

PAPER:

***QUALITY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING:  
WHAT ROLE DOES STAFF DEVELOPMENT PLAY?***

***Michele Simons***

**and**

***Dr Roger Harris***

**Centre for Research in Education, Equity and Work  
University of South Australia**

Abstract:

The vocational education and training (VET) sector is currently undergoing another phase of significant reform including the implementation of initiatives relating to User Choice, Training Packages and New Apprenticeships. Within this changing context, the provision of staff development for VET staff is an issue which needs serious attention if the stated goals of the reforms are to be achieved.

Current approaches to the provision of staff development are complicated by a range of factors including diminishing resources, increased competition within the sector and changes to the working conditions of VET staff. Teachers and trainers are increasingly finding themselves working in a variety of settings outside of the traditional TAFE classroom, often in part time, casual or on limited term contract positions. The impact of new technologies, including those linked to the flexible delivery of programs, is also a key factor. Within this context, there is a pressing need to explore the current approaches to staff development and to press for a new conceptualisation of staff development that will be responsive to the environment in which VET teachers and trainers work.

This paper reports on preliminary findings from a review of research literature relating to the provision of staff development (both initial and on-going) for VET staff in both public and private Registered Training Organisations. Key themes and concepts from the literature will be examined. Issues which impact on the nature and availability of staff development for the various groups of teachers and trainers working within the VET sector will also be explored.