

**Factors influencing the employability of VET graduates over time:
a PLS analysis**

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The Australian Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses are designed to meet the skills of industry and employability of students. While many students are unemployed before commencing their study the nature of TAFE is such that most students are employed and/or seek part time employment during their period of study. Nevertheless, after graduation from TAFE some will be in jobs while others will not - and some will have moved to better jobs. In 1999, ACNielsen Research collected Student Outcomes Survey (SOS) data from 4673 South Australian 1998 TAFE graduates on behalf the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) who manage a program of satisfaction and destination surveys. In addition, in 2000, NCS Australasia also collected Student Outcomes Survey (SOS) data from 2819 South Australian 1999 TAFE graduates on behalf of NCVER. Among these completing students some were employed (part-time or full time) whereas, others were unemployed. Some of the students were employed before starting the course while some were also employed during the course, and the remaining graduates were unemployed. Thus, the main purpose of the present study is to identify whether or not the student level factors that influences the employability of 1998 VET graduates are similar with that of the 1999 VET graduates. The data employed for the study are the 1999 and 2000 South Australian Student Outcomes Survey (SOS) data mentioned above. In this paper partial least square path analysis methods are employed to examine student level factors that influence employability of students after graduation from TAFE over time using the PLSPATH 3.01 (Sellin, 1990) computer program. Conclusions are drawn about the student level factors that influence the employability level of students.