

*The Newsletter of the Australasian Vocational
Education and Training Research Association*



AVETRA 'A-NEWS' NEWSLETTER – December 2021



Photo by Bruna Branco, UnSplash

From the President



AVETRA's Executive wishes you a safe and relaxing break, and that 2022 will be kind to us all. Many people say that 2021 has been a trying year, with all the COVID-related upheavals, work loss and yet work intensification that has seeped into a wide range of roles. The VET sector more broadly has had its fair share of disruption while in the background the

work of reform rolls on. In the midst of the turmoil, AVETRA has been working towards a more sustainable and relevant mode of operation while continuing to deliver the events and services that are its core concerns.

Another successful OctoberVET season brought fresh perspectives to the conversation of VET. Thanks to Robyn Shreeve, Karen O'Reilly-Briggs and Lizzie Knight from the Executive, and Sharon Swaboda from our Secretariat for developing the series.

Andrew Williamson must be thanked for editing Research Today, a unique publication that gives a voice to a group of VET researchers who might not be so widely known otherwise. And Josie Misko is to be thanked for bringing you A-News, always packed with interesting and important information that reflects the diversity and complexity of our

sector. Sarojni Choy and Selena Chan have been keeping the good work of our *International Journal of Training Research* going, providing a forum for new research bearing on VET in Australasia and globally, while Michele Simons and Lizzie Knight have toiled to establish a productive relationship with the publishers.

My thanks go to AVETRA's fine Executive generally for all the support and advice through a rather busy time. Our existing executive – Kira Clarke (Vice President), Lizzie Knight (Secretary), Llandis-Barratt-Pugh (Acting Treasurer), Robin Shreeve (Immediate Past President), Michelle Simons, Jason Skues, Josie Misko, Andrew Williamson and Teresa Schmidt – was expanded to include Karen O'Reilly-Briggs, Claire Field, Don Zoellner and Anne Jones. The Executive meets every two months, while sub-committees meet in between, convening to focus on different areas of operation. A new working group has been assembled to develop strategy to guide the association over the next couple of years. Kira Clarke, Claire Field, Don Zoellner, Anne Jones, and I have been meeting every fortnight to analyse the position and opportunities for the association to formulate a way forward.

Steven Hodge, President, AVETRA

A MINUTE WITH Kira Clarke, Senior Research Fellow, Brotherhood of Saint Lawrence

The training system needs more than just subsidies and incentives to be match-fit for the recovery role ahead

As Australia emerges from two years of major economic and social upheaval brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, governments across the country are turning to the training system as a key vehicle of recovery. More than ever, Australia needs a training system that looks to the future and focuses on building capability, not just skills, of individuals and communities for navigating the unpredictable economic and social recovery ahead.

Capital works, subsidised and free training, and learning and employer incentives, are all being predictably deployed by governments to drive training participation and address labour market skill shortages. Reforms stemming from the Joyce Review, including the establishment of the National Skills Commission, are also underpinning a more explicit policy focus on aligning training uptake with high demand industries, particularly in the aged and disability care, food production, transport and logistics and construction sectors.

While participation and completions took an understandable hit during the pandemic and lockdowns of 2020 and 2021, the structural and systemic challenges of the training were already visible prior to the pandemic. Subsidies and incentives may promote training activity, but they do not address some of the core structural features of the system that continue to contribute to declining participation, stagnating completion and misalignment between training activities and workforce development needs.



There are a range of skills reforms underway at the [national](#) and [state and territory levels](#). In many ways these reforms represent a continuation of longer-term policy tinkering, rather than any radical or visionary systemic reform, the type of which is needed to enable the VET system to play a backbone role in both the post-COVID recovery and to address future economic and workforce development needs.

The sustained occupationally narrow structure of Australian vocational qualifications is out of sync with the intensifying need for jobseekers and workers to be occupationally mobile. Jobseekers of all stages of career, but particularly new labour market entrants, require transferable skills for mobility. However, the occupational narrowness of the current system fails to set jobseekers up for long-term mobility within and between different jobs and industry areas.

It is not just a mismatch between training trends and the needs of the labour market that have been brought in to sharp relief by the pandemic. The disruptions brought on by COVID-19 have also amplified long-standing, problematic demographic patterns, including the concentration of learners from low socio-economic status backgrounds and with low labour market attachment within training programs that offer limited mobility into sustainable and skilled employment.

While recent analysis from NCVER points to [some improvements in the outcomes](#) for VET graduates, there remain limitations in the utility of post-completion surveys of VET graduates to establish the long term efficacy of training in enabling access to decent and sustainable employment.

So, what is the way forward? The post-COVID recovery period presents an opportunity for driving enduring systemic change in the training system and building momentum for evolving an adaptive and differentiated system that is grounded in deep engagement between VET providers, local industry, and social partners. A renewed focus on resourcing and enabling collaborative place-based partnerships can enable the training system to provide jobseekers with not just qualifications but with the industry immersion experiences and networks required to not only gain employment but to be secure and upwardly mobile into the future.

Using incentives and subsidies to fast-track jobseekers into training without strengthening the efficacy of the training system for building capabilities that are aligned with labour market opportunities and changing needs, leaves learners, particularly those at the beginning of their working lives, vulnerable to long-term labour market precarity.

Resourced and enabled through government investment, key VET sector actors in institutions, industry and community organisations need to be supported to co-create high quality adaptive training pathways that are responsive

to local industry ecosystems and employer needs, and the needs of learners at diverse stages of career development and attachment to the labour market.



Photo by Chad Madden on Unsplash

New appointments



A new commissioner for regional education

Former Senator Fiona Nash has been appointed as the inaugural Regional Education Commissioner. Her appointment has been welcomed by Troy Williams, the CEO of the Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA). He said that independent vocational training providers do the heavy lifting in providing business across regional communities with the skills they need. It's in this context that ITECA welcomes Ms Nash's appointment as the first Regional Education Commissioner. Mr Williams noted that independent Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) support 74% of the 1,225,300 vocational training students across regional, rural and remote Australia, according to data from the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER). Read more about Fiona Nash at:

[Former Senator Fiona Nash – Parliament of Australia \(aph.gov.au\)](http://aph.gov.au)

A new Skills Authority for Victoria

In October this year the Victorian Government announced the creation of the Victorian Skills Authority. Craig Robertson was announced as its new chief. *'I am really excited to contribute to the community as the founding CEO of the Victorian Skills Authority – working alongside students, trainers, and industry to create better opportunities for Victorians' said*

Craig of his appointment', Craig said.

<https://www.vic.gov.au/about-victorian-skills-authority>



A new CEO for TAFE Directors Australia

Jenny Dodd is the new CEO of TAFE Directors Australia and follows Craig Robertson in the position. Jenny has worked across a range of jurisdictions. Most recently she was head of TasTAFE in Tasmania. She has also been the Chief Academic Officer and General Manager of Gold Coast for TAFE Queensland, and Deputy CEO (Education) and Director Marketing and National Positioning for the Canberra Institute of Technology. [Jenny Dodd – TAFE Directors Australia \(tda.edu.au\)](http://tda.edu.au)



Covid tales from three cities Sydney, Singapore, and London – a personal experience, by Robin Shreeve

Between late November and early December, I ventured to London for a week to visit in my 97-year-old mother in her care home near London. The visit was made urgent by finalising the sale of her home that had been vacant for two years. The critical take-away for me is how the private and public responses to the pandemic appeared to differ in Australia, Singapore, and England. Singapore was the most serious and organised, Australia the most balanced and England the most chaotic and inefficient. Leaving and arriving in any of these countries, even for transit requires you to be fully vaccinated and have a vaccine passport; complete a number of online, entry Travel or Personal Locator Forms and take a number of PCR tests a maximum of two days before leaving and within two days of arriving. These being for travel are normally not free.

The PCR tests by Laverty and Clinical Labs in Australia were fast and efficient with a 48-hour turnaround test completed by both labs and the results sent to me within 9 hours. The \$150 fee was reasonable. I took two as I was flying in the evening, and I was worried I would be over the 48-hour limit as I had taken my first test in the morning two days before. I booked a second test a day later but with that I was worried I would not get the results in time. I need not have worried about either - but this efficiency was not repeated in London.

As I stay in London in Shepherd's Bush, I booked my arrival test with ExpressTest in the Westfield Shopping Centre there. This was the only non-PCR lateral flow test I took. It cost GBP39. It was OK but the results went to the Government though I was also notified over two days later of the negative results. These tests are like "pregnancy tests" and the results are pretty instantaneous. Interesting the Government has funded free self-administering lateral flow testing kits that can be picked up from any pharmacy. People are encouraged to do one before going out to meetings, events, gatherings or if they feel unwell. Given my Australian experience I booked a GBP 59 "fit to fly" PCR test with ExpressTest for 9 am on Tuesday morning as I

was flying from Heathrow at 8 pm on Thursday. When I got to ExpressTests they made it clear (almost guaranteed) that I would not get my results in time – even though they had 36 hours for the results to be processed and that it had taken less than 12 hours (twice) in Australia. My only option was to take a 3-hour PCR test only available at Heathrow which would cost GBP 119. I could not trade in my GBP 59 test. So, I took both. They were quite right, the results for the first test came back after I had left the UK. But annoyingly even the 'guaranteed' 3-hour test at Heathrow was late – but in time for my flight having arrived at the airport 7 hours before departure. I met a number of people who had missed their flights as they did not get their results in time. Be warned!

But that was not the only issue in the UK. When I arrived in London, Omicron was not prevalent, Transport for London were, however, themselves requiring that all passengers wore masks. There were constant messages being played to that effect. But in the tube carriage from Heathrow to Shepherd's Bush I was the only person wearing a mask. When Omicron became an issue, the Government orders were restored requiring mask wearing on public transport. But even then, on buses I travelled on only 80% of passengers were wearing masks and there was zero enforcement. I never saw a police officer near a tube or bus. In London, you would barely know there is a pandemic on which might explain why they still have thousands of cases a day. Terminal 2 at Heathrow was heaving – so much so I chose to wait outside in the cold.

Compare this to Singapore. When we arrived for transit there, passengers were disembarked by final destination. Those of us going to Sydney were held in isolation by staff all wearing full PPE – aprons, gloves, masks, and visors. So, my advice is be prepared for different responses. Everything is not like Australia. DFAT travel advice is good, and Singapore Airlines were exemplary in keeping passengers up to date with changing regulations in departure, transit, and arrival destinations.

The Australian Training Awards 2019: Individuals, businesses, and RTOs

On 18 November 2021 the Department of Education Skills and Employment's National Careers Institute, announced the finalists and winners of the Australian Training Awards. Below is a list of winners, runners-up, and finalists of the different categories. This year a new category was awarded. It was the Lifetime Outstanding Achievement in the VET and Skills Sector Award.

You can watch the event online by clicking on this link: <https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/>

VET Teacher/Trainer of the Year Award

Winner

- [David Moore](#) - Australian Capital Territory

Runner-up

- [Maryke Gray](#) - Western Australia

Finalist

- [Erin Jacob](#) - New South Wales
- [Wendy Blight](#) - Northern Territory
- [Danielle Dixon](#) - Queensland
- [Stuart Rimmington](#) - South Australia
- [Roy Leurs](#) - Tasmania
- [Julie Kramer](#) - Victoria

Australian School-based Apprentice or Trainee of the Year Award

Winner

- [Hannah Holford](#) - Australian Capital Territory

Runner-up

- [Elyssia Tallon Rosas](#) - Northern Territory

Finalist

- [Chelsea McInnes](#) - New South Wales
- [Bree Connell](#) - Queensland
- [Rachael Kelly](#) - South Australia
- [Sophie Furphy](#) - Tasmania
- [Laura Davidson](#) - Victoria
- [Courtney Short](#) - Western Australia

Trainee of the Year Award

Winner

- [Megan Cox](#) - New South Wales

Runner-up

- [Lorraine Randall](#) - Northern Territory

Finalist

- [Sophie New](#) - Australian Capital Territory
- [Mitchell Pogan](#) - Queensland
- [Irshad Haidari](#) - South Australia
- [Ashling Cannell](#) - Tasmania

- [Samantha Brown](#) - Victoria
- [Amber Ugle-Hayward](#) - Western Australia

Apprentice of the Year Award

Winner

- [Savanne Canobie](#) - Northern Territory

Runner-up

- [Harrison Sanders](#) - South Australia

Finalist

- [Morgan Sutton](#) - Australian Capital Territory
- [Troy Harris](#) - New South Wales
- [Lauren Campbell](#) - Queensland
- [Sophie Russell](#) - Tasmania
- [Andrew Jan](#) - Victoria
- [Christian Ferrone](#) - Western Australia

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year Award

Winner

- [Kasey Hardy](#) - Queensland

Runner-up

- [Lucas Price](#) - Victoria

Finalist

- [Philip Khalu-Reindl](#) - Australian Capital Territory
- [Adam Hansen](#) - New South Wales
- [Jahdai Vigona](#) - Northern Territory
- [Tameeka Bagnara](#) - South Australia
- [David Lowery](#) - Tasmania
- [Kevin Wilson](#) - Western Australia

Excellence in Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice Award

Winner

- [Dean Champ](#) - Victoria

Finalist

- [Camilla Portela](#) - New South Wales

Vocational Student of the Year Award

Winner

- [Samantha Daly](#) - Victoria

Runner-up

- [Zoe Tucker](#) - Western Australia

Finalist

- [Banda Ramadan](#) - Australian Capital Territory
- [Gabriella Adeline](#) - New South Wales
- [Makisha Tilmouth](#) - Northern Territory
- [Helen Millen](#) - Queensland
- [Thomas Alexander](#) - South Australia
- [Gypsy Rose Blackberry](#) - Tasmania

Business

Industry Collaboration Award

Winner

- [Canberra Institute of Technology Renewable Energy Industry Collaboration](#) - Australian Capital Territory

Finalist

- [Queensland Water Skills Partnership](#) - Queensland
- [Flinders University, BAE Systems and TAFE SA: Diploma of Digital Technologies](#) - South Australia

Large Employer of the Year Award

Winner

- [Peter Warren Automotive](#) - New South Wales

Finalist

- [SA Water](#) - South Australia
- [Metro Trains Melbourne](#) - Victoria

Medium Employer of the Year Award

Winner

- [Robinson Civil Group](#) - Queensland

Finalist

- [Pups4Fun](#) - Australian Capital Territory
- [Consolidated Group](#) - Western Australia

Small Employer of the Year Award

Winner

- [My Kingdom for a Horse](#) - South Australia

Finalist

- [Core Developments NQ](#) - Queensland
- [Swell Constructions](#) - Victoria

Australian Apprenticeships - Employer Award

Winner

- [WPC Group - Esso Australia](#) - Victoria

Finalist

- [Affinity Education Group](#) - Queensland
- [WA Department of Justice](#) - Western Australia

Registered Training Organisation

School Pathways to VET Award

Winner

- [Hunter Trade College Ltd](#) - New South Wales

Finalist

- [St Raphael's Catholic School](#) - New South Wales
- [Geelong Industry Trade Training Centre](#) - Victoria

Small Training Provider of the Year Award

Winner

- [Taminmin College](#) - Northern Territory

Finalist

- [Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta](#) - New South Wales
- [Builders Academy Australia](#) - Victoria

Large Training Provider of the Year Award

Winner

- [William Angliss Institute](#) - Victoria

Finalist

- [Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education](#) - Northern Territory
- [TAFE Queensland](#) - Queensland

Lifetime

Outstanding Achievement in the VET and Skills Sector Award

Recipient

- [David Collins PSM](#) - New South Wales

Linda Simon speaks with Jenny Dodd the new CEO of TAFE Directors Australia (TDA)

Jenny Dodd is the new CEO of TAFE Directors Australia. She has previously held senior positions in TasTAFE, TAFE Queensland and the Canberra Institute of Technology. We asked her four questions around her new role and the challenges facing TAFE Institutes.



Linda: This is an important time for TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) in the lead-up to another Federal election. What are the most important issues for TDA in terms of ensuring support from all parties for TAFE and the VET sector?



Jenny: Additional investment in TAFE as the public provider is welcome from all parties. Additional places and investment in technology solutions is critical, and the digital upskilling of the TAFE workforce is just as important as any other workforce. COVID changed the way we deliver many qualifications, so now we need to embed this and continue the funding.

Noting that a blend of face to face, workplace and digital will always be the TAFE model.

Micro-credentials have their place, but we need to get the balance right between skills and education. Meeting the skills shortages so prevalent in industry, requires investment in whole qualifications and capabilities as well as meeting the immediate skills needs of industry. We need people with capabilities that enable them to contribute throughout their working lives. TAFE has a strong role to play in providing

entry level qualifications that can be built on, including for women and others upskilling to re-enter the workforce. TAFE has an important role in equity, in ensuring affordable qualifications.

Understanding the enormity of the literacy, numeracy, and digital needs of so many of our students is important, in order to allocate funding and provide support. We welcome commitments from parties that understand the lifelong learning role of TAFE.

Governments need to be aware that what works in one regional place in Australia may not work in another as well, or indeed be needed to that extent.

Linda: What challenges are TAFE Institutes currently facing?

Jenny: The challenges are numerous but perhaps five to highlight are:

1. The model of training packages:

The plethora of training package changes that have little consideration for the impact on the student or at the delivery level. It is difficult for all TAFEs to keep up with the changes. Training packages continue to be input and task driven where TAFE wants to operate with outcomes for students and industry. ASQA equally wants outcomes-based performance assessment. This disconnect between the product and the educator (and regulator) is adding little value to students or industry. Producing assessment and learning resources to meet this constant change is difficult, especially when the changes don't always have time to be put in place and then another change is underway. Removing the prescriptive nature of training packages is also needed allowing for greater flexibility and speed to market.

It is also important for TAFE to be further up the pipeline in the VET eco-system to have a voice in the development of VET products and policies.

The immediate problems of workplacement backlogs resulting from COVID and in some cases the fact that

simulations would have delivered equally (if not better) strong outcomes. Training packages that mandate too much workplacement can be a problem when simulation would have equally delivered the same outcome.

Curriculum and competency – both have a place – some qualifications lend themselves more to curriculum and others to competency – the one size fits all of training packages does not work. Competency based assessment works well in some areas, but not all – more flexibility is needed.

TDA welcomes the qualification reforms that will take away some of the problems that have emerged with training packages during the last decade.

2. Pathways to one tertiary system. This is an age-old issue, but is still as big now as always was.
3. Understanding the focus on regional priorities versus national training system reform such as training product and qualifications. TAFEs operate in local communities and must have the flexibility to find local solutions.
4. The recruitment of skilled and qualified industry educators is a challenge for all TAFES, especially those on the Eastern seaboard and in licenced TRADES.
5. Building the capability and professionalisation of the TAFE workforce. This will enhance their ability to work closely with industry clusters and be a significant component in maintaining quality outcomes.

Linda: You have worked in a number of jurisdictions and have an educational background. How do you see this as important for your role in TDA?

Having worked across the country I have a good overview of the fundamental role that TAFE plays particularly in different communities, in meeting different employer needs and in supporting diverse student populations. It has given me a

strengthened perspective of the need to empower regional communities. I understand government requirements to have some control over pricing and product to maintain the strength of a national system, but there is a need for lighter control around the edges, with TAFE being able to credit components of qualifications at the local level, particularly in regional areas. I understand what it means to implement policy at a local level which I believe is a critical perspective. I recognise the importance of investing in the professionalism of the workforce to develop multiple skills.

Linda: AVETRA is committed to supporting new researchers and practitioner researchers in the VET sector. We note TDA's work around applied research, and are interested in ways we can continue to work with TDA in this area.

Jenny: TAFEs continue to drive applied research as key to their business activities and a network of TAFE practitioners is loosely in place to support this direction. TDA continues to facilitate applied research through the World Federation of Colleges and Polytechnics (WFCP) connections and AVETRA. TDA has material around research on the website and has recently distributed resources to TAFEs.

We see there is an alternative term for applied research that is understood by the workforce and that is practice-based innovation. TAFEs collaborating with industry and community partners is not new. Applied research is the extension of these traditional partnerships, but in Australia the term 'practice-based innovation' is often used. Australian TAFEs use applied research as the development of innovative solutions to real-world challenges. Applied research tackles practical problems by applying the latest technology and knowledge to create new products, services, and processes, or improve current products and practices.

Networks are important to the work of TAFE professionals and TDA will highlight this importance, and encourage working with and through AVETRA.

OctoberVET 2021 – another great year for sharing VET research!

Once again AVETRA ran OctoberVET in 2021. OctoberVET is a series of lectures and presentations which celebrate and disseminate the latest developments in VET research and practice. It supplements the AVETRA annual conference and is a valued part of AVETRA membership.

This year Dr Karen O'Reilly-Briggs and Adjunct Professor Robin Shreeve co-ordinated OctoberVET ably assisted by Sharon Swoboda from FineHaus who run the AVETRA Secretariat.

The true heroes of OctoberVET were, however, the presenters and the co-ordinators of the eleven events that ran from early October to mid-November. The COVID pandemic meant most of the events were online, though Professor Llandis Barrett-Pugh did run a 'face to face' event in Western Australia that reflects the pandemic's status in that State. These events attracted 350 registrations.

Topics included:

- the relationship between migration and international education
- Training Package Overlap studies
- TAFE teachers and resilience
- making TAFE fairer
- practitioner research
- developments in New Zealand
- VET Beyond COVID.

A list of the events is viewable at

<https://www.avetra.org.au/pages/octobervet-.html>

Presenters came from a variety of institutions including the National Skills Commission, Holmesglen TAFE, Chisholm TAFE and Box Hill TAFE and Federation and La Trobe Universities. AVETRA's Research Today group was also represented. Independent researchers and presenters were from New South Wales, Western Australia, and Queensland. It is intended that presentation recordings, where appropriate, will appear on the AVETRA YouTube channel.

Links to get to the home pages of the different State Training Authorities.

- Australian Capital Territory (ACT) – Skills Canberra <https://www.skills.act.gov.au/>
- New South Wales (NSW) - [Training Services NSW](#)
- Northern Territory (NT) - [Department of Trade, Business, and Innovation](#)
- Queensland – Department of Employment, Small Business and Training <https://training.qld.gov.au>
- South Australia (SA) – Department of Innovation and Skills <https://innovationandskills.sa.gov.au/>
- Tasmania - [Skills Tasmania](#)
- Victoria - [Department of Education and Training](#)
- Western Australia (WA) - [Department of Training and Workforce Development](#)

[Photo by Danilo Alvsdi on Unsplash](#)



Hospitality Essentials:Pre-Employment Program

Serve It Up (RTO 22542) has converted the White Crow tomato sauce factory at 39/617-643 Spencer Street, West Melbourne 3003 into a 3-level state-of-the-art Hospitality training venue, equipped with its own café, restaurant, and function space--'Hunters & Disciples'.

Serve It Up (SIU) has partnered with the Local Jobs Program, the City of Port Phillip, City of Stonington, Job Active Providers, Hospo HR and local employers to create a Hospitality pre-employment program to help relaunch Melbourne's hospitality industry and place job seekers in the right roles. The program is designed for job seekers as a pathway into entry level employment or further studies in hospitality. These courses will provide essential entry level skills for job seekers to confidently enter a hospitality workplace and hit the ground running.

On completion of the course SIU works with Hospo HR to job match candidates with the right employers. Hospo HR organizes all the trials and facilitates the employment outcomes. Employers that take on these job seekers via direct employment or a Path Internship are generally eligible for a range of employer subsidies.

Over the first 4 weeks this program has run, SIU has already achieved a 65% engagement rate, where these job seekers have gone into employment or commenced further study in Hospitality. The program will continue to run in 2022 and SIU is seeking more employers that want to join the program. Not only does SIU provide free recruitment services, but employers are also helping long-term job seekers get into work that will have a long-term positive effect on their lives and the community.

Melbourne's hospitality industry is in dire need of staff, mainly because over the last two years many of the career hospitality veterans have re-skilled into other industries, international workers have left our shores and school leavers just want a holiday after completing their VCE at home without their friends. Business owners need a new way to encourage workers and competition is fierce. This program helps employers match with the right workers and ensures the job seekers are adequately prepared for a job in hospitality.

Email: info@serveitup.com.au

Phone: 1300 555 748

Address: 39/617-643 Spencer Street West Melbourne (2 min walk from North Melbourne Train station)



Stories making the news

CEOs believe that the skill shortage situation is the greatest challenge for: editorial

The responses of 85 CEOs to a national survey highlight Australia's serious skills shortage problem.

Source: The Australian -

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/commentary/editorials/resurgence-poses-challenges/news-story/c292e91f035d7aebbbd3eca85260cb2f>

The Prime Minister wants to establish apprenticeship programs for the trucking industry

There is an increasing shortage of truck drivers as consumers shift to online shopping. In responding to demands of the transport and logistics sector the Prime Minister is planning on implementing nationally agreed qualification to help address the sector's workforce challenges.

Source: The Australian -

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/politics/prime-minister-scott-morrison-apprentice-plan-to-help-nation-keep-on-trucking/news-story/8d8e1d2d8dae76a9f827e50b117c9e66> or request

After a 21-month wait skilled workers are arriving in Australia

As Australia opens its borders, vaccinated skilled migrants, and foreign students have been [allowed to enter Australia again last week](#). This comes after almost two years of COVID 19 border closures, and two weeks after the promised December 1 date shifted because of the new Omicron variant threat.

Source: Australian Financial Review -

<https://www.afr.com/politics/federal/surreal-skilled-workers-arrive-in-australia-after-21-month-wait-20211217-p59ij5>

Are future jobs how we imagined them?

For quite a few years we have been told that automation (including digitisation), skills shortages and a shrinking workforce of young people, would change the face of work. Then the pandemic hit and many of us have been working from home and buying goods on line. Today we find that the occupations that are in high demand include storemen, mail sorters, and delivery drivers.

Source: The Australian -

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/business/property/labour-force-of-the-future-skilled-agile-and-upbeat/news-story/a5bff88a2a65b1e904305a887807af93>

Many qualified migrant engineers in Australia can't find engineering jobs

Key points:

- There has been an overwhelming demand for engineers, with job vacancies up 97 per cent in the past 12 months
- The biggest barrier for getting a job for these overseas engineers was Australian employers wanting to hire people with 'local experience'.

Source: ABC News - <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-12-02/migrant-engineers-overlooked-for-work-and-jobs-report-says/100665902>

The old adage that you can't teach an old dog new tricks is flawed

The Conversation reports that in 2019-20, around 73,000 Australian adults aged 60 or more were enrolled in vocational training, community education and university courses.

Source: The Conversation -

<https://theconversation.com/you-actually-can-teach-an-old-dog-new-tricks-which-is-why-many-of-us-keep-learning-after-retirement-170379>

Undergraduate Certificates will still be available until June 2025

The Department of Education, Skills and Employment has extended the Undergraduate Certificate class until June 2025.

Source: Campus Morning Mail -

<https://campusmorningmail.com.au/news/undergraduate-certificates-survive/>

Claire Field writes on the cost of Labor's 'free TAFE' promise

While any additional investment in VET is welcomed, most 'Free TAFE' places will not be new enrolments. Instead, student fees will be removed from some TAFE courses for students ineligible for a concession card (concession card holders currently study for free).

Source: Campus Morning Mail -

<https://campusmorningmail.com.au/news/claire-field-on-the-cost-of-labors-free-tafe-promise>

Labor promises to invest in higher education and TAFE

The Labor party says it will make a significant investment of \$1.1 billion in the sector if it comes into office. These funds will cover 20,000 places on top of the number already promised, and 465,000 extra places for free TAFE courses in hospitality and tourism, construction, resources, digital and manufacturing. The aim is to train more Australian students and to decrease the reliance on migrant workers.

Source: Sydney Morning Herald –

<https://www.smh.com.au/politics/federal/higher-education-sector-needs-deep-reform-20211206-p59f5l.html>

A recent study by the Migrant Workers Centre (the Lives in Limbo report) finds that almost two-thirds of temporary visa holders had experienced wage theft.

Source: The Guardian -

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/dec/02/australia-has-become-a-guest-worker-state-exploiting-temporary-visa-holders-report-reveals>

Industries hiring the most Australian workers

Job vacancy postings on SEEK indicate that they have risen by just over half what they were before the pandemic arrived. In November 2021, hospitality, tourism, health care and trades are the sectors that have posted the highest numbers of vacancies.

Source: The New Daily -

<https://thenewdaily.com.au/finance/finance-news/2021/12/09/job-ads-seek/>

NSW to pilot digital tech institute with Microsoft

The University of Technology Sydney and Macquarie University along with TAFE NSW, will pilot a new digital technology institute. This centre (the Institute of Applied Technology (IAT) for Digital Technology) aims to open in August 2022. Source: IT Pro -

<https://www.itpro.co.uk/business-strategy/careers-training/361799/nsw-to-pilot-digital-tech-institute-with-microsoft>

The solving of skill shortages may be left to older Australians

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry says that older Australian, may help solve Australia's skill shortages, if they are encouraged to come out of retirement and back into the workforce, and provided with an incentive to do so.

Source: 4BC Radio - <https://www.4bc.com.au/how-450000-skilled-workers-could-be-attracted-to-solve-shortage/>

400 apprentices to start with Queensland Councils

The Palaszczuk Government has implemented a *Skilling Queenslanders for Work* program. The Minister for Training and Skills Development Di Farmer said 66 local governments would share in \$6 million to offer 12-month traineeships for young Queenslanders and disadvantaged jobseekers. 'As we continue to grow our economy, investing in skills and training will help even more Queenslanders find the right job' Minister Farmer said.

[Skilling Queenslanders for Work fact sheet \(desbt.qld.gov.au\)](https://www.desbt.qld.gov.au/skilling-queenslanders-for-work)

FREE TAFE (VIC) funding in Victoria

In 2019 the government introduced its Free TAFE program with more than 100,000 students enrolling in these programs. Recently the government has announced an extra \$108 million in funding for the TAFE sector. The government has invested \$530 million over two years for TAFE.

[Free TAFE for lots of jobs | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au/free-tafe-for-lots-of-jobs)

The Federal government's JobTrainer Program helps upskill those from CALD backgrounds

New figures show the Morrison Government's \$2 billion JobTrainer Fund has helped Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds to develop required skills. The Minister for Employment, Workforce, Skills, Small and Family Business Stuart Robert, MP joined the Member

for the multicultural seat of Chisholm (Gladys Liu) to launch the CALD JobTrainer campaign.

[Morrison Government's JobTrainer supporting Australians from diverse backgrounds get into work | Ministers' Media Centre \(dese.gov.au\)](#)

Linking universities with industry

A recent review by Emeritus Professor Martin Bean CBE and Emeritus Professor Peter Dawkins AO highlights the need for increased university-industry cooperation. The Hon Minister for Education and Youth, Stuart Robert, said 'We need universities and businesses to work together to give students access to practical work experiences and real-world technology so they can develop the skills that industry needs'.

**The report is available here:

<https://www.dese.gov.au/higher-education-reviews-and-consultations/university-industry-collaboration-teaching-learning-review>

The fiscal impact of the permanent migration scheme on migrants

The Treasury has developed a model to estimate the financial impact of migration to Australia on permanent migrants over the remainder of their lives. In 2018-19 the Skills Stream had the most migrants and the best outcomes. Age at which migrants come to Australia and how well they do in the labour market are key drivers of these outcomes.

See more at: <https://treasury.gov.au/publication/p2021-220773>

A new national roadmap for improving outcomes for Indigenous Australians

The *National Roadmap for Indigenous Skills, Jobs and Wealth Creation*, launched recently by Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon Ken Wyatt AM MP, outlines a framework for improving economic outcomes for Indigenous Australians. It aims to increase the job readiness of more Indigenous Australians and their participation in work. The Roadmap also aims to promote Indigenous entrepreneurship. See the roadmap at:

See more at: <https://www.niaa.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/economic-development/national-roadmap-indigenous-skills-jobs-wealth-creation>

Former National Senator Fiona Nash becomes Australia's first Regional Education Commissioner

Fiona will implement recommendations from the National Regional, Rural and Remote Tertiary Education Strategy (the Napthine Review). The Minister for Regionalisation, Regional Communications and Regional Education Senator the Hon Bridget McKenzie has congratulated Ms Nash on her appointment. 'Fiona has a deep love for regional Australia and a strong understanding of the education sector, and I know she will advocate fiercely on behalf of students who live and study in these areas' Senator McKenzie said.

<https://ministers.dese.gov.au/mckenzie/australian-government-appoints-first-regional-education-commissioner>

Fiona was formerly the Minister for Regional Development and Minister for Regional Communication. She has acted as Strategic Adviser for Regional Engagement and Government Relations at Charles Sturt university, which is part of the Regional Universities Network (RUN). The Chair of RUN, Nick Klomp' said that Fiona's appointment will enable RUN to work more effectively and help improve educational outcomes in Regional Australia. President of the National Farmers Federation, Fiona Simson, said 'By having a Commissioner committed to regional Australia, we can be safe in the knowledge that students - both in the bush and in our regional and remote towns - are being advocated for'.

[Regional, rural and remote students to benefit from dedicated Education Commissioner - National Farmers' Federation \(nff.org.au\)](#)

Further support for international education sector

The Morrison Government will make available \$37 million to support providers delivering international education and most affected by COVID-19. This includes fee waivers and additional grants, and changes to visas. The new visa settings will aim to uphold the post training rights to work of international students. They will also extend rights to extra years of study of temporary graduate visa holders. The government aims to use such measures to help accelerate economic recovery.

**The *Australian Strategy for International Education 2021-2030* consultation can be found [here](#).

Free training courses in Tourism

The NSW Government is offering 2,700 training places in around 35 short courses which will be free to students. They will be available for delivery by TAFENSW and other RTOs. These courses will be in the following areas: specialist outdoor recreation and accommodation and customer services for businesses large and small.

[Free tourism training on offer ahead of bumper holiday season nswliberal.org.au](https://www.nswliberal.org.au)

Getting a job after graduation

A recent report has found that graduates who want to get a job after university need to have done some relevant work experience during their studies. These are the most successful in getting a job by age of 25 years. [A report for the Morrison government](#)

Source: The Age -

<https://www.theage.com.au/national/victoria/research>

International students choose the UK and USA

New research from Victoria University's Mitchell Institute finds that new international student visas for the UK are almost 40% higher than they were before the pandemic; this compares to dramatic fall in students bound for Australia. The report points to the likelihood that international students who may have come to Australia pre-pandemic have gone to other shores:

<https://www.vu.edu.au/mitchell-institute/tertiary-education/student-interrupted-international-education-and-the-pandemic>

[Photo by Mariana Rascao on Usplash](#)



Invitation to submit articles to the International Journal of Training Research (IJTR) ,

ITJR is AVETRA's journal, published three times a year. Please consider ITJR as the journal to disseminate your articles covering any of the following themes: advancing knowledge and understanding of vocational education and training (VET) in Australia and internationally; and research about training, technical education, vocational education of interest to researchers, educators, trainers, and policy makers.

Topics could include:

- pandemic effects on learners/teachers and solutions/innovations
- technology-enhanced/blended/online VET
- equity issues
- role of VET and the future of work
- contemporary themes of work-integrated/work-based learning
- VET assessments/qualifications, and
- VET teacher education.



For enquiries, please email Professor Sarojini Choy (s.choy@griffith.edu.au) or Dr. Selena Chan (Selena.Chan@ara.ac.nz)



[Photo by Visual Stories](#) || [Micheile on Unsplash](#)

VET facts and figures: NCVER publication on Total Students and Courses 2020

These figures have been reproduced from NCVER's publication on Total VET Students and courses. This information can be found at [Total VET students and courses 2020 \(ncver.edu.au\)](https://ncver.edu.au). From this page you can also access information on funding source, provider type and program enrolments and completions:

Figure 1 Students enrolled in nationally recognised training, 2016 to 2020 ('000)

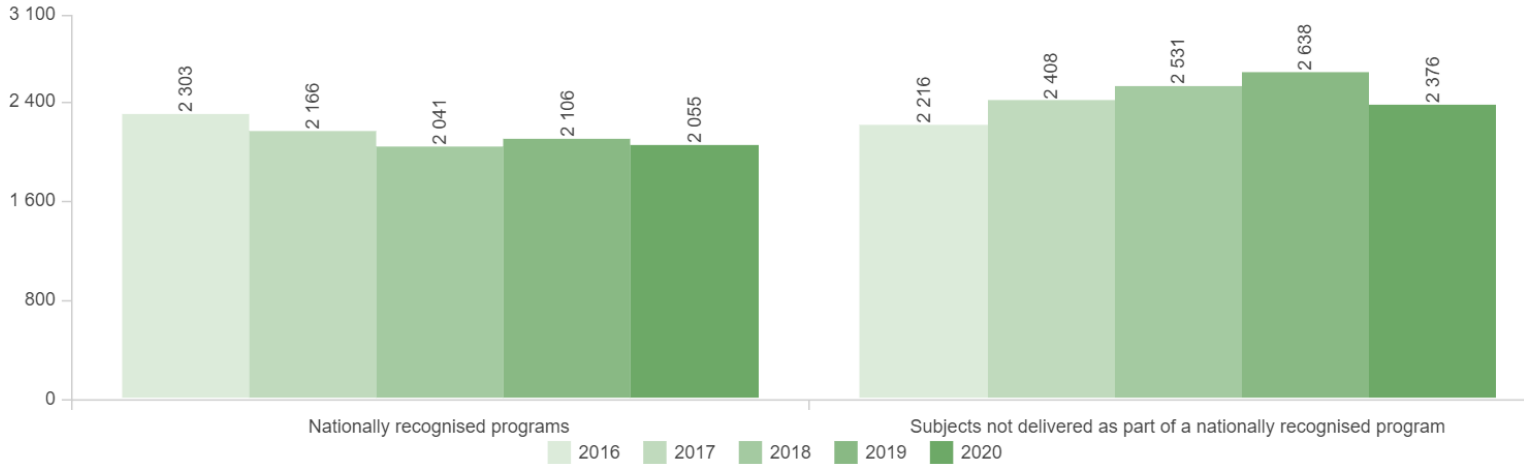
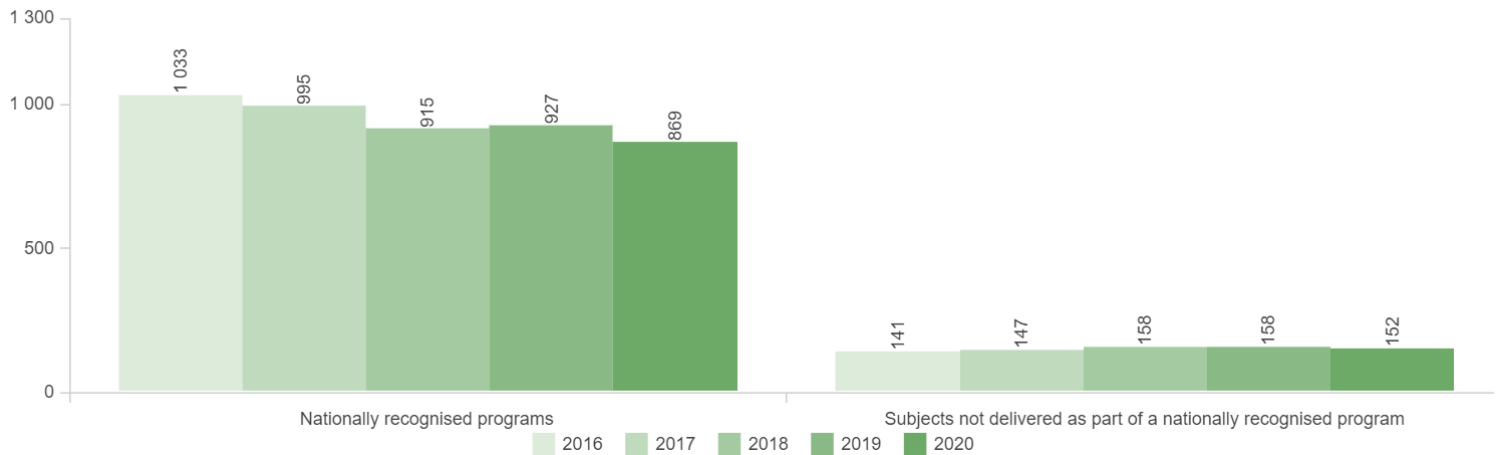


Figure 2 FYTEs in nationally recognised training, 2016 to 2020 ('000)



The term FYTES refers to Full-Year Training Equivalents

Figure 3 Students enrolled in nationally recognised programs, 2020 ('000)

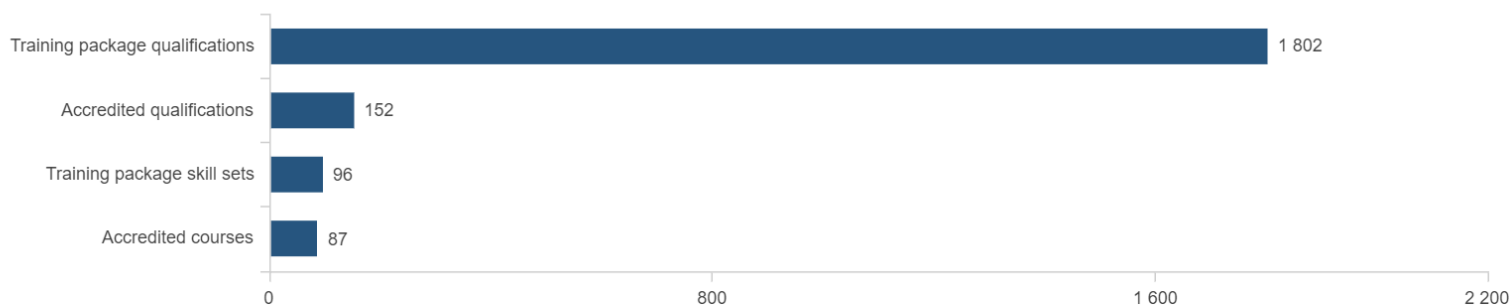
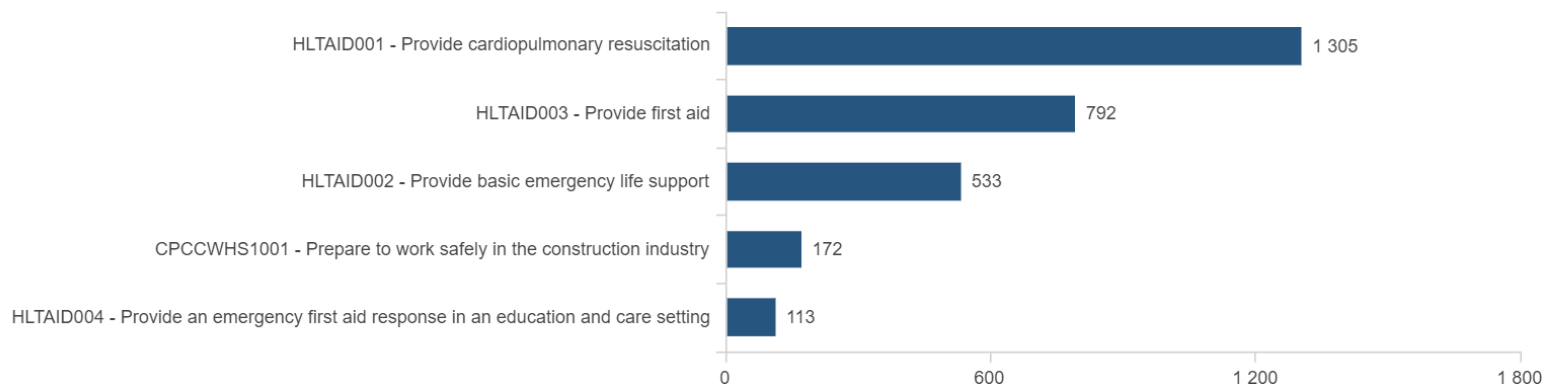


Figure 4 Enrolments in the top five subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program, 2020 ('000)



Kelly Marshall is the Manager of Data Services and Reporting branch and can be contacted on Kellymarshall@ncver.edu.au.

Click here to see NCVER greetings for Xmas [VET Christmas 2021 \(ncver.edu.au\)](https://www.ncver.edu.au/vet-christmas-2021)

The 31st 'No Frills' National VET Research Conference, Melbourne, 6-8 July 2022



Call for abstracts for 'No Frills' 2022 conference

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) is inviting abstract submissions for the 31st National VET Research Conference 'No Frills.'

The conference will be hosted in-person on 6-8 July 2022 in Melbourne, with the theme ***VET's role in transforming the future.***

Presentations that discuss how VET not only adapts but anticipates and activates change in response to Australia's shifting future skill demands are invited.

Submission is open to all parts of the VET sector - including industry, government, practitioners, peak bodies, and researchers.

Don't miss your chance! Submit your abstract by 1 March 2022: <https://www.ncver.edu.au/news-and-events/events/31st-national-vet-research-conference-no-frills>. Accepted presenters will receive a 50% discount on conference registration.



What is VOCEDplus? Click here to find out: <https://www.voced.edu.au/about-vocedplus>

The considerable resources of the VOCEDplus data base can help you when you are starting up new research projects or literature reviews. They can be accessed at:

<http://www.voced.edu.au>

The VOCEDplus Pod Network allows instant access to research and a multitude of resources in a convenient and efficient platform.

<http://www.voced.edu.au/pod-network>

Link to the whole list of podlets: <http://www.voced.edu.au/podlets>

Link to the feedback form: <http://www.voced.edu.au/content/contact>



[VOCEDplus Highlights – November 2021](#)

The November 2021 edition of [VOCEDplus Highlights](#) produced by NCVER Librarian Tracy Gamlin (above) is now available.

This presents an edited selection of research from the latest additions to the VOCEDplus database and highlights some of the current issues in tertiary education research internationally.

It presents a selection of items recently added to [VOCEDplus](#).

Right click on the icon below and copy and paste the link into your feed reader to subscribe to the VOCEDplus Highlights RSS feed.



The publications highlighted in the latest edition of [VOCEDplus Highlights](#) are:

- Shaping skills and lifelong learning for the future of work
- The quest for skills: tackling shortages in a disrupted world
- Inclusive lifelong learning in cities: policies and practices for vulnerable groups
- A practical guide to managing hybrid teams
- ILO Skills System Assessment Tool: identifying key issues and challenges in national skills systems
- Defining the skills citizens will need in the future world of work
- Even more discouraged?: the NEET generation at the age of COVID-19.

If you would like to see the full list of new titles added to VOCEDplus recently, please visit the [New Titles](#) page.

Highlights Downloadable Files:

-  [November 2021](#)
-  [November 2021](#)

The VET Knowledge Bank

NCVER's VET Knowledge Bank is also a key resource for researchers. Click here to activate the live site <http://www.voced.edu.au/vet-knowledge-bank>

VET Knowledge Bank

The VET Knowledge Bank contains a suite of products capturing Australia's diverse, complex and ever-changing vocational education and training (VET) system.

It aims to provide a collected memory of VET reference information.

The VET Knowledge Bank is a living, growing resource that NCVER continues to develop and update on an ongoing basis.



Getting to know VET

Get a broad overview of different aspects of the VET system in Australia.



Policy initiatives

Locate information about VET policies, programs and initiatives, and their funding.



Governance and regulation

Access information about who governs and regulates VET in Australia.



Glossary of VET

Understand the terms and acronyms used in Australian VET.



History of VET

Trace the story of VET in Australia through timelines and key publications.



Landmark documents

Explore the evolution of VET in Australia through landmark documents and historical overviews.



Organisations and resources

Discover key Australian research organisations and useful VET resources.



Further reading

Read the main information sources consulted in developing the VET Knowledge Bank.

If you would like to know more about the VET Knowledge Bank you can contact the team at voced@edu.au

Policy initiatives

COVID-19 has been a hot topic in the last two years or so. Below is a picture of the VOCEDplus page dealing with the issue in the various states and territories. Click here <https://www.voced.edu.au/vet-knowledge-bank-policy-initiatives-covid-19-announcements> to access the live site which has the collection of policy announcements on the issue. Navigate the live site by clicking on the plus sign to know more and the minus sign to know less.



Policy initiatives > COVID-19 announcements

This page was originally created to list the work-in-progress entries of new or enhanced initiatives announced in 2020 for the [Timeline of Australian VET policy initiatives 1998-2020](#). With the timeline now updated, the page has been refreshed to showcase the Australian, state and territory government policy responses that were announced to help reduce the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Australian economy.

Commonwealth	+
New South Wales	+
Victoria	+
Queensland	+
South Australia	+
Western Australia	+
Tasmania	+
Northern Territory	+
Australian Capital Territory	+

Thanks go to the team at NCVER for their expertise and hard work in developing and maintaining the data base content and providing users with assistance in accessing the resources.



[Photo by Element 5 Digital on Unsplash](#)

2022 Upcoming Conferences: dates, hosts and links



February 2-4, Swiss Federal University for Vocational Education and Training (SfUVET), The future potential of vocational education and training: Strengthening VET for the next generation. See more at:

<https://www.ehb.swiss/vet-congress-2022>

March 3-4, International Vocational Education and Training Association Conference, Barcelona. See more at:

<https://waset.org/vocational-education-and-training-conference-in-march-2022-in-barcelona>

March 15-17, National Apprentice Employment Network, Adaptation and Opportunity. See more at:

<https://naen.com.au/event/naen-conference-2022/>

April 5-6 Community Colleges Australia, See more at: [CCA Announces April 2022 Conference in Sydney](#)

April 28-29, AVETRA Conference, Citadines, 131-135 Bourke Street Melbourne. Keep checking at:

<https://www.avetra.org.au/>

May 11-13, 8th Stockholm International Conference of Research on Vocational Education and Training, See more at:

<https://stockholminternationalvet.com/>

May 12-14, 8th World Conference on Women's Studies, See more at:

<https://womenstudies.co/?gclid=EAIaIQobChMIIMLo74Tg9AIVB5hmAh307QQYEAMYAIAAEgJgcVDBwE>

May 18-20, 9th Nordic conference on **Adult Education and Learning**, New challenges, New Learning, New possibilities, USN Handelshøyskolen Vestfold, Norway, See more at: <https://www.usn.no/activities/9th-nordic-conference-on-adult-education-and-learning>

June 2-3, ITEC2022. Innovating for Growth: The business of Independent Tertiary Education [ITEC22 Conference - Gold Coast \(2-3 June 2022\) \(iteca.edu.au\)](#)

July 8-10, 31st National VET Research Conference- No Frills: *VET's role in transforming the future*. See more at:

<https://www.ncver.edu.au/news-and-events/events/31st-national-vet-research-conference-no-frills>.

July 10-13, Australian Conference of Economists, *ACE 2022, Economics in the New Normal* See more at [ACE 2022](#)

September 28-30, 4th International [G.R.E.A.T](#), University of Cologne, Germany

November 3-4, VELG, National VET Conference, Building your Roadmap, Gold Coast, Details not yet finalised but keep checking

<https://www.velgtraining.com/nvc/program>

Check out this website to find details on upcoming education and training conferences as well as other relevant news and activities

<http://lcn.pascalobservatory.org/pascalnow/pascal-activities/news/latest-news-european-research-learning-and-work-final-edition-augus>

Check out this website to find details on upcoming education and training conferences by topic and date to be held in Australia from December 2021 – December 2022 <https://10times.com/australia/education-training/conferences>

AVETRA executive contacts

President: Dr Steven Hodge, Griffith University, Steven Hodge s.hodge@griffith.edu.au;

Vice-President & Social Media: Kira Clarke, Brotherhood of St Lawrence, Kira.Clarke@bsl.org.au

Immediate past-President & OctoberVET: Robin Shreeve, shreeverobin@yahoo.com.au

Secretary: Dr Elizabeth (Lizzie Knight), Victoria University, lizzie.knight@vu.edu.au

Treasurer (Acting) Dr Llandis Barratt-Pugh, l.barratt_pugh@ecu.edu.au

Events & OctoberVET: Dr Teresa Schmidt: Central Queensland University, t.schmidt@cqu.edu.au; Dr Karen O'Reilly-Briggs karenoreillybriggs@gmail.com

Marketing and Engagement: Dr Jason Skues, jskues@swin.edu.au

Membership: Dr Llandis Barratt-Pugh, l.barratt_pugh@ecu.edu.au

Research Dissemination: Prof. Michele Simons, University of Western Sydney michele.simons@uws.edu.au

Scholarships and awards: Dr Elizabeth (Lizzie Knight), Victoria University, lizzie.knight@vu.edu.au

Strategy Working Party: Claire Field Claire@clairefield.com.au, Dr Don Zoellner Don.Zoellner@cdu.edu.au; Dr Anne Jones Annejones@percipience.com.au

Editors IJTR: Professor Sarojni Choy, s.choy@griffith.edu.au;

Dr Selena Chan, Selena.chan@ara.ac.nz; **Associate editor:** Dr Steven Hodge, Griffith University, s.hodge@griffith.edu.au

Editor: A-News & NCVER representative:

Dr Josie Misko, Josiemisko@ncver.edu.au

Editor: Research Today: Andrew Williamson, andrew.williamson@holmesglen.edu.au

AVETRA Secretariat: Finehaus; AVETRA@finehaus.com.au

The AVETRA Executive wishes everyone a safe and happy festive season.

Photo by Galina N on Un-splash



About AVETRA

AVETRA is the peak professional association for VET researchers. Its ability to be a sustainable and viable association depends on its membership. Members are urged to continue their membership and to encourage their colleagues to join AVETRA.

AVETRA services include:

- An annual VET international research conference
- Two editions of International Journal of Training Research per annum
- The AVETRA e-newsletter with the latest news in the VET sector as well as VET research twice a year.
- The new Research Today publication twice a year.
- OctoberVET workshops organised by AVETRA members in centres as widely spread as Perth, Darwin, Townsville, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide.
- The AVETRA website with VET research links and information

HELP AVETRA help VET research and join now if you are not a member. Full membership \$190 (GST inclusive) Student memberships \$95.00 (GST inclusive) Retiree memberships (GST inclusive), NCVER employee memberships \$95 (GST inclusive), Institutions of 80 or more employees \$950 (GST inclusive) and small or medium-sized institutions of less than 80 staff \$570 (GST inclusive). If you are interested in providing leads or contributing to this newsletter, please contact Josie Misko at josiemisko@ncver.edu.au