

# A Tale of Two Texts

**A Victorian tale of two texts: Skills Reform  
and, the Multi Business Agreement.**

VET Policy Discussion  
and  
TAFE Industrial Agreement

# A Tale of Two Texts

## Who I am

### David McLean

11.5 years experience in TAFE in a variety of roles:

Senior Educator

Project Manager

Department Manager

Additional experience in Instructional Design, teaching, developing and implementing youth programmes (VCAL & VETiS).!!

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## Scanning for an instance

### Understanding my work

Looking for ways to comprehend my work in both abstract and applied ways

I am an operational person that's is always looking for new ways of doing things; innovation as solution

Design my research approach around how I comprehend my work, what I do and see.!!

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## Quadrant of my work

### **Policy:**

Federal  
AQTF  
State  
Skills Victoria

### **Institution:**

Policies  
Procedures  
Forms  
Strategic Plan

### **Operations:**

Budget  
Student Management System  
Reporting  
Deadlines

### **Structure:**

Instructional Design  
Delivery plans  
Assessment Design  
Teaching

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## My Study

### Research Method

- Institutional Ethnography (IE) as Developed by Dorothy E. Smith
- Focuses on the every day work that people do and how that is organised and restructured via texts
- Also considers how a single text can influence multiple work places in different locations (the Translocal)

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## Key text

### **Victorian Vet Policy**

*Jobs for Your Future: Skills for Victoria*

### **People and Place of work**

Victorian TAFE Teachers & Senior Educators

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Securing Jobs for Your Future  
*Skills for Victoria*

A Victorian Government Initiative 

**VICTORIAN TAFE TEACHING STAFF**

**MULTI-BUSINESS**

**AGREEMENT**

**2009**

# A Tale of Two Texts

## Questions

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).

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## Victorian Skills Reform

### Contestability

- All state government funding will be open to both public and private providers (staged from July 1st 2009 onwards)
- TAFEs will eventually receive no fixed funding and will have to openly compete with the Private Sector.

### Funding

Victorian Government has:

- decreased the amount it contributes to a student's total fees
- decreased the amount Skills Victoria returns to institutes for an hour of instruction
- instituted a funding model that only pays against monthly measures of student activity in a course and
- affected eligibility requirements for individual students thus reducing the number of students in the system.

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## Output

**Skills Reform as an experiential story of change** recorded as it happened.

I want to tell the story of change.

I want to create a record of what happened.

I want to show how work is changed using a methodology crafted for that purpose.

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## The Mirror of Production

The economically constructive strategies of human capital theory, competency based training and productivity has been turned upon TAFE teachers with an expectation to change.

Productivity at both a state and federal level is setting the future and current policy of the sector.

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## The Mirror of Production

Teachers are now both implicit and explicit in the economically driven VET change agenda, what they have been effecting now affects them.

Further study should reveal to what degree teachers are *knowing* of the complicit nature of their work in regards to productivity and how productivity, as opposed to pedagogy, feeds into the coordination and construction of their work.