calling for significant changes to be instigated. Jobs are changing in a number of different ways. With some jobs, modifications are occurring to accommodate a shift to more sustainable practices; this is being accompanied by the creation of new jobs in emerging industries, while less sustainable jobs stand to be eliminated. These changes to work and jobs bring skill development within VET to the fore.
Abstract 49***

Thursday, 28 April 2011

Theme: Access & Success – Learner Engagement

CONCURRENT SESSION 1D
Time: 1115 – 1145 hours
Room: Rendezvous 4, First Floor

TEACHING VET IN VICTORIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS
Mike Brown
LaTrobe University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

This research paper focuses on the provision and teaching of Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs to young people within Victorian secondary schools. The study identifies and discusses the way that VET in schools programs are nuanced as they are made to fit the state system, then with the individual school settings and circumstances. These programs are important in offering a range of relevant and useful programs to a diverse range of senior secondary school students. The study found that when a VET program is provided to students through a secondary school setting in Victoria it will, (1) be made appropriate for students aged 15 to 21; (2) occurs as part of one of the two senior secondary school certificates, and (3) often have undergone some modifications to its authenticity with some flow on effect to its reliability and validity due to the limitations and nature of the school-based context. Accordingly, teachers and school administrators are required to be creative in fine-tuning their program provision as they work through issues that arise around costs, quality and effectiveness.
Theme: Reflecting Back… Lessons for the Future?

CONCURRENT SESSION 2C
Time: 1315 – 1345 hours
Room: Ballroom A, Ground Floor

STORMING THE WALLS: RE-ENGAGING STUDENTS IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
Stuart Middleton
Manukau Institute of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand

This [presentation] brings together three contextual elements of the conference – rethinking pedagogies and pathways, informing approaches which widen access and success and increasing learner engagement. The presenter as a Fulbright New Century Scholar in 2007-2008 developed models for describing the process by which disengagement developed in western education systems and of the actual process of student disengagement.

The scale of disengagement, now typical of English-speaking education systems, will be analysed to plot the unintended consequences of changes throughout the period 1975 to 2000 which stripped out vocational opportunities and pathways for secondary students.

The drift towards a general academic secondary curriculum combined with students' staying longer in secondary schools, led to the development of disengagement as a clear outcome for many students especially among groups under-represented in further education and training.

The process by which this happened will be described and key elements of the situation it has created detailed. The [presentation] will then outline the development of New Zealand’s first tertiary high school – a full-time polytechnic programme that reaches down to at risk Year 10 (Australia Year 9) students and in an integrated programme provides pathways allow students to complete their secondary leaving qualification and obtain a two year vocational, career and technical qualification. Students selected for the programme are, in the judgment of teachers, parents and caregivers and the students themselves, at risk of disengaging.

This development challenged the current legislative framework for education in New Zealand and required amendments to the Education Act to address issues of students’ being fully and legally enrolled in two institutions and fulltime in a tertiary setting while under the school-leaving age. The provision of both secondary and tertiary funding to the programme and the discharge of legal duty-of-care requirements for school-aged children were also authorised.

These changes have paved the way for other vocational and technical education developments. Early results are promising.
During 2008 in Victoria two influential texts were released within weeks of each other; texts that would have a significant impact on how Victorian TAFE institutes would organise both operational and human resources over the next four years. The texts were the new Victorian State Government Vocational Education and Training Policy, known as Skills Reform and the amended Victorian TAFE teacher employment conditions, the Multi Business Agreement (MBA). Skills Reform had many new policy initiatives stated to introduce a greater degree of market choice for the clients of VET providers. The MBA had pay rises with very minor changes to the core employment conditions of TAFE teachers and Senior Educators. While these two texts were created independently of each other, Skills Reform’s impact would need to be closely considered in relation to how a TAFE teacher’s work is organised from the MBA.

This [presentation] argues that the core change agenda of Skills Reform is not to create improved access to training by broadening consumer choice but to directly reduce the cost of training in the public sector through productivity gains. This will be forced by the new activity based funding criteria and a falling financial return to institutes per training hour. This strategy will force TAFE institutes to significantly change the way a teacher’s work is organised, not driven by competition but based on diminishing financial returns against increased operational costs.
Abstract 53***

Thursday, 28 April 2011

Theme: Tertiary Sector – Rethinking Pedagogies & Pathways

CONCURRENT SESSION 2A
Time: 1515 – 1545 hours
Room: Rendezvous 3, Ground Floor

RETHINKING PATHWAYS: COMPARING THE CAREER CAPITAL OF KNOWLEDGE WORKERS IN AUSTRALIA AND SINGAPORE

Roger Harris¹, Catherine Ramos²
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²Institute for Adult Learning, Singapore

This [presentation] interrogates and rethinks the notion of pathways (a Conference theme). In a knowledge society, there is need to include many other types and directions of movement within and between educational sectors throughout lifetimes. Moreover, knowledge workers’ careers are increasingly the responsibility of individuals rather than employers. Thus, individuals need to keep on reinventing themselves, engaging in ‘career investment behaviour’ (Greller 2006, p.544). This paper draws on data from two different research projects undertaken in Australia and Singapore. These projects involved individuals who had engaged in studies in two different educational sectors: the academic and the vocational. Australian respondents (N=190) had studied in both the VET and the Higher Education sectors; Singapore respondents (N=101) had graduated from both the formal tertiary education and the Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) sectors. Their pathway experiences in moving between sectors are compared within the conceptual framework of career capital.
The increasingly competitive and changing VET environment brings significant change to the way large training organisations operate. Strategic plans are well documented as useful tools for communicating and focusing long term organisational effort to achieve specific goals. Strategic targets are, however, often difficult to achieve in a large government organisation with policy and procedural imperatives.

Our recent study of the implementation of a strategic plan in a large VET organisation examined the influence of workplace practice and the wider influence of workplace culture on the roll-out of the plan. The study explored the nature of staff engagement with changes to priorities brought about by this new strategic plan. The study also mapped staff engagement against three interrelated yet somewhat opposing arguments in organisational change management theory. The mapping process indicated various links between workplace practice and the three theoretical arguments which included a range of staff approaches to and understanding of the need for communication, a sense of urgency and relevance in managing strategic plan targets in the context of teaching sections in a large TAFE college.

A subsequent workshop held with a number of vocational practitioners from around Australia and interviews with staff at the case college, provided a wide range of perspectives on the implementation and management of strategic plans in vocational education settings. While some managers felt constrained and ill equipped to manage set targets for their areas, others had implemented strategies which were proving useful and successful. This [presentation] outlines a number of recent staff experiences in managing strategic plans as a way to share concerns and successes. In this [presentation] we outline some of what we have learned in looking back and anticipate what we might find in looking forward.
RESTOR(Y)ING LIVES: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL REFLECTION AND PERSPECTIVE TRANSFORMATION IN ADULTS RETURNING TO STUDY

Jennifer Miles
Monash University, Clayton, VIC, Australia

Vocational education and training is not traditionally, let alone contemporaneously, designed or recognised for its transformative role and potential. In the work-dominated discourse of VET policy and practice it is commonly and officially assumed that vocational education and training is directed towards preparation for work or developing skills for employment. Within this domain, my aim has been to uncover the contexts in which research may have taken place; to establish what findings have emerged, and to identify opportunities for further research related to the following questions:

• In what ways can telling and reflecting on their stories provide adult learners returning to study with a greater knowledge of self that may foster a richer engagement in the learning process, build learner self-identity and potentially promote more beneficial learning and vocational outcomes?
• How might any transformations in the perspectives of adult learners returning to study extend beyond the individual to their immediate environment and society?
• What are the potential implications of these findings for pedagogical practice and curriculum design within the VET sector?

This small-scale Masters research study, in one Victorian TAFE institute, examines the process and self-articulated outcomes of five participants in a qualitative, narrative based inquiry, investigating the capacity of autobiographical reflection to promote perspective transformation in adults returning to study within the context of vocational education and training. It explores the personal and social dimensions of meaning-making, identifying the role of critical reflection in transforming learners’ perspectives as they come to critique the power relationships and hegemonic assumptions that have influenced their construction of self-identity as learners. Utilising a storytelling methodology, the findings and recommendations of the study are woven through the stories of the participants as they dance on the edge of their knowing (Berger, 2004).
Crucial to learning from the past and anticipating the future is how we communicate. What stories that we have been told? What lessons have we learned and shared? In vocational education, communication has sometimes seemed marginalised, ostensibly labelled a ‘key’ or ‘core’ skill, it has formed part of a set of skills to be learned alongside or integrated within a wider skill set. In the last ten years, China has emerged on the world stage as a dynamic economy and a developing society, and with that the recognition that what China says and does will impact on all our global futures. Education and especially vocational education has been at the forefront of China’s recent development. The research on which this paper is based explores the introduction of key skills communication into Chinese vocational education, an initiative established in 1999 when the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party and the National State Council identified the need for ‘key skills’, and reinforced this need by subsequent research in China suggesting that communication is an important component of vocational education (Ye and Li, 2007) and that the ability to communicate effectively is instrumental to success and career development (Tong and Zhong, 2008). Based on case studies within vocational colleges, the [presentation] investigates what communication key skills mean in a Chinese context and asks what lessons can be learned from the past for the future while questioning the transferability of notions of communication. It analyses how motivation might affect learner success; the relationship of pedagogy to curriculum; and the impact of student-centred learning. Finally, it suggests how communication through sustainability literacies might be key to longer-term development.
THE IGNORED PEDAGOGICAL DIMENSION IN VET DELIVERY OF THE TRAINING PACKAGES
Homi Azemikhah
University of Adelaide, Adelaide, SA, Australia

Application of the Double Heuristic Method (DHM) to the delivery of programs in Vocational Education and Training (VET) in Queensland (Azemikhah 2010) has been implemented in this research resulting in the emergence of a new theorising of the pedagogical engagement in the VET sector. Key elements of the findings will be shared in this [presentation], and it will be argued that these elements and the grounded theory that emerges are central to the heart of VET pedagogy.

The DHM graphical interface template (GiT) was designed as central to doctoral research conducted by the presenter. The template was designed to bring about the pedagogical clarity that was much needed in the VET community. This [presentation] discusses the two inter-related theories that have emerged from this research, i.e., Meta competency theory (MTC) and Confusion to Clarity theory (CTC). While the Meta-competency theory argues that synthesis of the segmented component parts leads to meaning making and pedagogical clarity, CTC establishes that pedagogical misunderstanding in VET delivery leads to clarity only through implementation of a way of working where elements are pedagogically defined and synthesized.
SCHOLARSHIP AS EMERGENT LABOUR: HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHERS IN TAFE AND THE MAKING OF SCHOLARSHIP

Fleur Goulding¹,², Terri Seddon²
¹Holmesglen, VIC, Australia
²Monash University, Monash, VIC, Australia

The recent Review of Australian Higher Education (the Bradley Review) has recommended the formation of a tertiary education sector to formalise the increasingly blurred higher and vocational education boundaries. The growth in delivery of higher education programs by TAFE institutes is contributing to these blurred boundaries and the debates surrounding the emerging notions of a tertiary education sector. The delivery of higher education programs in TAFE institutes has created significant challenges for teachers working in these settings. They work within a TAFE culture but confront the regulatory frameworks demanded of higher education providers. Scholarship is a particularly problematic issue because it has not been an expectation in TAFE providers but is a key feature in higher education. This [presentation] examines the emerging nature of scholarship in TAFE providers offering higher education programs. We report on an analysis of AUQA audit reports and associated documentation, which begin to formalise the notion of ‘scholarship’ in Victorian TAFE Institutes. We then compare this emerging official definition of scholarship in TAFE with higher education TAFE teacher’s experience of scholarship using interviews. We argue that higher education teachers and their TAFE institutes are forming distinctive hybrid scholarly cultures and practices as they take on external expectations (eg via AUQA) and navigate through existing orientations to industry, educational commitments to teaching and the absence of scholarly structures and values in TAFE.
MANAGING THE TRAINING TIME BOMB
Steven Hodge
Deakin University, Geelong, VIC, Australia

Like any VET qualification in Australia, the Diploma of Business (Frontline Management) specifies the skills and knowledge deemed to be essential to competent performance in the relevant industry and role. Employers who pay for their employees to undertake such a qualification can assume that a graduate will return to the workplace with the capacity to contribute to the management of the organisation or an enhanced ability to do so in accordance with industry endorsed standards. In this paper I present a case study of a Diploma of Business (Frontline Management) program which sought to develop the expected skills and knowledge about management in students, but which also produced some unanticipated results. The program was conducted off-site and attended by employees from a range of different organisations, and I interviewed most of the students from the program between two and three months after completion of their studies. I used the concepts of transformative learning theory to frame the study and analyse the results. Transformative learning theory describes a process of learning characterised by upheaval and critical questioning, and it was by using the lens of transformative learning to examine the outcomes of the program that the unexpected results of the program came to the fore. What the research showed was that most of the learners had become discontent with their employment and several of them had left or were planning to leave their places of employment based on a realisation that their new outlooks on management were in conflict with workplace management practices. The research raises questions about the impact and consequences of management training which focuses on isolated individuals without at the same time attending to the underlying management culture in their organisation. In this paper these questions are discussed and the spectre of training acting like a ‘time bomb’ is considered.
BEYOND DEFICIT APPROACHES TO TEACHING AND LEARNING: LITERACY AND NUMERACY IN VET COURSES
Stephen Black, Keiko Yasukawa
University of Technology, Sydney, NW, Australia

Literacy and numeracy skills (L&N), now framed nationally as ‘foundation skills’, are high on government and industry agendas, and a new National Foundation Skills Strategy is currently in the making. L&N support provided to students in vocational education and training (VET) courses is anticipated to feature strongly in this new strategy, especially in light of the national focus on increasing post school qualifications. Predominantly, current models of L&N support in VET courses can be seen largely as a ‘deficit’ approach in which individual students are identified, usually through a test or screen at the beginning of their course, as being in deficit of the L&N skills needed to complete their course. Students are often given the opportunity of obtaining assistance through attending additional ‘stand-alone’ L&N classes, a study centre, or a L&N teacher providing assistance in the vocational classroom. This [presentation] considers other models of support, both in the research literature and in Australian case studies, which ‘integrate’ L&N with VET courses. This involves a variety of team teaching arrangements between vocational and L&N teachers in which the aim is to assist the whole student group and not just those identified with L&N ‘problems’. This approach may improve vocational learning by more directly linking L&N practices with vocational practices. It also avoids the negative labeling of students associated with the deficit approach, and may be seen as a more active pedagogy, encouraging change in VET practices. The [presentation] is based largely on semi-structured, taped interviews with a total of fifty-three L&N teachers, vocational teachers and VET managers across most Australian states and territories. These interviews were undertaken by the authors as part of a Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) funded research project on integrated L&N support in VET which is due for completion in mid 2011.
Theme: Skilling for Sustainable Future

CONCURRENT SESSION 2E
Time: 1555 – 1625 hours
Room: Heritage Lounge, First Floor

NAVIGATING CONTESTABILITY: VETMAP – AN INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE
Mark O’Rourke¹, Adetoun Alabi¹, Lyndon Shea²
¹Victoria University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia
²Shea Business Consulting, Australia

In response to the Victorian Government’s Skills Reform agenda and the anticipated impact that contestability would have on publicly funded TAFE programs, Victoria University undertook a research project to collect data to provide information to underpin decisions to discard, modify or develop new products and services. The VETMAP research project used a product/market analysis toolkit to assist teaching teams and educational leaders to determine performance of VET products and services within VET markets and comparative performance of competitors within those markets. The project adopted quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques across VET programs at Victoria University at AQF levels 4, 5 and 6. Research reports were produced to assist program teams in identifying technological, economic, political and cultural changes that create opportunities to develop new products and/or services. The data collection highlighted major concerns, opportunities and strengths of programs which subsequently offered teams prospects for repositioning the marketing of programs and creating an evidence base for decision making for course delivery. The research also revealed some interesting reflections on institutional operations of VET delivery in a multi sector tertiary environment. The impact of industry developments on VET delivery and planning were captured from the data also, and the findings offer insights into the capacity of the VET workforce to meet challenges and be adaptable in a rapidly evolving VET policy landscape.
Successful learning pathways enable people to obtain skills and knowledge needed to gain employment and manage their careers (Harris et al, 2006). The vocational education and training (VET) sector has been set ambitious targets to ensure Australia maintains its economic prosperity through increased productivity and improved adult language, literacy and numeracy (COAG, 2009; Skills Australia, 2010). These targets will only be met when there are effective learning pathways, improved learner support systems and better ways of helping learners gain credit and recognition of prior learning.

VET qualifications offer national portability, empowering individuals to gain expertise to travel to regions where their skills are in demand. The VET sector’s wide geographical reach enables it to provide learning pathways into higher education.

Curyer, et al (2007) identified e-portfolios as a way to support successful learning pathways by providing learners with a means to manage their lifelong learning records. To support the use of e-portfolios for successful learner pathways VET training providers were funded to participate in E-portfolios Implementation Trials in 2009 and 2010. These trials investigated the way e-portfolios prepared learners to manage, control and present their information to demonstrate minimum course entry requirements, receive recognition and credit transfer for prior learning and existing skills or gain the appropriate support mechanisms to ensure course completions.

This [presentation] will discuss the key findings of these action research trials to demonstrate how e-portfolios are helping to: achieve access and participation targets (Wallace, 2010); support personalised forms of learning (Joyes et al, 2009); and provide learners with mechanisms to better manage their learning pathways.
Average life expectancy in Australia has increased remarkably, and remarkably quickly, effectively inserting a whole new phase of active, healthy living into our 6th, 7th and 8th decades. While most people say they would like to change the pace at which they work once they reach the age of 60-65, many baby boomers intend to keep working well past that traditional point of retirement.

What is particularly interesting about the future cohort of ‘non-retiring retirees’, is how many say they want a change. They want their ‘encore career’ to be different from their mid-life one. They want to change not only the pace but the substance of their work: a fresh direction and a chance to develop new skills – a new way of being productive, being of value and valued. This cohort, re-skilled for encore careers, constitutes a potentially significant addition to the Australian workforce – important both for what it contributes to the economy and for the demands it does not make on health and pension services.

This presentation describes a current NCVER research project which began by talking with TAFE institutes about whether they would be interested in helping people re-skill for encore careers for their Third Age. The answer was an enthusiastic ‘yes’ – even to the extent of Institutes providing encore career programs for their own older staff. But then complications set in:

- there was criticism: what exactly is, and is not, an encore career? does it matter? when do we need tight definitions and where is fuzziness a virtue?
- the current [flawed] thinking about ‘mature age’ workers (aged 45 to 60) distorts possibilities for people working in their 70s and beyond – how to handle that?
- given the constraints operating in the VET sector (e.g., concern with completion rates), what scope for innovative unfunded programs that are not yet on the COAG/VET agenda?

The intention is for this session to be informative and provocative and useful.
This survey was undertaken in February 2011 of Head Teachers and Special Program Co-ordinators in TAFE NSW, and those who either aspired to be Head Teachers or managers who had once been Head Teachers. The survey was sent out to some 1200 respondents across TAFE NSW, and when closed on 18 February, there were 420 responses, around a third of the number of Head Teachers in TAFE NSW. Given it was a busy time of year, we may have been able to gather more responses a little later in the term. 85% of respondents said that they were currently Head Teachers or Special Program Co-ordinators, and an additional 30 respondents said they were currently acting in Head Teacher positions.

The aim of the survey was to provide a basis for a paper entitled ‘Paths to Promotion’ which focused mainly on the current skills and capabilities of Head Teachers, their current and future challenges and the qualifications they would need. It is a follow-up to the work we undertook during 2010 on ‘Raising the Bar on VET Teacher Education Qualifications’, where over 500 TAFE teachers responded and overwhelmingly said that they needed tertiary level teaching qualifications to do their jobs effectively.

TAFE Head Teachers have been identified as holding possibly the most critical positions in TAFE NSW, in which they undertake both leadership and management roles. This frontline role has been described as “where the rubber hits the road as far as doing business is concerned” (Mulcahy 2003, p.57). In his 2009 research ‘Head Teacher Voices’, funded by the TAFE Teachers Association, Stephen Black detailed the concern of Head Teachers that they were not recognised and appreciated in their roles. As one of the respondents to his survey said, “I love my job but am frustrated constantly by unrealistic expectations”. We wondered whether anything had changed in almost three years, but in the main we wanted to focus not on the jobs but whether Head Teachers believed they had the skills and capabilities to effectively undertake the jobs as they saw them, and what skills and qualifications they might need in the future.

It is about the future of the Head Teacher role, and as such the data collected may provide some useful advice to TAFE management and the State Government. It is not however about the current industrial agreement that operates in TAFE NSW and is under review. Consequently we hope to be able to ask similar questions of frontline managers in some relevant private RTOs in NSW, to consider any possible similarities or differences.

The survey is separated into four sections: General information, Qualifications, Skills and Capabilities, and Issues for Head Teachers. We wanted to know which aspects of the job they saw as being most important, what they saw were the challenges for the future, the qualifications they currently had, and what skills and capabilities they thought they might need to continue developing in their roles. The survey and this report are also very timely in also picking up on the work of John Mitchell and John Ward on Advanced VET Practitioners, and the Productivity Commission’s report on the Vocational Education and Training Workforce.
A number of complex environmental drivers are impacting on the skill profile required of VET practitioners. Most notably, the recent changes to government policies at state and federal levels are driving rapid reforms in the VET and Higher Education (HE) sectors. The merging of educational boundaries, the widening of access and greater participation in tertiary education and recommendations for greater collaboration and partnerships between TAFE and Universities in an integrated tertiary sector are at the forefront of current debate.

Reforms in Victoria such as contestable funding arrangements and skills deepening over the past few years have resulted in a more flexible, competitive, demand driven and responsive VET sector.

Ongoing strategies for the development of the VET workforce are required at a strategic, organisational and individual level to keep pace with these changes and meet the new and merging needs of industry, learners and government. The TDC has developed this workshop [presentation] to provide high level thoughts for the development of a sector-wide VET Practitioner Development Strategy and to test our assumptions.

Ensuring a high quality workforce depends largely on the ability of the (Victorian) Vocational and Education and Training (VET) sector to educate, train, motivate and mentor learners and workers now and into the future. The VET workforce spans TAFE Institutes, Private Providers, Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE), Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETiS), Enterprise RTOs and Higher Education (HE) organisations delivering VET programs.

While the sector requires a broad workforce development strategy that includes leaders, managers, administrators, learning, training and assessment practitioners and specialist support staff, the focus of this workshop is the development of VET practitioners; the people working across the sector as teachers, trainers and assessors.
Theme: VET Work & VET Workers

CONCURRENT SESSION 3B
Time: 1115 – 1145 hours
Room: Ballroom B, Ground Floor

THE TEXTUAL COORDINATION OF FRONT LINE WORK IN VET
Lauri Grace
Deakin University, Geelong, VIC, Australia

Many vocational educators put considerable effort into documenting their learning and assessment strategies to demonstrate that the programs they deliver comply with standards outlined in the relevant Training Package/s and the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). At audit, these learning and assessment plans form an integral part of the documentation used to demonstrate organisational compliance and maintain RTO status. The [presentation] explores the operation of these texts (Training Packages and the AQTF) using an Institutional Ethnography lens, as an accountability circuit which brings the front line work of vocational educators into alignment with institutional and governmental imperatives. In developing their learning and assessment strategies to address the national standards, vocational educators are drawn into a textually mediated process of self-governance in which they document their educational practice using categories set up to be read within the terms of the regulatory texts. The professional work of educators is then made accountable as their local learning and assessment plans are audited for compliance. When this study commenced in 2001, vocational educators described a shift in responsibility from the RTO to individual educators whose local learning and assessment plans are crucial to maintaining RTO registration. Paradoxically, this was accompanied by an erosion of professional freedom as educators reshaped their practice to meet the requirements of the national standards. Training Packages and the AQTF have since undergone multiple revisions, yet anecdotal evidence suggests that the experience of educators at the front line has changed little in respect to their interactions with these texts. This [presentation] will briefly present the findings of the initial study, review the impact of current developments in the regulatory texts of VET, and foreshadow the next phase of this project.
There are two main elements to this [presentation]. Firstly, we critically examine the current literacy and numeracy ‘crisis’ in Australian workplaces in which loss of productivity, lack of take-up in education and training, and skills shortages are being blamed on workers’ lack of literacy and numeracy skills (Australian Industry Group [AiG] 2010a&b, DEEWR 2010, Skills Australia 2010). We indicate that the issues of literacy and numeracy in workplaces are more complex and require alternative understandings of literacy and numeracy (as social practices), and the additional perspectives of the workers themselves.

The second main element to this [presentation] is the opportunity for unions to demonstrate their stake in the education and training of workers. We ask: what possibilities are there for this to happen; what models exist from which Australian trade unions can draw? In the UK the Trade Union Congress (TUC) successfully negotiated with the Labour Government, to establish a Union Learning Fund (ULF), and give recognition to union learning representatives (ULRs), to facilitate learning for workers. Evaluations show that literacy and numeracy learning is one of the areas most positively impacted by union learning representatives. Based on a critical analysis of the current policy discourses around adult literacy and numeracy, review of the current overseas literature on the role of union learning representatives in workplaces, and research on the history of the involvement of Australian trade unions in shaping the VET agenda, this [presentation] reviews the role unions played in recent VET policy formation and considers what new directions they might explore in the emerging policy environment.
The aim of this project was to research and document how inclusive teaching and learning strategies may contribute to improving qualification completions for social inclusion target groups within South Western Sydney Institute, and highlight case studies of faculty specific strategies that contribute to improved qualification outcomes.

The scope included equity cohorts as well as other socially disadvantaged client groups. The focus included groups of students in customised or targeted programs, as well as a sample of individual students who are supported in mainstream programs.

The approach taken in this research study was that the cohorts that “stayed together as a group” would offer the best opportunity to correlate specific teaching and learning strategies with completion outcomes. In studying groups of students, particularly those where the group achieved successful completion outcomes, the project aimed to minimise the influence of individual factors on student outcomes.

One hundred and ten cohort groups were identified as part of the first phase of data collection. A sample were invited to complete a survey instrument. Surveys were competed for 23 cohorts (groups) and 13 cohorts (individuals) and these cohorts were then interviewed to document specific teaching and learning strategies.

In “tagging” an identified group in this way the project team was then able to proceed to:
- Track individual and group completion and articulation outcomes
- Identify quantitative and qualitative individual and group profile characteristics, and
- Document the teaching and learning practices i.e. the key elements of the student TAFE experience which was common to the cohort as part of a customised program of delivery.

The project has resulted in a research report, highlighting specific case studies and providing recommendations about socially inclusive teaching and learning strategies.
LIVING AND LEARNING IN A COMPANY TOWN: SOCIAL INCLUSION, SUSTAINABILITY AND VET

Jenni Carter
University of South Australia, Adelaide, SA, Australia

This presentation considers the possibilities and dilemmas of considering social inclusion and sustainability in an industry led VET system. In particular it focuses on the relationships between industry and communities in the context of a 'company town'. Considering three different 'company town' case studies the strategies developed by industry to further social inclusion and sustainability are identified and analysed. These include the programs operated or sponsored by industry to further access and participation, community development and sustainable approaches to workforce development. Within this context, the role of the formal VET system is considered. In particular it offers a set of provocations that put into question contemporary understandings of the reach of VET in bringing about the kinds of employment and social outcomes laid out in policy goals that centre on increasing access and participation.
Completing for Success @ SWSI

The Completing for Success @ SWSI project was an Institute initiative focusing on strategies to increase qualification completions across areas of low course completions. Increasing pressure to achieve state and national targets to alleviate the skill shortages and to increase workforce participation and productivity was a key driver for the project. The objective of this research project was to identify, document, evaluate and promote strategies that can be implemented by the Institute to improve qualification completions.

The research project involved eight teams that focused on completions in a particular qualification or groups of related qualifications where data indicated there was a significantly low level of completions, or high risk areas where there were national, state or Institute targets to be addressed. Project teams engaged in research and data analysis to stratify the possible reasons and causes for low course completions to develop strategies that may improve the number of students completing specific qualifications. The project resulted in a research report that identified a broad range of Institute specific strategies and recommendations to improve qualification completions.
MY POINT OF VIEW: USING E-LEARNING TO IMPROVE TRADES-BASED LEARNING EXPERIENCES FOR STUDENTS AND THEIR TEACHERS

Ruth Wallace¹, Milton Nomikoudis²
¹Charles Darwin University, Darwin, NT, Australia
²Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

A group of RMIT Indigenous students, sponsored by the Plumbing Trades Employees Union, have been enrolled in the Certificate III in Plumbing. The enrolment of students from a range of regions, cultures and educational backgrounds challenged trainers to think about the ways they delivered and assessed the competencies, in particular the underlying theory. Trainers recognised the need and opportunity to explore the potential of mobile technologies to provide additional support to improve learners' outcomes from, and participation in, theory and practical sessions. This [presentation] describes the journey of the trainers and the learners in identifying the best technologies for their needs and the impact on their whole approach to teaching and learning with Indigenous people. In particular the [presentation] discusses the use of point of view glasses that allowed the students to show what they can do, trainers to show what can be done and the ways these perspectives were integrated into a new approach to delivering complex and technical content. The success of the programme is being integrated into RMIT’s Indigenous strategy to engage Indigenous learners and introduce new approaches and technologies to both the student learning and the development of teaching capability. The next challenge is to make this approach transferable to other courses and training teams.
NEW TOOLS FOR OLD HANDS: E-PORTFOLIOS FOR CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN REMOTE EDUCATION WORKFORCES

Alicia Boyle
Charles Darwin University, Darwin, NT, Australia

Increasingly, federal government policy has dominated the way public education agencies perform and execute their responsibilities. This has been most acutely felt in the Northern Territory (NT). Under the Quality Teaching Package and Enhancing Literacy measures of the Closing the Gap in the Northern Territory National Partnership Agreement, the Australian Government has committed $44.3 million over three years (2009/10 to 2011/12) to Northern Territory education providers to develop career pathways for Indigenous staff, increase the number of Indigenous staff with education qualifications and provide support and programs to enable teachers and students achieve improved outcomes in literacy and numeracy in 73 targeted remote communities. By presenting the outcomes-to-date of a suite of projects conducted with the Northern Territory Department of Education and Training over 2010, this [presentation] describes and demonstrates the potentially significant role that ePortfolios can play in the continuing education of remote education workforces. The discussion considers both the opportunities and challenges for remote learners/employees, vocational education and training (VET) providers and public agencies considering the adoption of ePortfolios for career and professional development.
The “VALUE” OF EVALUATING TEACHING PRACTICES FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Lydia Richards
University of South Australia, Adelaide, SA, Australia

The introduction of AQTF 2007 (and successive frameworks) in VET encourages an outcomes focused audit approach. This approach is aimed at allowing Registered Training Organisations greater flexibility with the objective of encouraging innovation, and ultimately, continuous improvement. However, defining, let alone achieving continuous improvement, is challenging. This presentation highlights some findings from qualitative research, undertaken as part of a Masters of Education, which investigated VET practitioners’ understanding of continuous improvement in their teaching practices and AQTF 2007 compliance.

This presentation describes how practitioners perceive the audit requirement for demonstrated continuous improvement as more focused upon demonstrating minor incremental change and keeping up-to-date, and how this focus, coupled with the lack of time for practitioners to reflect on their work, may restrict opportunities for more innovative change. In addition, the need for systematic evaluation of data to inform change was not fully appreciated as a fundamental characteristic of continuous improvement by all practitioners.

This discussion highlights the need for practitioners to develop an enhanced understanding of continuous improvement and the importance of evaluation of data, as well giving them the time and skills to undertake evaluation and reflect upon their work. The role of auditors in exercising their professional judgement to encourage and promote the gathering and review of evidence for genuine continuous improvement rather than minor adjustments is also emphasised.
Theme: VET Work & VET Workers

CONCURRENT SESSION 3B
Time: 1155 – 1225 hours
Room: Ballroom B, Ground Floor

PERSPECTIVES ON TAFE TEACHERS’ PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY:
DUALITIES AND DILEMMAS
Phoebe Palmieri
Monash University, Clayton, VIC, Australia

The transformation of TAFE to VET has had significant effects on the work of TAFE teachers. Different research literatures document these changes in the terms, conditions and practices of TAFE work and highlight their effect on the professional identity of TAFE teachers.

This [presentation] draws on Stephen Toulmin’s Cosmopolis: the hidden agenda of modernity to identify dilemmas in the contemporary era of change and tracks their significance for TAFE teachers’ professional identity.

In this [presentation] we identify dilemmas in TAFE work in terms of Toulmin’s dualities of thinking. He identifies two traditions: the ‘quest for certainty’ advocated by Descartes and others, and the tradition of ‘reasonableness’ endorsed by Montaigne. These two ways of thinking parallel the managerialist language of regulatory frameworks in TAFE Institutes, and the more ‘humanistic’ language of (many) teachers.

Following Toulmin, we explore the scope for convergence between these dualistic discourses through interviews with teachers in TAFE degree programs. The interviews focus on teacher’s views of their own teaching and what they consider most important in their work. TAFE degrees were chosen as the site for research on the grounds that the disturbances and dilemmas created by the introduction of this new program of work might provide a fruitful ground for reflective thought. Their reflections highlight the way they work between the dilemmas and their own values as teachers in TAFE. A central value for all interviewees was found to be the development of students in their own lives; they differed in the ways they negotiate the structural changes and also the cultural changes which accompany the current reconfiguration of VET.
This [presentation] presents perceptions of university-based, Technical and Vocational Education (TVE) teacher-educators in Malaysia, Australia and the UK in relation to the United Nations Educational, Scientific & Cultural Organization (UNESCO) statements on TVE. The study was conducted in Malaysia, Australia and the United Kingdom, February-May 2010.

In the 21st century we experience the world in an interconnected and ‘global’ way. It is unfortunate that much of that connectedness is at the price of negative experiences – economic crises, human rights violations, natural disasters and environmental mismanagement. Such experiences can stem from economic, social and/or environmental events that impact our capacity for a sustainable future, regardless of cultural context. Our capacity to deal with them through TVE is underpinned by guidance of organizations such as UNESCO and UNEVOC; providing a visible presence for TVE in the international context. But are teacher-educators for TVE really attending to their advice and direction? Less than 10% of those surveyed and interviewed (n=48) were even aware of UNESCO’s statements on the global intent of TVE, yet all countries involved in this lead-in study are member states.

The central issue is to challenge that ‘everything is going along nicely, thank you’. Arguably, the TVE community is attuned to mitigating risk factors for its own survival, and is perpetually focused on reporting the ‘good news’ about the effectiveness and penetration of programs. This lead-in project set out to get teacher-educators critically reflecting on technical education, and thinking about their role as the intellectual community that will inform economically, socially and environmentally sustainable futures.

The study involved extended stays and site visits in four countries. Data were drawn from structured interviews and surveys, plus over a dozen site visits to universities, polytechnics, specialist research centres and to national bodies governing technical education. Overall, almost 60 teacher-educator academics specializing in technical education, from more than 20 universities, were involved.
FRUITFUL LEARNING ECOLOGIES: BUILDING EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS

Jude Cooke, Patricia Kenny, Nola Randall-Mohk
TAFE NSW, Sydney, NSW, Australia

In this [presentation] we reflect on our own and broader practice with a lens on partnerships, one of the keys to successful TAFE Outreach practice. Traditionally our partnerships have been built on longstanding relationships and often emerge through organic processes that are articulated in current learning ecology theses derived from Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model of human development (1979). Dynamic interagency networks are often at the heart of this process. This collaborative approach can lead to highly innovative, locally negotiated, supportive and flexible programs for equity student groups. External policy pressure on educational providers to develop new paradigms in order to comply with conditions such as imposed partnerships with nominated agencies can undermine existing successful models. We reflect on our own practice and explore practices within Australia and in other countries to inform our future directions.
There have been some suggestions that Australian universities are not adequately addressing the needs of VET students transitioning to higher education. Whilst dual sector universities generally have more opportunity to build cohesive and complimentary pathways that support VET transition, this practice usually requires greater determination and co-operation in single sector institutions. A common theme has been emerging in recent reports and research projects including the Bradley review suggesting that universities need to improve the way in which they manage VET to HE partnerships, credit transfer and transition to enable a smooth and successful transition for VET students. In 2009-2010 a research project supported by the ALTC was conducted by 2 NSW universities to specifically focus on what factors contribute to a positive experience for VET students transitioning to a single sector university. The project targeted Business, Nursing and Education disciplines to identify gaps, develop strategies and actively examine the effectiveness of specially designed systems and structures that support VET to University transition to form a set of foundation principles of good practice that can be shared and developed across the sector. This session will discuss the project team’s findings and what elements VET students have reported to be key influences in their transition experience whilst sharing some practical examples of ways in which single sector universities can manage and support transition that positively supports and engages the VET learner on their journey through to Higher Education.
The vocational education and training (VET) sector is under scrutiny to achieve national and state targets which focus on the number of students completing qualifications. Improving the rate of completions is key to raising the educational levels of the wider population, alleviating skill shortages and increasing workforce participation.

In 2009, the Prime Minister, Julia Gillard, in her previous role as Commonwealth Minister for Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, expressed her concern about the issue of VET sector qualification completions ‘... inefficiency, waste and lost opportunities represented by current levels of non-completion’.

Moves towards a more competitive VET sector training market necessitate a focus on improved qualification completions as this will become a critical factor in attracting and maintaining student enrolments.

Research by Mark and Karmel (September 2010) estimated the national completion rate for all vocational course enrolments that commenced in 2005, at 27.1 per cent. This rate increases to 34.7 per cent for full-time students aged 25 years or older who have no prior vocational qualification.

TAFE NSW has implemented a range of strategies to address qualification completions including state-wide project during 2010 which investigated qualification completions in specific programs or for specific target groups.

This action research project involved 17 Institute teams who interrogated specific aspects of qualification completions and identified strategies to address local completions issues.

A critical message expressed in the research about completions was confirmed by the TAFE NSW project. Learners usually have more than one reason for not completing, so a multi-faceted approach is needed to improve qualification completions. No single solution will work for every student and no single solution will resolve the problem entirely.
MINE! NO MINE! A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF CROSS-SECTORAL DESIGN
Barbara Cram
University of Canberra, Canberra, ACT, Australia

Reviews of the tertiary education system in Australia highlight the need for greater integration between the vocational and higher education (HE) sectors. Historically, the sectors have been established with distinct funding sources, governance structures, employment conditions, student characteristics, learning outcomes and curriculum design (Karmel 2008). A variety of organisational structures shape current cross-sectoral programs and pathways, including co-located dual-sector institutions, degree program offerings in TAFE colleges and specified credit and articulation arrangements between vocational institutions and universities. Despite the potential for such structures to widen participation for educationally disadvantaged groups, tertiary participation rates for Indigenous people, people from regional and remote parts of Australia and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds have not improved (Gale 2009, Wheelahan 2009, Bradley et al. 2008).

This [presentation] presents a framework for the design of regional HE courses and pathways in a community context. The framework draws from community-based participatory research methodologies and includes a critical analysis of underlying drivers, barriers and enablers to regional delivery. Structures and processes are proposed for gathering the varied and often contradictory views of educational institutions and local communities, and for incorporating these views into the design of regional pathways and courses.

Community-based development of regional programs entails new forms of engagement for educational providers, government bodies, business and communities. The framework presented in this [presentation] is proposed as a sustainable approach to the development of cross-sectoral pathways and programs to address the needs of the most seriously under-represented groups in regional Australia.
PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES ACROSS THE TERTIARY SECTOR:
SUMMARISING THE LITERATURE ON THE PEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT FOR
STUDENTS MOVING FROM VET INTO UNIVERSITIES

Mike Brown¹, Erin Withers², Cathy Down³, Jane Figgis⁰, Jacqui McManus²
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²University of New South Wales, Sydney, NSW, Australia
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⁰AAAJ Consulting, Perth, WA, Australia

This [presentation] summarises issues and identifies gaps that have arisen from the initial review of
literature associated with the ‘Transition from VET to University: What are the pedagogical issues?’
research project. This is an on-going research project funded by NCVER. This study explores the
pedagogical practices encountered by vocational education and training (VET) graduates making
the transition into university programs. The research is looking to provide an evidence base for the
development of strategies that will enhance the student’s experience of cross-sectoral transition. The
aims of this project are in line with the recommendations of the Bradley Review and subsequent moves
by Australian Universities to attract VET graduates into undergraduate university programs. Amongst
the gaps identified are, the need for direct findings devised from speaking with VET students going into
Higher education; evaluating the adaptability of VET students transitioning to the pedagogical practices
utilized in higher education; and exploring whether the use of authentic learning tasks and assessment
might be appropriate within first year higher education programs.
Theme: New Researchers

CONCURRENT SESSION 2F
Time: 1435 – 1505 hours
Room: Rendezvous 2, Ground Floor

NEW RESEARCHERS AND NEW RESEARCH COMMUNITIES: AN EXPLORATION OF STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY IN CONTINUING EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN SINGAPORE

Andrew Brown, Joyce Tan
Institute for Adult Learning, Singapore Workforce Development Agency, Singapore

In recent years, Singapore has invested heavily, and successfully, in Continuing Education and Training (CET). There has to date, however, been little research in this area carried out in Singapore. One part of the mission of the Institute for Adult Learning (IAL), set up by the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA) in 2008, is to develop the capability and capacity for research-informed practice in CET. This involves not only the production of a sound infrastructure for the conduct and dissemination of research, but also the development of a community of active CET researchers. To this end, the IAL has developed, in consultation with key stakeholders, a research strategy, which combines the development of research specific research studies in the areas of learning, work and the impact of CET, with a programme of infrastructure and capability building activities. These include the development of strong national and international partnerships, support for practitioner researchers, research-led workshops and seminars, sponsorship and hosting of higher degree programmes and a range of research grant schemes to support new and experienced researchers. In this [presentation] we will map out the strategies we have developed to build this research capability, and explore the ways in which this is impacting on the development of research communities for production of and engagement with new knowledge in CET and adult education.
One of the future challenges for the VET sector will be securing an appropriately skilled workforce that is capable of engaging students and supporting their learning in ways which will deliver the economic and social outcomes required of the sector by governments and employers. This development of teachers and trainers will occur in a context where demographic factors, changing employment conditions and the ‘war’ for talent all have the potential to reshape the relationships between VET employees and their organisations. The choices made by individuals about how to best build their careers and the decisions made by organisations to support their staff develop their expertise through a range of education and continuing professional development activities will be critical.

There is a wide range of ways in which VET teachers and trainers might address their professional learning needs. These can include a range of formal qualification pathways, as well a variety of non-formal and informal learning opportunities such as those provided through learning at and through work. The concept of ‘career capital’ provides a useful framework for considering the relative merits and outcomes for career development that these different types of learning opportunities offer individuals. Career capital refers to the dispositions, expertise and networks of knowledge, people and resources accumulated by individuals across their working lives. This capital can assist individual VET teachers and trainers to move from job role to job role. It can also support the development of expertise which is vital to ensure that VET staff remain up-to-date with workplace requirements as well as with the latest developments in pedagogy.

This [presentation] will examine the concept of career capital as it might apply across the working life of VET teachers and trainers. Particular attention will be paid to examining the range of professional learning activities available and the potential these have for developing the sorts of career capital needed to sustain and develop VET teachers and trainers for current and future roles.
The Transferability of Vocational Education and Learning from the Military Context to the Civilian Context

Tony Holland, Lisa Groves
University of Technology Sydney, Sydney, NSW, Australia

One of the most commonly advanced reasons for joining the Australian Defence Force (ADF) is the quality of the training given to enlisted personnel. The access to quality vocational education and training is a significant recruitment and retention benefit put forward by the ADF and is highlighted on all the recruitment related materials available for potential military personnel. This presentation describes the results of research undertaken into vocational education and training within the military context and how it compares and aligns with similar civilian delivered vocational education and training. The presentation also looks at the transferability of vocational learning from the military context to the civilian context through a series of case studies in three vocational areas and finds that while the content of military training is highly transferable the context and culture of the vocational education and training is quite distinctive and some of these factors could lead to a possible disjuncture when military personnel transfer to the civilian sector.
Theme: Skilling for Sustainable Future

CONCURRENT SESSION 3E
Time: 0955 – 1025 hours
Room: Heritage Lounge, First Floor

INDIGENOUS MODELS OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING IN NORTHERN AUSTRALIA
Ruth Wallace
Charles Darwin University, Darwin, NT, Australia
CRC National Plant Biosecurity, Darwin, NT, Australia

In northern Australia, effective partnerships between Indigenous land managers and relevant government agencies are working to undertake biosecurity management in these remote regions. Biosecurity surveillance, reporting and management work have been identified as having the potential to be developed to support economic, cultural and social sustainability in remote Indigenous communities. These partnerships require approaches that explicitly recognise Indigenous and Western knowledge and skill sets that focus on identification, intervention, management and eradication of plant biosecurity. By explicitly recognising and endorsing local knowledge and skills, connections to policy level descriptions and support can be developed that ultimately improve outcomes for communities’ economic, cultural, social and economic futures. The potential for stabilizing and extending these programs and securing the environmental, agricultural industries’ and Indigenous people’s futures is being realised through connection to emerging enterprises and existing areas of expertise. The task undertaken by this project was to develop processes to support Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to make decisions about biosecurity management including a training framework, enterprise development and data management systems. This [presentation] discusses the key issues in developing Indigenous workforces and showcases the multilingual training resources created by Indigenous people to share their knowledge and reinforce the role of Indigenous rangers in cultural and land management.
Continuing professional development for a workforce that is largely casual within a new sector has many challenges. In an interventionist study involving Singaporean trainers delivering competency-based training (n=23) these challenges were identified as ranging from policy implementation, systems, curriculum design through to commonly used symbolic language such as “imparting knowledge”. Singaporean trainers are committed, care deeply about their learners and actively seek out professional development. They want to know more about managing pedagogical processes, and understand pedagogical theory as it relates to practice. The aim of the study was to develop research capability and reflective practice. The study involved interviewing trainers to capture their reported pedagogical beliefs and enactment of these beliefs. Trainers undertook their own research project supported by a series of workshops where the researcher (the author) worked with them. Field notes of these workshops along with the initial interview data constitute the data for this paper which has two purposes; to describe the challenges of continuing professional development for a new workforce and to explore the implications and possibilities for addressing these challenges.
The Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association (AVETRA) was formed as an independent association in 1997. AVETRA sought to be inclusive of a broad range of interests in both its membership and executive committee. These interests included funding bodies, producers and consumers of vocational education and training (VET) from the Universities, TAFEs, private providers, industry and policy developers.

The association’s first national conference was held in Sydney in 1998 and has been held annually since. The primary functions of the conference are to provide an opportunity for the dissemination of research activity and to engage in dialogue. The annual general meeting is also held at this time. More recently, there has been an increased emphasis on supporting and providing opportunities for ‘new’ researchers to present in a ‘safe’ environment. Conference papers may be refereed or non-refereed.

A history of AVETRA (Miller, 2008), states that ‘AVETRA is now at a point where it needs to assess its position within the VET landscape and clearly define its roles in this context’ (p.5). If AVETRA is to represent the interests of its membership then there is a need to gather information about those interests. This paper aims to contribute to this base of data through an analysis of the conference papers that have been presented at the annual AVETRA conferences between 1998 and 2009.

Given the importance of the annual conference, and the inclusive nature of paper selection, the conference represents a weathervane in respect to the interests and activities of members. This research will analysis authorship, institutional affiliation, keywords etc. to identify and discuss the implications of trends in AVETRA conference activity over more than a decade.
WORKPLACE LEARNING EXPERIENCES OF TRAINEES ENGAGED IN SINGAPORE’S WORKFORCE SKILLS QUALIFICATIONS (WSQ) TRAINING

Magdalene Lin, Helen Bound
Institute for Adult Learning, Singapore

The inevitability and value of learning through engaging in the activity of work is now well accepted. Being in a real work environment enables learners to not only develop situation-specific knowledge and skills, but also experience the culture, politics, workflows, and time pressures that are part of the productive process. In the vocational education and training sector, efforts have been made to incorporate some form of workplace learning component into the qualification itself. Based on current research, the purpose of this [presentation] is two-fold. First, it provides an overview of the extent and type of workplace learning found in Singapore's Workforce Skills Qualifications (WSQ) framework. Second, it examines the workplace learning experiences of WSQ trainees to identify what and how they learn at work, and the workplace affordances and individual agency that influence this learning.
CONCURRENT SESSION 1A
Time: 1035 – 1105 hours
Room: Rendezvous 3, Ground Floor

UQ COLLEGE – OPENING UP NEW PATHWAYS
Gerry Corcoran
UQ College, Ipswich, QLD, Australia

The changing Australian political and education environment is driving the evolution of dual-sector universities. Tertiary education policy is in a state of rapid change.

The connection between VET and HE has been identified as a key element to achieve national attainment and participation goals and thus dual-sector universities are well positioned to meet the challenges of this new environment.

This [presentation] will outline one example of the genesis of a dual sector model where The University of Queensland is implementing a new university college (UQ College) located on the UQ Ipswich campus that will offer Associate Degree programs that articulate with Degree programs. The college will provide opportunities for improving access to higher education by offering a range of study options and upgrading pathways for school and non-school leavers. It will also offer bridging programs and tertiary preparation courses for students new to university study. The first of these degrees in Business will commence in September 2011.

The UQ College will also provide flexible VET course offerings, thereby increasing the accessibility of the programs to students. The college will be, ensuring that its students will benefit from being part of the University environment.

A research project focusing on the Business Studies area is being undertaken by the presenter which will track the development and implementation of the new College over a three year period which will provide input into responses to questions which are important to an understanding of the evolution of dual sector university models in Australia.
The aim of this article is to problematise how confession operates as a technology that shapes and fosters subjects within vocational education. By rehearsing parts of Foucault’s genealogy of confession as emerging among the Stoics and within Christianity, an in-service training program for care workers within elderly care is analyzed. Learning conversations and log-books are identified as confessional techniques through which care workers come to know who they are. These techniques work through the freedom of those they target and thus these techniques need to be problematised.
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Friday, 29 April 2011

Theme: Reflecting Back… Lessons for the Future?

CONCURRENT SESSION 3C
Time: 1035 – 1105 hours
Room: Ballroom A, Ground Floor

SIZING-UP OFFSHORE VET: THE DATA-POLICY NEXUS
Caitlin Harris
TVET Australia, Melbourne, VIC, Australia

Until now, very little has been known about the extent and nature of Australian VET qualifications being delivered offshore by the private sector. In 2010 the National Quality Council oversaw the first ever compulsory data collection from private Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) about their offshore activities. The results of the collection have been combined with DEEWR’s annual data collection from public TAFE providers to give, for the first time, a comprehensive picture of the locations, students and programs being offered offshore by Australian VET Providers.

Recent changes to regulatory arrangements and immigration policy are expected to spur new growth in the offshore VET market as RTOs increasingly look overseas for new opportunities to expand their businesses. This is a great opportunity for the sector, but also one that presents significant risks to the brand and reputation of Australian education. Having accurate data to support evidence-based policy making for offshore VET delivery is essential.

This [presentation] will outline the findings of the 2009 public and private offshore data collections and highlight what policy makers, researchers and RTOs can learn from the data, particularly in terms of risks and quality assurance.
Theme: Skilling for Sustainable Future

CONCURRENT SESSION 3E
Time: 1115 – 1145 hours
Room: Heritage Lounge, First Floor

THE AQUE DUX PROJECT AT HARVESTER TECHNICAL COLLEGE: AN APPROACH TO EVIDENCE BASED SUSTAINABILITY CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT AND APPLIED LEARNING

Adela McMurray¹, Linda Mitchell²
¹RMIT University, Melbourne, VIC, Australia
²Harvester Technical College, Sunshine, VIC, Australia

This presentation reports on the findings of a funded study addressing the awareness level of students, school educators and industry stakeholders towards environmental sustainability at Harvester Technical College. A sample of 105 surveys was supplemented by 19 semi-structured interviews. Analysis uncovered the four themes of 1) Understanding of Environmental Sustainability, 2) Transferability of Skills needed to contribute towards Environmental Sustainability Projects, 3) Climate Change Awareness among Students and the 4) Relationship between Industry and Educational Institutions. Regression analysis uncovered a significant positive relationship between self-perception and the perception of environmental conservation and climate change awareness. Implications for evidence based curriculum development and innovation in teaching practice are discussed, with a specific focus on the power of applied learning pedagogy.
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