

Workbased Learning in the Contemporary Australian VET Sector: a Re-appraisal

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This paper reports on a project conducted in the latter part of 2000 and supported by Framing the Future. The project involved a re-appraisal of the nature and value of workbased learning as a methodology for national staff development in the VET Sector throughout the 1990s, with particular reference to staff development initiatives from 1997 to the present, and a consideration of the possibilities for the future.

The seminal work of Carter & Gribble (1991) is revisited along with a review of the national and international staff development literature from the past decade. The evolution of definitions of workbased learning is traced and compared to the ways workbased learning has been taken up by teams of VET practitioners within Framing the Future Projects since 1997.

From this analysis, unique features of workbased learning identified in the literature and developed by VET practitioners through their involvement in recent staff development projects have been identified thereby extending understandings of workbased learning and its key contemporary features.

The paper concludes with a summation of the relevance of workbased learning as a conceptual framework for staff development in the VET sector of today and tomorrow.