

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



AVETRA 'A-NEWS' NEWSLETTER – December 2019

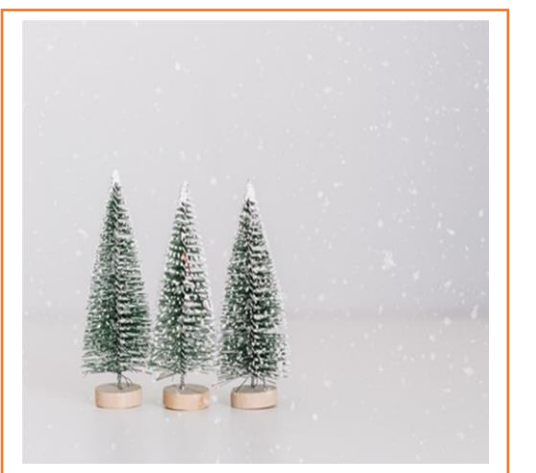


Photo of Xmas trees by Sincerely Media, UnSplash

From the President

Research – part of the solution to the challenges in our public VET system



Politicians and public policy makers are now openly talking about a crisis in VET, especially in the public provider TAFE.

Anthony Albanese, the federal opposition leader, hardly does a doorstep interview without talking about the need to rebuild TAFE. Now I am sure that there are parts of the system including some TAFE Institutes that are doing well. Nobody wants to talk down unnecessarily the entire system. But by the same token some systems are experiencing challenging times. TAFE NSW, for example, has struggled in recent years with maintaining student enrolment levels and last year their annual report revealed a shortfall in sales income of around \$230 million.

The standard political solutions to these issues are more money for courses – restore the cuts – and better promotion so more young people and their parents see VET as a viable career option. The argument is that if more funding and better information about VET trained job and wage opportunities was available more people would enrol in VET and we would avoid damaging skill shortages. But is it that simple? Two recent research reports by the highly respected NCVER¹ and Grattan Institute² give more nuanced views. Both these reports give solid data on where VET (including TAFE) could meet growing demand and expand their offerings. They also point to areas where TAFE and VET are less competitive with universities. The industries and occupations they identify for growth in VET are in the care industries and the trades. VET is also playing an increasingly important role in supplying qualifications for occupations

¹ O'Dwyer, L & White, I 2019, The dynamics of qualifications: implications for VET, NCVER, Adelaide.

² Norton, A., & Cherastidtham, I, 2019, Risks and rewards: when is vocational education a good alternative to higher education?

such as truck driving and storekeeping, where qualifications were not a requirement for jobs in the past. At the same time VET is also being 'crowded out' by universities in other occupations, like technicians and various health-related therapists.

The types of students who could benefit from going to a VET or TAFE institution are those with moderate tertiary entrance scores (say over 50 but less than 70), who in the past (before university expansion) would not have been able to enter a range of popular university subjects.

The Australian workforce is gender-segregated and female-dominated occupations pay less than male-dominated occupations. However, women tend to do better economically from entering jobs requiring university rather than VET training.

According to the Grattan report 'Vocational diplomas in construction, engineering, and commerce offer courses that ... typically lead to higher lifetime incomes than many low-ATAR university graduates are likely to earn, especially with degrees in fields such as humanities'.

This research should not be ignored both by policy makers and managers of VET institutions. Too often decisions are made for ideological reasons or because of untested and received impressions. The recent marketisation fiascos in VET are evidence of this. Let us put our faith in the power of research and data analysis to provide us with verifiable evidence for policy making.

AVETRA will continue to lobby for the importance of VET research in informing policy.

Robin Shreeve, President

<https://grattan.edu.au/report/risks-and-rewards-when-is-vocational-education-a-good-alternative-to-higher-education/>

A MINUTE WITH Phillip Toner, Department of Political Economy, University of Sydney



Well Margaret, this is another fine mess you have got us into.

Phillip Toner, Department of Political Economy, University of Sydney

One of the truly amazing, but unrecognised, facts about the training market is that it was introduced three decades ago without any hard evidence that the former system was grossly deficient in efficiency, quality or capacity for keeping teacher skills and equipment current with industry innovation. The revolution in VET policy in the 1980s and 1990s based on CBT, flexibility in all things VET and contracting out publicly funded VET to private providers, was based on pious hopes and wishful think. The many reviews at the time justifying radical change furnished no detailed empirical analysis or rigorous evaluations. The revolution in public policy was founded on 'free market' ideas so crude they would make any respectable economist blush (https://melbourne-cshe.unimelb.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0006/2845779/Phillip-Toner-finaldocx.pdf). These ideas were then beginning their domination of public policy in the western world.³

What were the particular institutional bases of the old TAFE system and what were the incentives created by these institutions for teachers, students and employers? What would the market structure of the new 'training market' look like? What would be the level of demand for high quality training or training just for regulatory compliance, keeping the dole or keeping the magistrate 'sweet'? What incentives would this create for private providers, students and employers? What criteria would be used to determine if the new market was delivering quality and who would be accountable? These questions were never asked by proponents and, later when they had to be asked, the answers were never pretty (<https://www.anao.gov.au/work/performance-audit/administration-vet-fee-help-scheme>).

Funnily, or not so funnily, depending on your take on life, VET is not alone in this. Identical free market ideas also justified 'reform' of the electricity and gas markets, aged care, child care, employment services, public transport, private building certification, deregulating imported building materials (like cladding), the Murray Darling water pricing system and privatisation of airports and prisons and so on. All magnificent success stories...I think not! (<https://www.blackincbooks.com.au/books/wrong-way>)

Not only was the VET revolution not evidence-based, in any meaningful use of the term, its key design principles appear to have been flawed from the beginning. Consider the key concepts of 'industry led', 'flexibility' and 'standards'. The new system was to be 'industry-led' but it did not define who or what was 'industry'. You can find ASQA definitions of 'industry' which include the individual student, the individual firm and the industry sector to which the firm belongs. But who determines what the interests of these diverse groups are, and, how are conflicts between these interests to be resolved? Individuals want training that is transferable across firms and industries and of high quality to give them leverage in the labour market, while firms generally want lowest cost training customised to their specific needs. Not only do these conflicts create great ambiguity about whose interests the VET system is intended to serve and what weight is to be given to each interest, it makes evaluation difficult. The new system also sought to undermine the professionalism of teachers by excluding VET teachers from key VET policy apparatus. For example they are not included in the definition of 'industry' (<https://www.asqa.gov.au/standards-vac/definitions>) nor do they appear to be formally involved in Industry Reference Committees- though some RTOs are included in some IRCs

³ These ideas were first implemented under Margaret Thatcher, who provided the name used in the title.

<https://www.aisc.net.au/content/industry-reference-committees>). This exclusion appears to be based in part on their early opposition to many changes to pedagogy and practice arising from introducing the VET market and is justified mainly on the crude economic principle that teachers, like any participant in the economy, are self-interested and seek to maximise their income and minimise their effort.

From the beginning the key concepts of flexibility and standardisation have informed the present system. There is to be flexibility in the choice of provider and place, time, mode, delivery, content and assessment of training. At the same time there was also supposed to be standardisation in national qualifications, minimum teacher qualifications, and development of Training Packages and their associated competency criteria. The history of VET over the last three decades has been that when these principles come into inevitable conflict priority is always given to flexibility. As detailed elsewhere valuing flexibility above all other qualities could actually be a principal cause of declining levels of quality training provision (<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1035304614533624?etoc=>).

Despite the claim of being ‘industry-led’, in reality, the VET system is subject to incessant government reviews, and tinkering with regulations and incentives. This is in response to one VET crisis after another and/or to meet budget cuts. The number of government changes to the system over the last two decades has been truly prodigious (<https://www.clairefield.com.au/the-vet-reform-merry-go-round/>). (A similar pattern of constant tinkering can also be observed in other activities subject to ‘reform’ like electricity and gas markets, aged care and bank deregulation). Incessant tinkering with VET is inevitable given some faults in what the system delivers, and futile given many faults in its fundamental design. An example of futile tinkering is regulators and RTOs imposing what appears to be a tsunami of compliance requirements on teachers.

None of the above is a criticism of teachers, administrators and regulators in the VET system as this would be like blaming the builders for a poorly designed building. What is required is new architecture.

On a positive note it is heartening to see the continuing support from employers, unions, parents and many governments for apprenticeship and technician level training not only because of the good career paths their jobs offer but also because these jobs underpin innovation and the development of new industries (<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/103530461002100206->).



Photo by Steffi Pereira on Unsplash

Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow- a new set of initiatives based on co-design principles

The Australian Government has announced a \$585.3 million Skills Package under the umbrella of the 'Delivering Skills for Today and Tomorrow' package.

The three initiatives under this package are:

- The National Skills Commission <https://www.employment.gov.au/NSC>. This agency is to oversee the Australian Government's investment in the VET system, by providing a national approach to forecasting skills. An Interim Commissioner (Mr. Adam Boynton, left). Mr Boynton will oversee consultations with government and industry stakeholders and provide advice to government on models for efficient pricing and forecasting skills demand. His team will also evaluate the effectiveness of initiatives for increasing the number of apprentices. Formerly, the Chief Economist at the Business Council of Australia, Mr Boynton has also been the Australian Chief Economist at Deutsche Bank, on the NSW Skills Board since 2013. He has worked on the development of pricing, funding and costing models and evaluation of NSW VET system. This experience and knowledge make him well placed to lead the new National Skills Commission. See more at: <https://docs.employment.gov.au/documents/co-designing-national-skills-commission-discussion-paper>
- Skills Organisations: There will be two pilots to trial a new approach to the provision of industry leadership for the VET sector, so that it meets the needs of industry and students <https://www.employment.gov.au/SO> The pilots will be implemented in human services care, and digital technology (including cyber security) and mining. See more at: <https://docs.employment.gov.au/documents/skills-organisations-national-co-design-workshops-discussion-paper>
- The National Careers Institute: This Institute is to lead the delivery of quality evidence-based career development to enable Australians to make decisions that are well-informed about their studies, training and work pathways. Popular television personality Scott Camm, who is also carpenter by trade and has hosted programs that feature episodes on home renovations (like the Block), is the National Careers Ambassador. <https://www.employment.gov.au/videos/national-careers-ambassador> See more at: <https://docs.employment.gov.au/documents/national-careers-institute-consultations-and-co-design-background-paper-october-2019>



Left: Scott Camm, The National Careers Ambassador with the Prime Minister and Minister Michaelia Cash.



The Australian Training Awards 2019: Individuals, businesses and RTOs

The 2019 Australian Training Awards were held on 21 November at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre in Queensland. If you or your organisation wants to apply for the 2020 awards visit this website.



Minister for Employment, Skills, Small and Family Business, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, said the awards highlight the excellence that is being achieved in the VET sector.

‘To be selected as a finalist is an outstanding achievement. All of the individuals, businesses and registered training organisations recognised at this year’s training awards are leaders and role models in their field’, Minister Cash said.

Assistant Minister for Vocational Education, Training and Apprenticeships, the Hon Steve Irons MP, said the awards are an opportunity to inspire the next generation of women and men whose skills will keep our economy going strong’.

‘Looking at the list of this year’s very impressive winners and finalists, you can see the breadth of rewarding career opportunities offered by vocational education and training, providing real skills for real careers’, he said.



Individuals

- **Lifetime Achievement Award:** Wayne Collyer <https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/wayne-collyer>
- **National Achievement Award:** Judith McKay
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/awards/2019/Individual/#nationalachievementaward>
- **Australian Apprentice of the Year Award:** Rory Milner
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/awards/2019/Individual/#apprenticeoftheyear>
- **Australian School-based Apprentice of the Year (Trainee) Award:** Arcadia Meldrum
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/arcadia-meldrum>
- **Trainee of the Year Award:** Stephen Witkowski <https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/stephen-witkowski>
- **Vocational Student of the Year Award:** Shaona Imaru <https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/shaona-imar>
- **Aboriginal Student of the Year Award:** Taylor Williams
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/taylor-williams>
- **VET Teacher/Trainer of the Year Award:** Sarah Ford:
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/awards/2019/Individual/#apprenticeoftheyear>

- **Excellence in Language, Literacy and Numeracy Practice Award:** Debra Guntrip
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/debra-guntrip>

Businesses

- **Small Employer of the Year Award:** Crusader Homes <https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/crusader-homes>
- **Medium Employer of the Year Award:** Astill's Electrical Services
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/astills-electrical-services-pty-ltd>
- **Large Employer of the Year Award:** Barmenco <https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/barmenco>
- **Australian Apprenticeships - Employer Award:** Essential Energy
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/essential-energy-0>
- **Industry Collaboration Award:** Holmesglen Institute and Royal Children's Hospital
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/holmesglen-institute-and-royal-childrens-hospital-collaboration>

RTOs

- **Small Training Provider of the Year Award:** The Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/catholic-education-diocese-of-parramatta>
- **Large Training Provider of the Year Award:** Sunraysia Institute of TAFE
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/sunraysia-institute-of-tafe>
- **International Training Provider of the Year Award:** TAFE Queensland
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/tafe-queensland>
- **School Pathways to VET Award:** Circular Head Christian School
<https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/finalists/circular-head-christian-school>



See more at: [https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/2019 Awards](https://www.australiantrainingawards.gov.au/2019%20Awards)

The next Australian Training Awards will be held in Melbourne, Victoria in November 2020



Have you visited the Educator Hub site recently? <http://avetraeducatorhub.org/just-like-avetra-this-hub-is-set-up-to-bringaustralias-vet-research-community-together/>. There are links to AVETRA research tools and other current research issues, a blog to discuss your research, and an opportunity to network with other researchers/inquirers in the VET sector. The Hub is free, so we hope you will involve yourselves (from Linda Simon, AVETRA Executive member).



Every year Flexible and Inclusive Education Programs support over 70,000 young people to learn.

The Australian Association for Flexible and Inclusive Education is calling for members.

The Australian Association for Flexible and Inclusive Education (AAFIE) is the first member-based organisation for the Flexible and Inclusive education sector!

Are you an educator, researcher, wellbeing professional or policy maker?

Are you interested in progressing a shared commitment to providing successful educational opportunities and pathways for young people who have experienced barriers to completing school education?

**BE REPRESENTED
JOIN NOW!**

www.aafie.org.au

Linda Simon (AVETRA) speaks with Andrew Williamson, former head of the Victorian TAFE Association



After five years as Executive Director of the Victorian TAFE Association, Andrew Williamson is moving on. In 2020 he will be taking up the role of Executive Director at Holmesglen Institute of TAFE, responsible for enterprise solutions and international engagement. For Andrew, the move represents a return to the sector he loves. Linda Simon (left) interviewed Andrew (right):

Linda: What do you consider your main achievements at VTA?

Andrew: I joined the Victorian TAFE Association (VTA) almost five years ago, just as the new state government was establishing a new vision for TAFE. The era of pitting TAFEs against each other in a fiercely contestable environment was over: we needed to regroup as a TAFE Network and undertake the cultural reform from competition to collaboration. The VTA was ideally placed to act as a platform and help facilitate this reform. In order to do so, the VTA would have to itself evolve: we modernised our branding; completely overhauled the vision, mission and functions of the Association; grew and strengthened the range of TAFE networks; and took on several major cross-sectoral collaboration projects.

technology, including setting up video conferencing facilities, rebuilding and expanding our web presence, updating all our computers and equipment, moving to the cloud, refitting our offices and moving from paper to electronic filing.

The VTA has always – and continues to – focus on the needs of the members. There is amazing talent across all levels of Victoria's TAFE institutes and dual sector universities: I see

the VTA's role is to harness that collective capability in all that we do, be it advocacy, stakeholder engagement, or supporting our members.

Linda: You had a strong focus on TAFE teacher development. Why do you consider this to be important to the sector?

Andrew Teaching is at the core of the TAFE function and therefore, our teachers are vital to TAFE effectiveness. Teaching is a tough gig, especially when it is done well: ensuring that skills and knowledge transfer is successful for every student means adapting the delivery program to the learning needs of each student. Responsibility for equipping teachers with the tools to do this is shared between the teacher (as a professional, reflective practitioner) and the TAFE (as the employer). Where possible, the VTA has tried to play a constructive, supportive role in enhancing teacher capacity.

Linda: You have also worked to ensure applied research is an important area in TAFE. Why is this the case?

Andrew: A few years ago, I was fortunate to go on a study tour to Canada and look at the program of applied research going on through their colleges and polytechnics. There is a significant federal funding regime that resources partnerships between businesses (mainly SMEs) and colleges. Impressive, critical features of the program are that (1) all IP created is retained by the business partner and (2) that students are engaged in the research. The outcomes of these applied research projects are many, and include: building the students' capacity for innovation, research and problem-solving; weaving real, contemporary case studies



into the teaching and learning program; supporting SMEs to address their challenges; and recasting the college as an innovation partner to business.

I returned to Australia confident that there were many examples of informal research and innovation partnerships occurring in our TAFEs, but that they weren't structured programs of enquiry, they weren't called research and those undertaking these weren't calling themselves researchers!

There is a growing number of us in VET recognising the value of applied research to enrich teaching and learning and create value for our stakeholders. We've been promoting applied research in TAFE, lobbying for a secure and stable funding stream and supporting TAFE staff to embrace applied research. Significantly, we recognised *applied research and innovation* in the list of teacher's duties in the latest Victorian TAFE teacher industrial agreement. Recently, VTA launched a resource to support TAFE staff embrace applied research: *Doing applied research in Victorian TAFE institutes: an introductory guide* that can be accessed here: <https://www.vta.vic.edu.au/docman-sortable-list/952-doing-applied-research-in-tafes-an-introductory-guide-2/file>



Photo by [Rodion Kutsaev](#) on [Unsplash](#)

OctoberVET 2019 – another great year for sharing VET research!

OctoberVET is an initiative of AVETRA that has the goal of sharing and debating VET research in local events across Australia. OctoberVET is designed to complement AVETRA's annual conference with events that are low cost or free and accessible to more people than the conference.

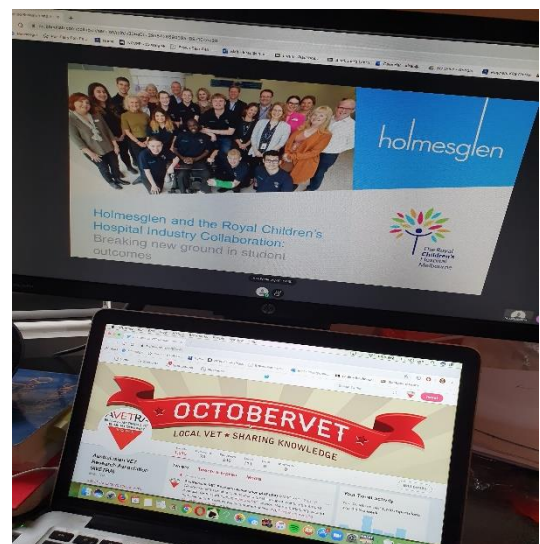
OctoberVET events are supported by AVETRA but a big thanks must go to the dedicated volunteers who make the events possible. We especially thank the event convenors this year who were:

- Dr Arnaldo Barone
- Deniese Cox
- Sean Felsman
- Dr Louise King
- Dr Elizabeth Knight
- Joe Pagnocco
- Dr Karen O'Reilly-Briggs
- Associate Professor Llandis Barratt-Pugh

In many cases convenors worked with a small team of volunteers whose help is acknowledged too.

Many convenors sent us photos from their events which we are very pleased to share with you:

Applied Research and Innovation in TAFE: Victorian TAFE Association, 4 October



OctoberVET 2019 at Holmesglen



Dr Henry Pook, Director, Centre for Applied Research and Innovation,

Holmesglen Institute's Centre for Applied Research and Innovation, in conjunction with AVETRA, held an OctoberVET conference on October 30, 2019. The theme was *Showcasing Applied Research in TAFE* at Holmesglen. The conference offered participants an opportunity to learn about the applied research being undertaken by TAFE researchers, jointly with industry and community partners, and featured sessions on a range of research projects taking place across the sector.



Holmesglen CEO Mary Faraone delivering the 'Welcome' address

Researchers presented on a wide range of topics including:

- virtual reality applications in nursing and building construction
- occupational stress amongst chefs
- falls screening for health professionals
- environmental management
- developing a safety training programme for first responders to incidents on high speed roads,
- improving employment outcomes for students with a disability
- apprenticeship retention, and
- the development of 21st century skills in workplace training



The conference also included keynote addresses from prominent figures in the TAFE landscape, including, Bruce Mackenzie, former Chief Executive of Holmesglen and now leading the Mackenzie Research Institute, and Andrew Williamson, CEO of the Victorian TAFE Association (VTA). The conference featured the release of the VTA's 'Doing Applied Research in Victorian TAFE Institutes'. This conference was a success because it not only provided recognition for researchers in TAFE, it also set the parameters for further research and demonstrated how TAFE contributes to the development of industry and a more vibrant community.

Left to right: Andrew Williamson, Warren Guest, Dr Melinda Waters, Bruce Mackenzie, Dr Henry Pook, Dr Joe Pagnoccolo, and Mary Faraone at the launch of the VTA's 'Doing Applied Research in Victorian TAFE Institutes'

OctoberVET at Holmesglen



Showcasing Applied Research
in TAFE, 30 October



OctoberVET at La Trobe University, Victoria



Tradie to teacher: identity, practice and place-based learning, 8 November

2019 October VET at Federation University, Ballarat, Victoria :



Supporting young people into their futures: Research and Practice, 14 November

2019 October VET at Charles Darwin University, Northern Territory



The future of VET Teaching, 17 October



OctoberVET at VET Development Centre, Degrees of Difference



**Interim Report Launch for the
Australian Research Council
Discovery Project Vocational
Institutions, Undergraduate
Degrees, 29 October**



Photo of Xmas trees by Sincerely Media, UnSplash

School-based Apprenticeships in Diocese of Toowoomba- Media Release

11 December 2019

School-Based Apprenticeships Program - providing a gateway to further education and employment for 20 years

Toowoomba Catholic Schools (TCS) has celebrated 20 successful years of their School-Based Apprenticeship (SBA) Program this year. Their systemic approach to supporting students across 12 secondary schools and colleges as they gain and maintain school-based apprenticeships and traineeships is now an integral part of many students' senior studies.

The approach adopted by TCS since 1999 includes a team centralised in Toowoomba, Queensland who provide expert knowledge in relation to the Queensland model of school-based apprenticeships to school SBA Coordinators as well as facilitating and monitoring the students' training contract from commencement through to completion or transition to part-time or full-time status.

Each year, around 300 students in Years 10, 11 and 12 whose schools lie within a radius of some 500 kilometres of Toowoomba are supported to balance their school, training and paid employment commitments to successfully participate in an SBA. The schools also benefit from the industry engagement and strong working relationships with employers, supervising registered training organisations and Australian Apprenticeship Support Networks that the SBA Program team have developed to promote the benefits of SBAs.



Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic Schools

'The SBA Program is a shining light in the education field, and in reaching the 20 years milestone in providing such a service to senior students in Catholic schools we know that it is achieving great outcomes,' said Dr Pat Coughlan, Executive Director: Catholic Schools. Since its inception the SBA program has focussed on all the features of a successful and sustainable program. Firstly - a clear purpose - fulfilling a collective and growing need across all Catholic secondary and P-12 colleges and, capitalising on the efficiencies and good sense of doing things together rather than individually - systemness.

Secondly - delivering outcomes - the program provides a critical service to students in delivering choice and opportunity when it comes to making decisions about career pathways. Importantly the program encourages students to remain connected to school to complete a senior education and incorporate a school-based apprenticeship.

Thirdly - strong leadership and communication - it is run by talented and passionate people who have enlisted a group of generous employers who assist in the supervision and training of students in work placements. Not surprisingly, a large part of this ongoing success is the diligent work of many people, however, three people in particular ensure the program continues to meet the needs of schools and students: Karen Coulston, (Manager, School-Based Apprenticeships, Karen White, (Assistant Manager) and Jen Holmes, (Administration Officer). It is because of their ongoing leadership and support this program continues its success,' said Dr Coughlan.

CONTACT: Karen Coulston – Manager: School-Based Apprenticeship Program | 07 4687 4351

Left to right: Jen Holmes (Administration Officer), Karen Coulston (Manager: SBA Program), Karen White (Assistant Manager: SBA Program), Dr Pat Coughlan (Executive Director: Catholic Schools)

Application for Fulbright Scholarships in Vocational Education and Training will re-open in February 2020



Belinda Russon, 2017 Fulbright VET scholar

ABOUT THE FULBRIGHT COMMISSION

The Fulbright Commission offers a diverse selection of scholarships for Australian students, scholars, and professionals seeking to study or conduct research in the U.S. Applicants can be at any career stage and from any academic background.

THE FULBRIGHT PROFESSIONAL SCHOLARSHIP IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION & TRAINING

This scholarship suits employees within the vocational education and training sector or training leaders in business and industry.

It involves the undertaking of an educational program concerning current vocational education and training policy or practice, such as a short course and/or research. (for 3-4 months) The outcomes of the scholarship must inform and benefit the wider VET sector in Australia. The scholarship was established in 2005, funded by the Department of Education and Training.

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

Examples of those who may apply include:

- employees, including teachers, managers, and administrators, of private and public registered training organisations
- people who are leading vocational education and training strategies within their business.
- staff within universities that teach in the training/skills sector of a university.
- preference will be given to those who have a record of achievement and are poised for advancement to senior level

- <https://www.fulbright.org.au/applicants/australian-applicants/>

Bachelor's degrees in TAFE Institutes

The Interim Report of the Australian Research Council Discovery Project 'Vocational Institutions, Undergraduate Degrees' was launched on October 29th this year. It reports on the first phase of a study which looks at the provision of bachelor's degrees in TAFE Institutes in Australia.

The event was well attended in person and by live streaming and the report is downloadable from the front page of the project website www.monash.edu/hive

The launch of the final report will take place on 5th May 2019 in Melbourne and live streamed.



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 Industry and Skills](#) <https://industryandskills.sa.gov.au/>
- Tasmania - [Skills Tasmania](#)
- Victoria - [Department of Education and Training](#)
- Western Australia (WA) - [Department of Training and Workforce Development](#)

Preparing for future work: Jobs Queensland

In 2013, academics Carl Frey and Michael Osborne startled the world with their prediction that 47 per cent of jobs in the United States were at risk of automation.⁴ This fuelled intense speculation, including in Australia, that robots would ‘wipe out’ nearly half of the current workforce in the coming years. It also contributed to an explosion in commentary and debate.



Jobs Queensland has been investigating this topic, with a specific emphasis on what the future of work means for employment and skills policy. We have undertaken an extensive review of relevant literature, engaged in conversations with industries, communities, academics and government agencies across Queensland and Australia, and performed social research to uncover the perspectives of workers and employers.

In November 2019, Jobs Queensland published *Future Work, Future Jobs: Preparing Queensland for the evolution of work* to bring together the findings from this suite of work.

We found that despite the changing nature of work, the outlook for future employment is overall strong. Significant employment growth is projected in many service-based industries in Queensland. Employment growth is also projected in traditional industries such as agriculture and manufacturing. Despite this, the impacts of change for individuals and enterprises can be influenced by factors such as age, education level, geographic location and occupation of employment.

Employment and skills policy must respond to our changing economy and labour market. We identified five key areas where government can act to shape a positive future and prepare for the evolution of work:

- Empowering employers and individuals to navigate change and take advantage of opportunities
- Driving job creation through forward-looking economic strategies underpinned by workforce planning and development
- Balancing opportunities provided by the changing nature of work with protecting the most vulnerable
- Supporting regions to strengthen their economies and promote inclusive growth
- Emphasising the critical importance of lifelong learning.

The role for government is important but is essentially facilitative. Individuals, employers, communities, educators and government all have a role to play. Shared priority, purpose and responsibility will ensure that everyone is ready for the opportunities presented by future work.

To access the *Future Work, Future Jobs* report and the underpinning research, visit <http://www.jobsqueensland.qld.gov.au>

⁴ Frey, C. B. and Osborne, M. A. 2013. *The Future of Employment: How susceptible are jobs to computerisation?* Oxford, Oxford Martin Programme on Technology and Employment. <https://www.oxfordmartin.ox.ac.uk/downloads/academic/future-of-employment.pdf>

Stories making the news

Apprenticeship and traineeship numbers go up for South Australia [media release]

South Australia achieved a 19.4 per cent increase in apprentice and trainee commencements for the quarter ending June 2019 compared to a year earlier, according to the latest National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) figures – the largest increase on the mainland. ‘This is a significant improvement and a further indication that the Marshall Government is continuing to turn around the state’s training system, following last month’s positive NCVER figures on South Australia’s apprentice and traineeship enrolments,’ Minister for Innovation and Skills David Pisoni said. ‘Last month, the NCVER’s release regarding government funded VET activity showed SA experienced a significant increase in apprentices and trainees, with 10,185 enrolments representing an increase of 28.8 per cent – the largest percentage increase nationally.’

Source: Premier of South Australia -

<https://premier.sa.gov.au/news/further-boost-for-sa-s-training-system-with-latest-apprenticeship-and-traineeship-numbers>

Australian workers don’t feel prepared for digital transformation

The Centre for the New Workforce at Swinburne University of Technology has conducted a second annual national survey on the future of work, which provides insights into worker perceptions of their preparedness for the digital economy. Source: Swinburne University of Technology - <http://www.swinburne.edu.au/news/latest-news/2019/12/australian-workers-expect-big-changes-in-the-workplace-but-dont-feel-prepared-.php>

Workers want training in soft skills

The findings from LinkedIn’s Future of Skills 2019 research provides some insights into how Australian workers feel about the rapid advances in their industries and workplaces, with over half reporting experiencing rapid changes in the skills they require for success. Almost 40% say they feel

‘overwhelmed’ by these changes. Source: Information Age - <https://ia.acs.org.au/article/2019/workers-demand-soft-skills-training.html>

Teaching taskforce recommends double time for literacy training

State and territory education ministers have been urged to back the recommendations of a taskforce set up to investigate incorporating phonics into the accreditation standards for initial teacher education, following revelations that the key element of teaching children to read and write has been overlooked by many universities.

Source: The Australian -

<https://www.theaustralian.com.au/nation/teaching-taskforce-recommends-doubling-literacy-training-time/news-story/6ce5fe9a4060e5344c4e8ccc662bc406>

More than \$500m cut from regular federal government budget for skills and training

In 2018 the federal government spent \$531m less than before on skills and training. This has been blamed on ‘poor policy design and implementation, almost constant change and chronic under-resourcing’. Source: The Australian - <https://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/over-500m-less-spent-on-skills-education-by-federal-government/news-story/9668abb04323426db9d518793e948c75> and



Over.docx

SEEK predicts job market for 2020

The SEEK 2020 Trends report can help students to make ‘sensible, evidence-based decisions on the career/s they wish to enter’. Source: Campus Review – see attached



SEEKs job market.docx

Talking Point: How did failed vocational training push end up costing us billions?

MANY who are old enough will remember Kerry Packer's response to a question in 1991, when he said, 'I pay whatever tax I am required to pay under the law, not a penny more, not a penny less ... if anybody in this country doesn't minimise their tax they want their heads read because as a government I can tell you you're not spending it that well that we should be donating extra.' In this article the Mercury provides some facts about the rotting of the VET system by unscrupulous providers.

Source: The Mercury -

<https://www.themercury.com.au/news/opinion/talking-point-how-did-failed-vocational-training-push-end-up-costing-us-billions/news-story/04c811590f3a7cac19ff9e27a69e2c42>

Students to benefit from clearer post-school pathways

[media release]

The Australian Government today endorsed the higher education recommendations of the [Noonan review of the Australian Qualifications Framework](#). It has also endorsed the review's proposed changes to vocational qualifications – which will be discussed with the States and Territories.

Source: Universities Australia -

<https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/media-item/students-to-benefit-from-clearer-post-school-pathways>

See also: A new future for VET and higher education

[media release]: Ministers Media Centre –

<https://ministers.employment.gov.au/cash/new-future-vet-and-higher-education>

Govt backs AQF review: Campus Morning

Mail -

<https://campusmorningmail.com.au/news/govt-backs-aqf-review/>

Not OK: one in five young jobseekers in Australia long-term unemployed [media release]

About a fifth of unemployed young people have not been able to find a job for 12 months or more. In the new report, titled '[Prosperity's children](#)', the Brotherhood of Saint Laurence confirms the national youth unemployment rate is almost three times rate of unemployment rate those aged 25 and over.

Source: Brotherhood of St Laurence –

<https://www.bsl.org.au/media/media-releases/not-ok-one-in-five-young-jobseekers-in-australia-long-term-unemployed/>

See also: Lack of vocational training and education

disadvantaging young Australians: ABC Radio -

<https://www.abc.net.au/radio/programs/worldtoday/lack-of-vocational-training-disadvantaging-young-australians/11780000>

TAFE Directors Australia's CEO Craig Robertson speaks about his optimism for VET

'In Beijing last week, I was asked by a British ex-pat now living in Washington and an Aussie living in England if I was confident about the future of vocational education in Australia. Admittedly, I had just been lamenting the poor participation levels in the sector and praising the clear enthusiasm for vocational education in China. I said I was. My confidence is not borne from the Joyce Review or the Commonwealth's reforms, COAG's Roadmap, the AQF review, the review of higher education provider standards or the forthcoming prognostications of the Productivity Commission, although these all help. Nor is it borne solely from the new lease of life in the federal bureaucracy toward VET, although that will now be tested. Federal responsibilities for VET will be merged into an expanded education, skills and employment portfolio, some six months after leaving the education portfolio following the federal election! I'm confident because vocational education is right for the times'.

Source: TDA - <https://www.tda.edu.au/newletter/cause-for-hope-comment-by-ceo-craig-robertson/> and attached

Research reveals the future of Australian jobs

Research commissioned by Cisco and Oxford Economics predicts a total of 630,000 Australian jobs could be displaced by new technologies over the next decade, which equates to more than seven per cent of the nation's current workforce. It's not bad news for all industries - there will be more jobs in health, wholesale and retail, finance and education.

Source: News.com.au –

<https://www.news.com.au/finance/work/careers/research-reveals-the-future-of-australian-jobs/news-story/0c66353c2ab02f44de56b9df73b778b0>

Challenges for mature workers in Australia (fed)

Researchers from the ARC Centre of Excellence in Population Ageing Research (CEPAR) based at Curtin University and the University of Sydney, have conducted a national survey of mature age workers. The findings show that many of these workers do not feel included in the workplace, have less opportunities to develop skills, do not feel that their work allows them the flexibility fully cater for their needs and preferences. They are also frustrated by the lack of knowledge transfer amongst co-workers of different ages. More information and access to the report [here](#)



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Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (Fed)

The Education Council today launched a new national declaration on educational goals for all young Australians. The COAG Education Council Chair, Minister for Education Dan Tehan, said that the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration sets out our vision for education in Australia. 'The Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration builds on the impact of the 2008 Melbourne Declaration and includes changes to ensure Australia's education system continues to provide the best opportunities for young Australians in a rapidly changing world', said Minister Tehan. Signing this declaration in Alice Springs (Mparntwe), a remote town in the heart of our vast country, recognises our commitment to an education system that delivers outcomes

for all young Australians, regardless of their geographic location. (Communique attached)

**The publication is available [here](#)



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Vet Trainers & Assessors gain a new credential through new College of Vocational Education Professionals (fed)

The Independent Tertiary Education Council Australia (ITECA) has inducted the first cohort of assessors, trainers and managers into the ITECA College of Vocational Education and Training Professionals. The establishment of this College, supported by stakeholders across the sector, stemmed from the need to recognise individuals across the vocational education and training (VET) sector with a commitment to quality. 'The ITECA College of Vocational Education and Training Professionals exists to recognise individuals that share a commitment to delivering quality outcomes. These individuals have demonstrated a high degree of proficiency as trainers, assessors, or managers through possession of required qualifications and also a commitment to ongoing professional development', said Mr Troy Williams, ITECA Chief Executive.



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Reforms to Australia's higher education system (FED)

Minister for Education Dan Tehan said today the Government had accepted all 10 recommendations made in the Review of Australia's Higher Education Provider Category Standards by Emeritus Professor Peter Coaldrake AO. The review recommended: Reducing the number of higher education provider categories from six to four. Adding greater differentiation among the large majority of private providers. Creating a new category of teaching intensive, high performing higher education providers. Greater regulatory transparency to facilitate new entrants into higher education and progression to various levels of oversight and self-accreditation.



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The 23rd annual conference of the Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association, Thursday and Friday 23rd-24th April, 2020

**Citadines Conference Centre
131-135 Bourke St, Melbourne**

20/20 vision for VET: Research at the centre of future policy and practice

[REGISTER NOW](#)



Professor Stephanie Allais

Research Chair of Skills Development, University of the Witwatersrand and Special Advisor to the Minister of Higher Education and Training

TVET in developing countries: Constraints and possibilities

Professor Rod McDonald

Principal, Ithaca Group, and former Special Advisor to the Australian National Training Authority; author of seminal report on VET research: No Small Change

Research at the centre of policy and practice - is it too much to expect?

Professor Ann-Marie Bathmaker

Professor of Vocational and Higher Education, University of Birmingham

Leadership dilemmas and incompatible goals? Pursuing access, social inclusion, social mobility and employability in public further education

For conference and sponsorship enquiries please email: AVETRA2020@federation.edu.au

[Joining AVETRA now](#) provides membership till the end of 2020.

To join, email: avetra@theassociationspecialists.com.au

[CLICK HERE](#) for the **Call for Papers and more information**

For additional guidance on writing an abstract, please [CLICK HERE](#)

The 29th National VET Research Conference 'NO FRILLS 2020', co-hosted with North Metropolitan TAFE, Perth, WA, 8-10 July 2020



The call for submissions to present is now open [29th National VET Research Conference 'No Frills'](#)

NCVER are seeking presentations that explore the theme **Workforce ready: challenges and opportunities for VET**.

Submissions are invited from all parts of the VET sector, including researchers, industry, government, practitioners, and peak bodies.

Submissions are open until **Monday, 17 February 2020**.

Learn more about [presentation guidelines and how to submit](#).



women in adult &
vocational education

WAVE National Forum 2020

More than just women in hardhats: understanding the wide role of VET for the careers of Australian women

Wednesday 22 April 2020
VET Development Centre
Level 8, 379 Collins Street
Melbourne

To be held before the AVETRA conference on 23rd and 24th of April

This forum will feature keynote speakers, panels and the chance to discuss ways we can influence decisions so that women's needs are the focus for policy around women's careers and involvement in adult and vocational education, not just economic concerns.

Cost for the day including lunch and refreshments: \$53.84 for WAVE financial members; \$80.21 for general registrations; and \$106.59 with WAVE membership for a year.

Registration: https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/wave-forum-2020-more-than-just-women-in-hardhats-tickets-86285555419?utm_campaign=postpub&utm_medium=em&utm_source=sm&utm_content=viewevent

To join and for further details about WAVE – www.wave.org.au or wave@wave.org.au

Facts and figures: statistics from the NCVER's 2019 Total VET Students and Courses publication



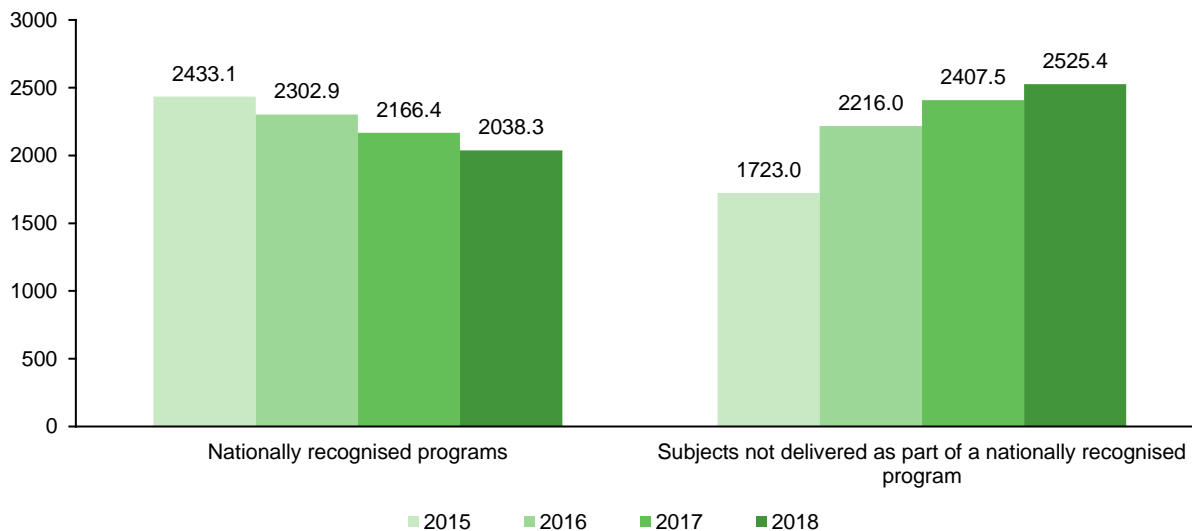
The following information and selection of charts (Figures 1, 2, 3, 11 and 12) are reproduced from the NCVER publication *Total VET Students and Courses* 2018 available at:

<https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/publications/all-publications/total-vet-students-and-courses-2018>

This publication provides an estimate of the extent and nature of nationally recognised vocational education and training (VET) delivered in 2018 by Australian registered training organisations (RTOs).

This picture of training activity is known as 'total VET activity', to reflect that the information reports on students who undertook nationally recognised VET on a government funded or fee-for-service basis. This publication provides information on students and full year training equivalents, participation rates, program and subject enrolments, program completions and training providers.

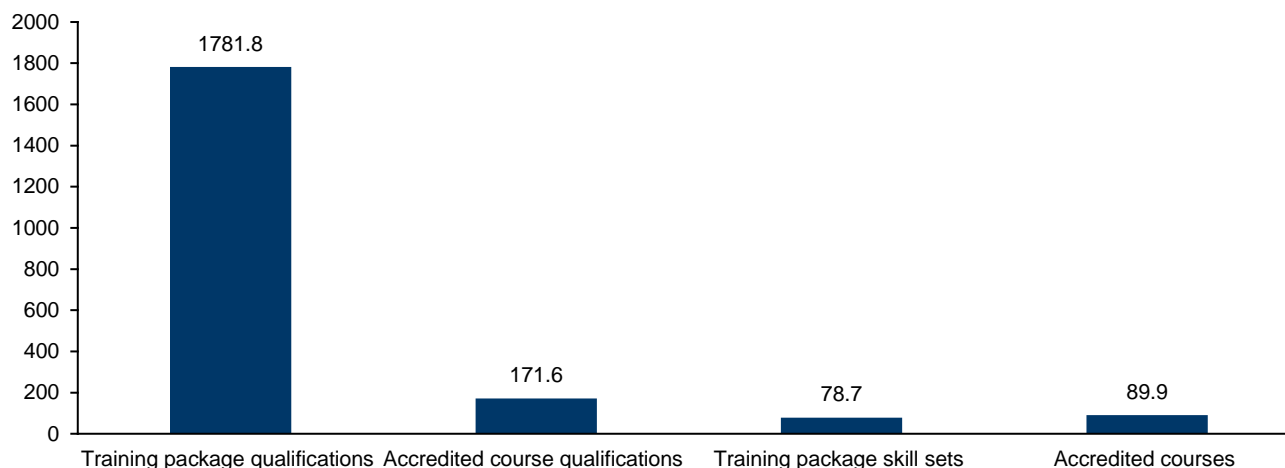
Figure 1: Students enrolled in nationally recognised programs, 2015-2018 ('000)



Notes: The increase in the number of students enrolled in subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program from 2015 to 2018 is likely to be a combination of better reporting as well as a real increase in activity. For more information refer to the fact sheet *How much training did exempt RTOs report?* located at <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/collections/students-and-courses-collection/total-vet-activity-tva-fact-sheets>.

The sum of students (n=4.6 million in 2018) will not add to the 2018 total (4.1 million) as a student may have enrolled in multiple types of training in a calendar year.

Figure 2 Students enrolled in nationally recognised programs, 2018 ('000)



Note: The sum of students (n=2.1 million) will not add to the total (2 million) as a student may have enrolled in multiple types of training in a calendar year.

Figure 3 Enrolments in the top three subjects not delivered as part of a nationally recognised program, 2015–18 ('000)

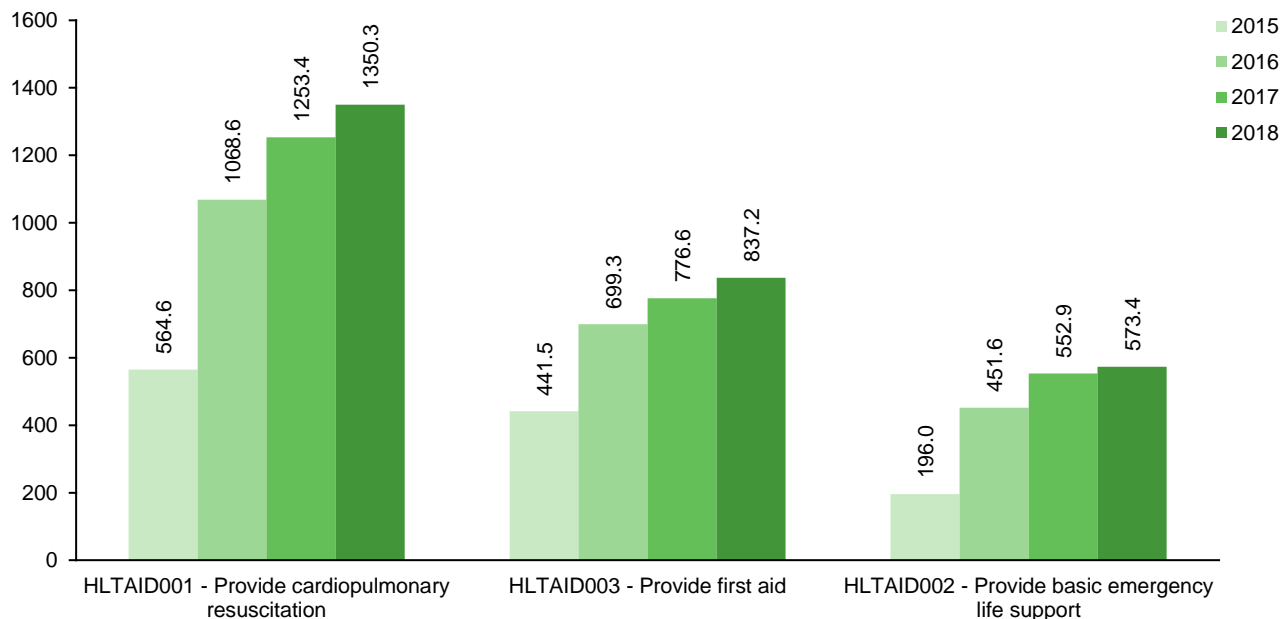
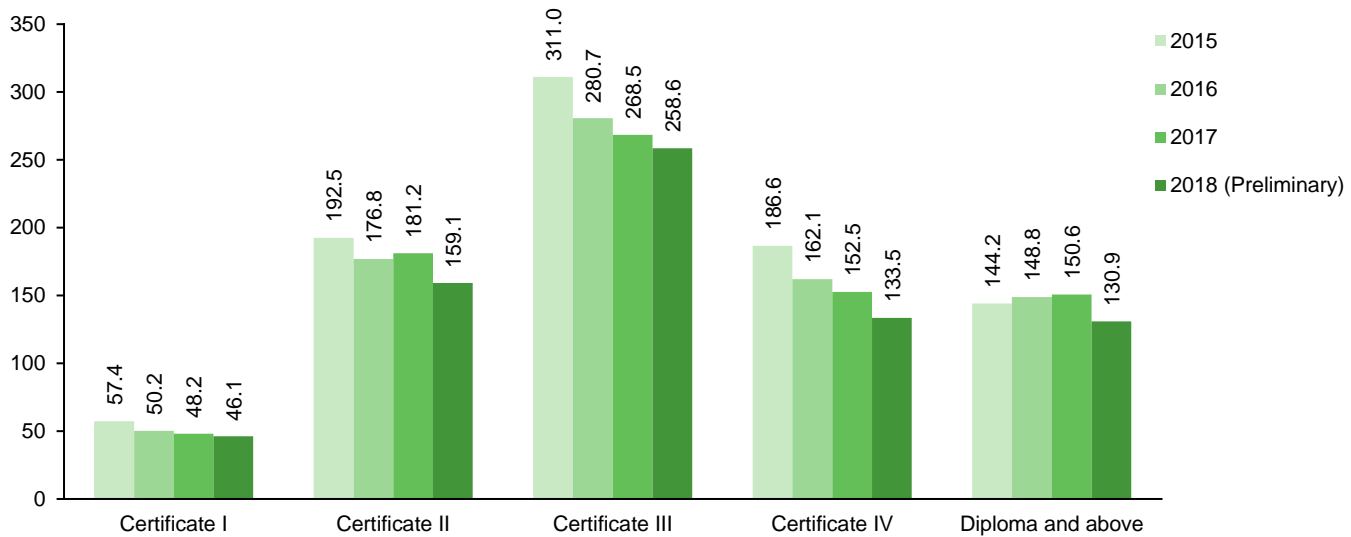


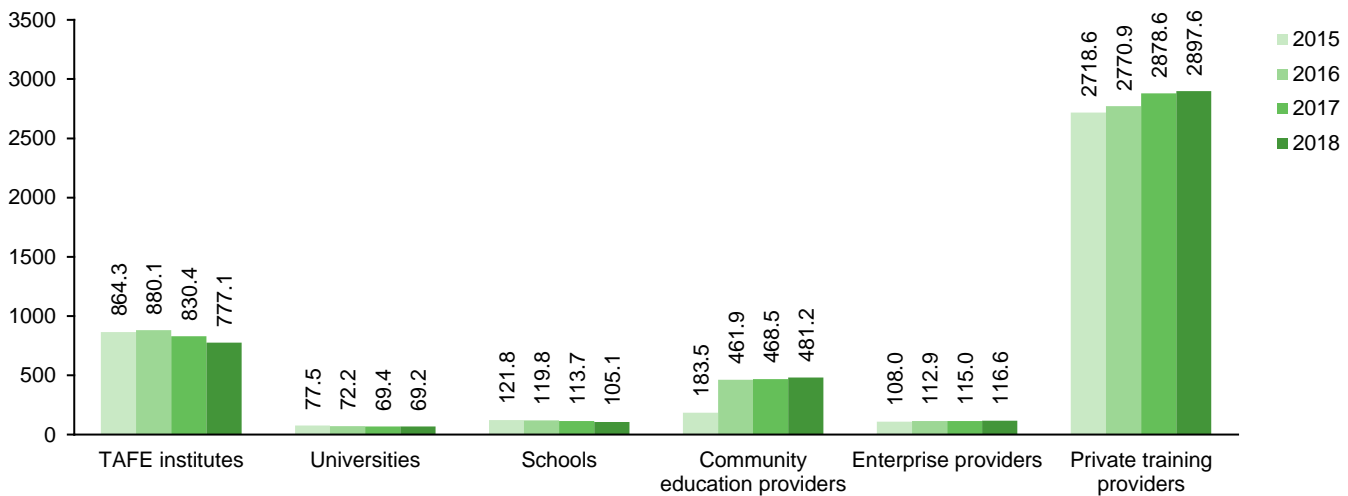
Figure 11 Qualification completions by level of education, 2015–18 ('000)

Qualification completions for 2018 are preliminary only. The 2018 data will be revised upwards with the release of *Total VET students and courses 2019*.



Qualification completion rates cannot be derived from the qualification enrolments and completions reported in the tables above. For VET completion rates refer to the publication *VET qualification completion rates 2017* located at <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/collections/students-and-courses-collection/total-vet-students-and-courses>.

Figure 12 Students by provider type, 2015–18 ('000)



Note: The sum of students (n=4.4 million in 2018) will not add to the 2018 total (4.1 million) as a student may have enrolled in training with multiple provider types in a calendar year.

If you have any queries or want more information about the publication and other data, please feel free to call Toni Cavallaro of NCVET on 8230 8433 or email her at tonicavallaro@ncver.edu.au

Resources for your research: NCVER's VOCEDplus data base

VOCEDplus Highlights – November 2019

The November 2019 edition of [VOCEDplus Highlights](#) produced by NCVER Librarian Tracy Gamlin (shown right) 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.



Vocedplus Highlights: Downloadable Files

-  [November 2019](#)
-  [November 2019](#)



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>

NCVER has developed another product to help you with your research work. This is the VET Knowledge Bank. Click here to start <http://www.voced.edu.au/vet-knowledge-bank>

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

2019 Upcoming Conferences: details, dates and links

Australian Conferences



April 23-24, AVETRA Conference, 20/20 Vision for VET: Research at the Centre of future policy and practice, Citadines, 131-135 Bourke Street Melbourne. See more

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

July 8-10, Australian Conference of Economists, *ACE 2020, Economics of Wealth & Economics of Well-being*
See more at <https://ace2020.org.au/program/>

July 8-10, 29th National VET Research Conference- No Frills: *Workforce Ready: Challenges and Opportunities*, Perth, Western Australia. This conference is co-hosted by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research and North Metropolitan TAFE, WA. See more at: <https://www.ncver.edu.au/news-and-events>

Australian Council of Educational Research (ACER) Research, not yet finalised. Keep checking at <https://www.acer.org/au/research-conference>



October **22-23 October** , - Not finalised at time of writing. Keep checking

<https://www.iteca.edu.au/Conference>

September 17-18, VELG 2020, 14th National VELG Conference 2020, *Vision for the Future*, Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre,
See more at

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

October 13-16, The Australian International Education Conference (AIEC), 20/20 Vision: Insights for the Decade Ahead, Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre,
See more at: <https://aiec.idp.com/aiec-2020>

Community Colleges Australia Annual Conference, not yet finalised. Keep checking at: <https://cca.edu.au/>

Check out this interactive website to find details on upcoming education and training conferences by topic and date to be held in Australia from December 2019 – December 2020

<https://10times.com/australia/education-training/conferences>

Photo by [Rodion Kutsaev](#) on [Unsplash](#)

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Photo by Element5 Digital on Un-splash

The Executive wishes everyone a safe and happy festive season.



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
- Awards for VET researchers including the Berwyn Clayton Award, The Ray Barker Award, and the AVETRA Best Paper Award.

HELP AVETRA help VET research and join now if you are not a member. Full \$190 (GST inclusive) and Student memberships \$95.00 including GST are available.

If you are interested in providing leads or contributing to this newsletter, please contact Josie Misko - josiemisko@ncver.edu.au

Note: AVETRA Membership for institutions and organisations has been formally endorsed. Arrangements are currently being made to enable institutions and organisations to join AVETRA on an annual basis.