

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

I recently wrote with Joanna Palser an article on the 'NSW Response to the Marketisation of VET, 1990–2017' which was published by the L H Martin Institute as one of a series on contemporary issues in Australian Vocational Education and Training. When we had finished the article I reflected on how much time and effort was put in over that period on governance and structural issues in contrast to the more limited effort expended on matters to do with the delivery of excellent teaching and learning. I accept over that period there was an awful lot of discussion over the merits or otherwise of competency-based training and assessment, but that discussion often did not include teaching techniques and strategies.

Why this emphasis? Well it was a period of economic reform begun by the Hawke/Keating Governments - largely supported by both sides of industry. Skills and the creation of human capital were seen to be integral parts of the overall reform narrative. VET needed to be both industry led and made more efficient by exposure to competition. It also began a period when VET was often managed at both the political and senior executive levels by people with backgrounds in economics, policy and generic management rather than education and training.

Now I believe bringing in people from outside the sector can be good as it exposes the sector to new ideas. But given their backgrounds, the new ideas brought in by these externals were more likely to be about governance, structure and business management than about teaching and learning. So I think it critically important that policy makers and senior managers read and acknowledge the research on the teaching and learning process in VET.

AVETRA members have conducted much of this research on vocational teaching and learning in Australia. We need to make sure this research is utilised by decision makers. It is certainly appreciated by the field – I recently posted on LinkedIn about some UK research on factors that contribute to 'brilliant teaching' in VET. The post has received over 4,000 hits but most of the hits were from practitioners rather than executives.

One of the points I was trying to emphasise in this post was although good quality, centrally-produced learning resources are important and can certainly enhance delivery, they cannot replace

good, professional teaching practice by individual teachers. Despite what some externals might think you cannot have 'teacher proof' curriculum.

The AVETRA executive will continue to try and raise the profile of research into vocational teaching and learning at the highest levels within VET and government. We will do this by lobbying and running more research forums and through our publications. We encourage all members to promote research into VET and to make sure that research is used to inform policy as well as practice.

This is not always easy. AVETRA has been disappointed with recent cuts to the NCVET Budget. We have let Ministers and senior bureaucrats know what we think about this.

As I write, preparation for a Research Forum to be held in Canberra in late October led by Professor Erica Smith is being finalised. We are holding it in Canberra to make it easy for policy makers as well as practitioners and academics to access.



Full details are available on the AVETRA website see: [avetra.org.au/pages/-avetra-research-forum-26th-october-2018-.html](http://avetra.org.au/pages/-avetra-research-forum-26th-october-2018-.html) ■

**Robin Shreeve –  
President, AVETRA**

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# Making the school to VET transition

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There are many options for a young person once they leave school. Some choose to start working full time. Others take a 'gap year' to travel or pursue hobbies. Many enter a university, embarking upon multiple years of education towards a degree. Every year, thousands of these young people will start their post-school journey with vocational study.

A range of recent work on this transition from school to vocational education and training has been published by NCVER, with focuses ranging from student aspirations, to student choice, to the experience of disadvantaged learners. This paper is based on the collation of these publications published earlier this year by NCVER (Osborne & Circelli 2018).

## Looking before enrolment

Many discussions of the VET experience begin with enrolment. This is understandable; enrolment is when a person officially becomes a VET student. Recent research suggests we in fact need to look earlier and consider the aspirations that lead to enrolment. One thing that really affects students' relationship to VET is its perceived status. While we know that young people appreciate the practical and often hands-on learning they do in VET, the overall perception of vocational learning options are often negative. Students surveyed by Gore et al (2017) talked about not 'hearing good things' about VET institutions or said that they doubted someone who had gone to a TAFE would get a job over someone who had gone to a university. Within the same research students appeared to be ranking TAFE or vocational education options as secondary to university. Perceptions about the low status of VET and its lack of educational prestige are likely preventing potential VET students from ever making it to enrolment. If a student is hearing from their peers, teachers and parents that VET is a poor option for their future, there's little chance they'll embrace it as a positive option in their own life. For more information on VET aspirations, intentions and choice, see the research summary by Hargreaves & Osborne (2017).

## What do they choose?

Understanding the experience of students making the school to VET transition means understanding what choices they are making. We conducted an analysis of the field of education that those likely making that transition were choosing (school leavers were defined here as 15-19 year-olds enrolled in VET study but not attending school). Figure 1 presents the comparison between this group and all other ages for the five fields of education that experienced the greatest differences (the differences range between 5.9 and 3.1 percentage points). For example, 10.8% of 15-19 year old VET students were in the food, hospitality and personal services field, compared to 4.9% of students at other ages. What this shows is that the profile of field of education choice is likely to be different between those leaving school and starting VET, and the rest of the VET student population.

This is important to understand, as it gives us an insight into what VET courses appeal more specifically to the young people leaving school, and what courses they're not interested in. Any attempt to engender in young people interest in a certain field (such as a specific trade) should be built on an understanding of the current choices these young people are making.

## Early school leavers

The traditional Australian pathway is for a student to complete year 12 and obtain a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education (SSCE) before progressing to further study. However, this is not the case for all students. Those who leave school before completing year 12 are known as early school leavers. These young people are vulnerable to unemployment and a lack of participation in education or training, so it is particularly important that VET be there to support them (Stanwick, Forrest & Skujins 2017). Dommers et al (2017) found that access to transport could be a significant factor in the engagement of early school leavers with VET. Many of these young people didn't own or have access to a car for personal use and were instead reliant on public transport. In some areas access to public transport was limited, making travel to and from training difficult or impossible. The same research also highlighted the importance of learning support for early school leavers transitioning into the VET system, especially with general literacy and numeracy. These students may also have specific learning needs, which have led to their original disengagement with school.

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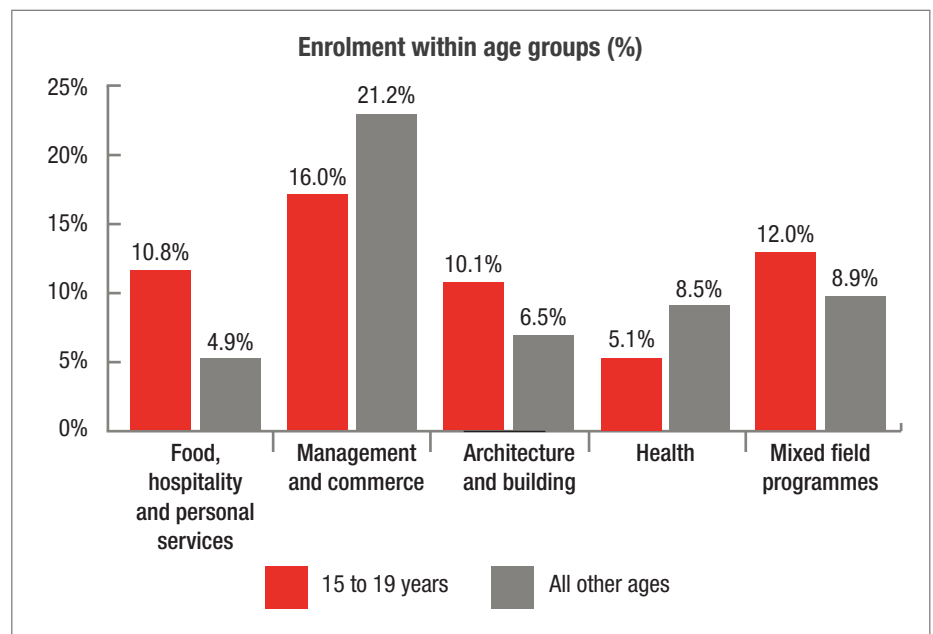


Figure 1: Enrolments within age group by field of education, selected fields of education, not attending school, 2016. Source: National VET Provider Collection, NCVER.

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### Do outcomes differ?

What are the outcomes of the students making the transition? This is an important question; ensuring a successful transition and education means paying attention to the results. We found that VET graduates aged 18-19 report achieved their main reason for study in similar proportions to older graduates (82.3%). In fact, students in this age group reported achieving every specific personal benefit from study more often than older students. These benefits were things such as getting into further study, improving skills, making friends and gaining confidence. These students also mostly report improved employment status after their course and report job-related benefits in similar proportions to other graduates. This is an indicator that VET is 'on the right track' in terms of delivering outcomes to school leavers.

### Who might we be missing?

It is tempting in this discussion about school leavers to consider them as a single group. However, as we've seen from the specific challenges faced by early school leavers, this is not the case. Indigenous school leavers and school leavers with a disability face unique challenges with many requiring specific support to achieve the best possible VET experience and outcome. There are also students from other equity groups that face specific challenges, such as gender and sexuality diverse students (LGBTQIA+) and for whom there is almost no research in an Australian VET context. The experience of all these students would be improved if there was a greater understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by this diverse range of school leavers. ■

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# 3<sup>rd</sup> ICTVET 2018

International Conference on Technical and Vocational Education and Training

October 19-21st 2018

State University of Jakarta  
Bung Hatta Building

## The Conference

THE 3rd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (3rd ICTVET) 2018 will be held with theme "**Technical & Vocational Education Training on The Industrial Revolution 4.0**". Innovation in education, industry, vocational education, and its various supporting elements are expected to provide answers to the challenges of the Industrial Revolution 4.0. The Industrial Revolution 4.0 makes information technology as the backbone of communication, distribution channels, and competitive weapon in global community. Indonesia, with big potential of human resources, natural resources and strategic geographical position, must encourage innovation to confront the Industrial Revolution 4.0 in the Asia Pacific region. This conference specializes in topics related to Vocational Education and Training, Engineering, and Innovation Industry.



**3<sup>rd</sup> ICTVET 2018**  
International Conference on Technical  
and Vocational Education and Training



Faculty of Engineering

All details at: [seminars.unj.ac.id/ictvet2018/](http://seminars.unj.ac.id/ictvet2018/)



# Marketisation of VET: the NSW response 1990s – 2017

**Joanna Palser, Consultant &  
Robin Shreeve, Federation University**

*This paper is a shorter version of the paper authored by Robin Shreeve and Joanna Palser, published by the LH Martin Institute, University of Melbourne, in 2018.*

By 1990 the optimistic idealism of the Kangan era reforms (Kangan, 1974) that in 1974 had established TAFE as an educational sector in its own right committed to maximising the potential of the whole person, was being replaced with a narrower and more instrumental world view. Over the following twenty-five years this would see TAFE NSW cast as just one provider in an expanding VET sector whose main purpose was to focus on the needs of industry and compete for a role in skilling the workforce.

The NSW response to VET marketisation, indeed to national reforms generally from the 1990s onwards, can be characterised as often cautious, with the overriding concern of sequential state politicians to remain in control of their own state system. In 1997, for example, NSW reserved its position on ‘user choice’ for modern apprenticeships, one of the flagship strategies of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) to increase competition within the VET sector (Selby Smith, 1998).

Politicians and bureaucrats in NSW took such a vigilant approach to these nationally driven reforms that they were often accused of recalcitrance and protectionism of the public provider. NSW introduced ‘selective’ and ‘constructive’ competition limited to robust markets, avoiding the risk of perceived market failure, especially in thin regional, industry or occupational markets (Goozee, 2013, p. 411). It gradually relaxed this position, but it was not until 2015 that the NSW Government implemented its own comprehensive training market policy under Smart and Skilled.

Why was NSW so restrained in its response to the establishment of a competitive training market for such a long time? Part of it was ‘state rights’ and a desire for the State Government to remain in control especially of the budget and where the money was allocated. Contestability was tactically embraced as a means of accessing Commonwealth funding. State funding would be controlled by the state. Politicians on the left supported the ‘access and equity’ approach of Kangan while politicians on

the right saw the impact as well as political value of VET – and especially the easily recognisable TAFE brand in rural and remote communities.

If the response to national initiatives was restrained, this did not stop both Coalition and Labor NSW governments – outward defenders of the public provider – from regularly reforming management structures in TAFE NSW. In nearly all cases the stated rationale was the same – to reduce management costs, shift resources to the teaching front line and reduce reliance on public funding. NSW would have changed on its own terms. The NSW Teachers’ Federation continued to be a powerful factor in this tussle. The Federation was ideologically opposed to marketisation and fiercely resisted any attempts to change comparatively generous leave conditions

**“ Politicians and bureaucrats in NSW took such a vigilant approach to these nationally driven reforms that they were often accused of recalcitrance and protectionism of the public provider. ”**

and face to face teaching hours. TAFE NSW management failed in its attempts to persuade governments to force change. The result was even more pressure by Commonwealth bodies to shift provision to a cheaper private sector and the replacement of full time teachers in TAFE NSW with part time casuals.

In the post ANTA period, national VET funding agreements were transferred into the more muscular apparatus of inter-governmental Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreements, upping the ante on marketisation. This culminated in the introduction of a national VET training entitlement and gradually extended income contingent loans to VET students undertaking higher qualifications. New federal financial arrangements with the states came with the more direct engagement of central agencies of Premier and Cabinet and Treasury departments and the specialist oversight of the COAG Reform Council. These agencies were often the unseen guiding hands behind these initiatives, especially following the 2012 COAG agreement, when their intervention in TAFE NSW and the VET sector intensified. They were classically neo-liberal in outlook and thus generally believed in competition as a means of improving efficiency. For most of the period these agencies had a focus on reducing public expenditure, increasing efficiency

and shifting public VET funding away from TAFE grants and into the marketplace.

These national policy decisions had a tsunami of unintended consequences including intensive competition among many rent-seeking private RTOs, huge loss of enrolments across TAFE systems nationally, widespread RTO quality concerns – amounting to fraud in some high-profile instances, the trashing of VET reputation and spiralling government budgets.

Under these turbulent conditions, the NSW government attempted to hold a steady rein. Slower adoption by NSW of market policy meant that it could look to the good and bad examples of what was occurring elsewhere – especially Victoria – and travel a safer middle path – aware of the pitfalls of budget blow-outs around entitlement

places, quality concerns and proliferation of qualifications in occupations with little market demand.

Yet, even when late in the first decade of the 2000s NSW finally signed on to the national agreement for a student entitlement to training, the Minister responsible, Adrian Piccoli, remained a staunch defender of TAFE NSW. He wanted to ensure the Smart and Skilled policies were implemented in a way that avoided some of the disasters for VET emerging in other states. Part of the blueprint at the time was a more independent TAFE system operating at arm’s length from government.

There was a sudden reversal of this position, unsupported by earlier research and public reviews, when in 2016 the Minister responsible for TAFE NSW, John Barilaro, announced TAFE was abolishing its institutes and recentralising under a strategy known as ‘OneTAFE’. Economies of scale now trumped competition as a means of improving efficiency, flexibility and responsiveness. Once again part of these reforms would be financed by TAFE delivering more training on a ‘fee for service’ basis to enterprises and governments but with no real analysis of how big this market was and whether TAFE had the capability and capacity to service it.

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So where to from now? Many insiders feel VET and TAFE need better public funding and a period of organisational stability. Contestability and marketisation of VET also are being questioned as a dominant ideology that may have run its course in the sector's development (Moran, 2017). To resolve these issues and the conflict between States and Australian Government agencies over TAFE and VET policy, TAFE needs a national review as far-reaching as the one led by Myer Kangan in the early 1970s. That heralded a golden age not just for TAFE and but also for the individuals, enterprises and the communities TAFE served. ■

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# VET CONGRESS 2019: 4-6 March

Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET), Zollikofen, Switzerland



**SFIVET**

SWISS FEDERAL INSTITUTE FOR  
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND  
TRAINING

*Swiss excellence in vocational  
education and training*

**The end of VET as we know it? Skills development in times of technical and social change - 6th Congress on Research in Vocational Education and Training**

For the sixth time, the Swiss Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (SFIVET) invites researchers to engage in an exchange of ideas and research findings and to reflect on VET issues.

The end of VET as we know it stands representative for a time of reconsideration of VET as a way of adequately preparing young adults for the world of work and for society. It is about coping with insecurity and disruption, building new technological and social competences as well as developing creativity for innovation. Demographic change and the expansion of higher education challenge VET as an attractive educational pathway to the labour market. With technological advances leading to more radical changes in the labour market, experts are calling for a reform of education, including vocational education and training, adult and professional education. An increasing decay of knowledge leads to a reconsideration regarding

the kind of knowledge that is relevant as well as about the ways in which knowledge is acquired and how it needs to be combined within new forms of learning and working practices. Renewal and change requires building up and recombining a broad range of skills to work in various kinds of teams. Topics that concern education in respect to workforce preparation include migration and inclusion of foreign workers, hybridization of education, digital skills development, and reskilling and upskilling to avoid skills mismatches. The conference attempts to capture these developments through presentations coming from various disciplines, such as education, psychology, sociology, economics or political science.

We are looking forward to meeting you,  
Prof. Dr. Antje Barabasch, Chair of the Congress

**All details:** [sfivet.swiss/vet-congress](http://sfivet.swiss/vet-congress)

# Employability skills: What are employers asking for?

Ian White, National Centre for Vocational Education Research

With the world of work changing, the demand and need for employability skills and their impact on education has become a significant focus for governments and industries around the world (Allen, Teodoro & Manley 2017). Employability skills can be defined as a set of non-technical skills, capabilities and attributes that contribute to an individual's likelihood of gaining employment. Employability skills are also referred to as soft, generic, transferable, or more recently, 21st century skills.

The vocational education and training (VET) sector has an important role in developing employability skills and preparing learners for the workforce. According to the National Student Outcomes Survey, 84% of VET graduates undertook training for employment related reasons (NCVER 2017). The sector helps students develop employability skills in several different ways. Essential foundational skills are embedded in all subjects and are identified in every unit of competency according to the [Standards for Training Packages](#). There is also a standalone training package and qualifications for foundational skills. The sector also supports many learners with lower levels of prior education, and those seeking to gain employment. Employability skills are then (both explicitly and implicitly) a part of VET.

In this study we used data from internet job postings to analyse the employability skills employers are requesting across different occupations. The analysis identifies the skills commonly requested across most occupations, and those that are more specific to certain occupations. Skills that are commonly requested in an occupation may identify them either as particularly important, or as currently in demand. We also undertook a comparison between the skills listed in the units of competency in relevant VET qualifications with the skills requested in job postings by employers to look for gaps and discrepancies.

## Internet job postings data

Internet job postings are a novel data source, that provide valuable real-time insights into both job openings and the skills required for jobs as expressed by employers. They can provide information on unmet demand, or the skills that employers require or desire.

Internet job-postings data are produced by regularly scanning websites on which job postings are listed, for example, job boards and corporate websites. Copies of the postings are extracted from these sites. These data are collected and coded to provide information on the numbers and types of jobs available, as well as the various attributes of these jobs, covering characteristics such as the location, occupation, skills required and industry of the employer. This conversion of internet job postings into a structured dataset, permits analysis by conventional means.

A job vacancy can be posted in multiple locations, such as on two different job boards or a job board and the website of the employer. Based on a range of factors, including job title, employer name and location, these duplicate postings are removed to ensure the integrity of the data.

## Top employability skills requested

Figure 1 shows that communication skills were by far the most requested employability skill in job postings by employers in Australia between 2014 and 2017. This indicates that employers placed a great deal of emphasis on effective communication skills in prospective employees.

Using the same source of data, we can compare the emphasis employers put on each employability skill for different occupations. Figure 2 compares the percentage of internet job postings in each occupation (ANZSCO Major Group) that requested communication skills. The percentage of all internet job postings that requested communications skills from Figure 1 is included for comparison. The occupation groups that employers

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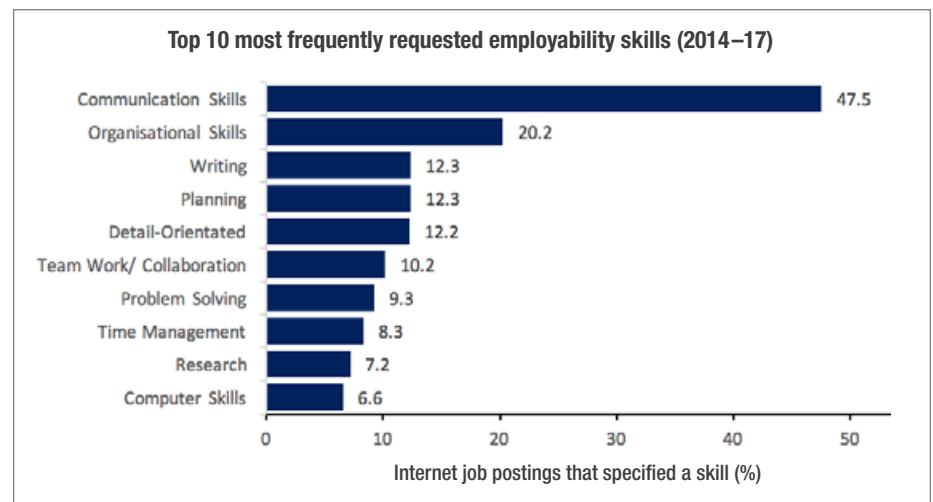


Figure 1: Top 10 most frequently requested employability skills across all internet job postings between 2014 and 2017

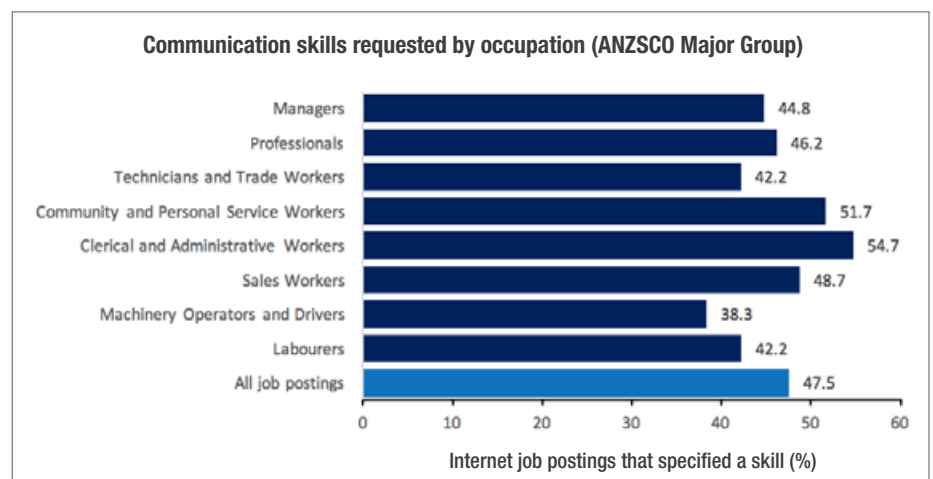


Figure 2: Percentage of internet job postings by occupation (ANZSCO Major Group) that requested communication skills

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placed most emphasis on effective communication skills for, were Clerical and Administrative workers, followed by Community and Personal Service Workers. There was less relative emphasis placed on communication skills in job advertisements for Machinery Operators and Drivers, and Labourers.

Similarly, Figure 3 below compares the percentage of internet job postings in each occupation that requested detail-oriented skills. Attention to detail is requested more frequently by employers for the occupation groups of Clerical and Administrative Workers, Machinery Operators and Drivers, and Labourers compared to the other occupations.

Placing greater emphasis on a skill for an occupation, may mean employers identify the skill as particularly important for the occupation, or that there is a demand for that skill in the workforce. However, placing

less emphasis on a particular skill for an occupation does not necessarily mean that employers identify the skill as less important. While it is in employers' interests to specify the skills and other criteria required for the job in postings (posted online or otherwise), these criteria may be stated implicitly or explicitly. The coding by Burning Glass relies on the criteria being explicitly stated in internet job postings.

For example, less emphasis relative to the baseline for all internet job postings was placed on communication skills for Managers. A job role for which good communication skills are generally considered essential. A possible explanation for this could be that employers assumed prospective candidates for Manager positions would be implicitly aware that good communication skills are expected from someone employed in that role. Therefore, employers may have not explicitly requested them in the job posting.

### What skills are requested for Hospitality Workers?

Data on internet job posting can also be used to examine employability skills requested by employers for more specific occupations. The VET system plays an important role in the training of Hospitality Workers (ANZSCO 431). Figure 4 shows the top 10 ranked employability skills requested in internet job postings for Hospitality Workers.

Using internet job postings across all occupations shown in Figure 1 as a baseline, employers requested communication skills more frequently and organisational skills less frequently for Hospitality workers. Skills in multi-tasking, English, and work area maintenance were requested more frequently indicating employers regarded these as particularly important for working in Hospitality. Attributes such as a positive disposition and being energetic were also emphasised by employers. Skills in planning, writing, and research were not ranked in the top 10 requested employability skills by employers for Hospitality Workers, which makes sense considering the type of work involved in this occupation.

### Are these skills provided by VET?

Data on employability skills requested by employers for an occupation, can be compared to the training specified in the relevant qualification. This could aid in identification and further investigation of potential gaps. For example, Hospitality Worker positions are likely to be sought by graduates of the Certificates I, II, III and IV in Hospitality (see the entry on training.gov.au for more information). Table 1 (next page) lists the subjects by qualification level, that could be relevant to communication skills requested in internet job postings for Hospitality Workers.

Skills in communication are well covered by subjects on offer across all Hospitality qualification levels. They are also tailored to the level of qualification. For example, at the certificate I and II levels, the relevant subjects teach communication skills from the point of view of interacting with customers or work colleagues. At the certificate IV level, communications skills are covered in terms of coaching or managing others. This is evidence that communication skills are being taught across the qualifications, at levels that correspond to the job level to which it leads.

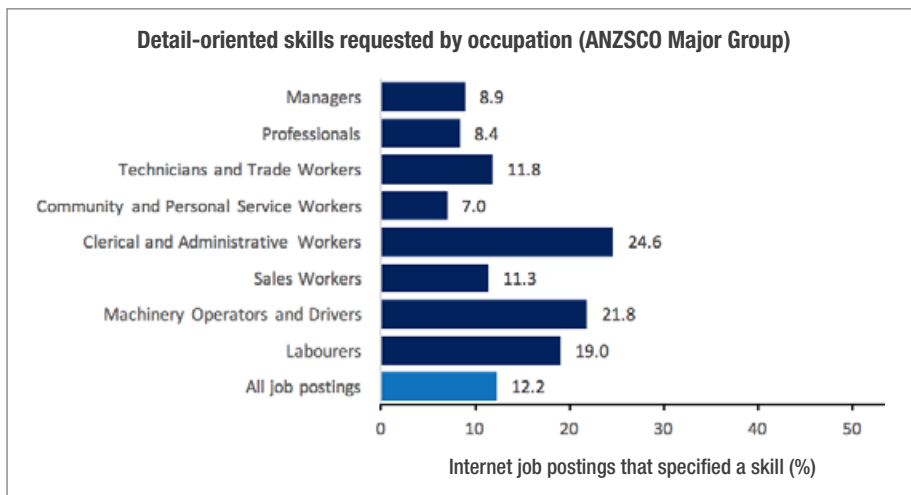


Figure 3: Percentage of internet job postings by occupation (ANZSCO Major Group) that requested detail-oriented skills

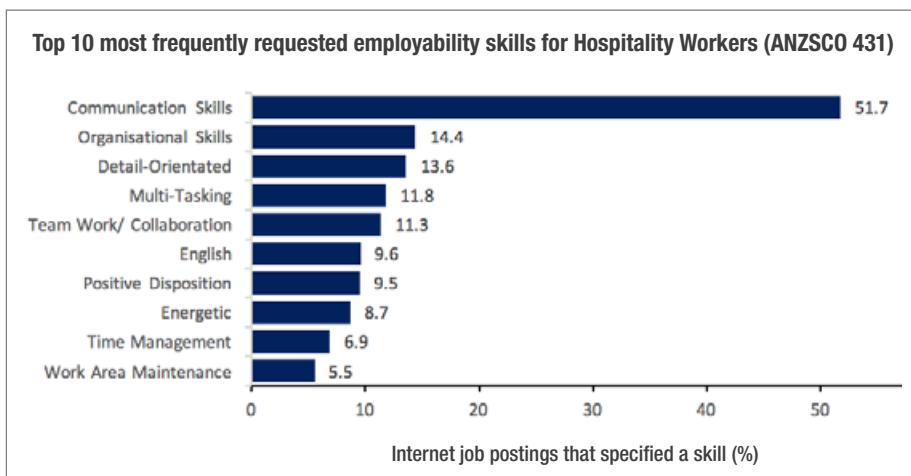


Figure 4: Top 10 most frequently requested employability skills across all internet job postings for Hospitality Workers, 2014–2017



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**Table 1: Subjects in the Certificates I to IV in Hospitality relevant to communication skills by qualification level**

Certificate I	Certificate II	Certificate III	Certificate IV
Provide customer information and assistance*	Communicate in the workplace	Coach others in job skills*	Coach others in job skills*
Work effectively with others*	Interact with customers*	Communicate in the workplace	Manage conflict*
	Work effectively with others*	Work effectively with others*	Work effectively in hospitality service*
		Work effectively in hospitality service*	

\* denotes a core subject at qualification level

Data note: matching of skills to corresponding subjects was manually determined based on the title and description of the subject. It is possible that a number of subjects covering technical skills for the job may also indirectly lead to the acquisition of communication skills. Only the subjects that directly related to communication skills have been included here.

## Way forward

There is currently a wealth of comprehensive data on the supply side of the VET sector, such as the characteristics of the students, providers and training. There is comparatively less data on the demand side of the VET sector. Some of this data is available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Labour Force Survey and Census and the Department of Employments' Internet Vacancy Index. However, these sources do not capture the skills that employers are requesting, or the skills employers need. Job vacancy data has the potential to fill this gap. By providing insights into the skills being

requested across the workforce, in key industries and occupations for the VET sector, and relating this back to the training that is being provided.

For the full analysis including comparison by industry see [Internet job postings: employability skills - infographic](#). ■

### Data source:

Burning Glass Technologies 2018, Labour Insight Real-time Labour Market Information Tool, Burning Glass Technologies, Boston, viewed April 2018, <<https://www.burning-glass.com>>

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Allen, R, Teodoro, N & Manley, C 2017, *Future skills and training: a practical resource to help identify future skills and training*, Australian Industry Skills Committee, [Place of publication not identified]

National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) 2017, *Australian vocational education and training statistics: VET student outcomes 2017*, NCVER, Adelaide

## The 29th Annual AAIR Forum is set to be held at Rydges Melbourne from 19–21 November 2018.

The theme for this year's forum is **Reflecting on the Past, Experiencing the Present, Shaping the Future**.

The Forum program ([airforum.com.au/program](http://airforum.com.au/program)) is guaranteed to challenge and excite as specialists share their rich experience, discuss key topics and strategize in response to an ever-changing higher education sector.

Evidence based strategic planning and continuous quality improvement supported by a solid survey and evaluations framework are on the agenda.

All of this is underpinned by business intelligence, analytics, visualisation and modelling.



Pre-Forum workshops and Special Interest Groups will run on the day prior to the main Forum, with sessions including a full day survey manager's workshop. There will be plenty of networking opportunities including the welcome reception at Bobby McGees and the Forum dinner which is being held at the iconic Melbourne Zoo!

### To register for this event:

Please visit [airforum.com.au/registration](http://airforum.com.au/registration).

Queries can be directed to Emily Marriott, Forum Manager at [emily@laevents.com.au](mailto:emily@laevents.com.au) or on +61 3 6234 7844.



## Stories making the news

### WA moves to stop flow of international students to other states

The Western Australian government has recently implemented a plan to retain highly skilled graduates in the state. In part this was to redress the negative effects of its recent policy regarding international students and their access to the regional sponsored skilled migration plan. One of the consequences of this policy was to decrease the number of international students coming to study at WA universities. [www.iscah.com/statement-wa-government-state-sponsorship-wa-students/](http://www.iscah.com/statement-wa-government-state-sponsorship-wa-students/)

**The Australian** – [www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/wa-back-in-the-market-for-international-students/news-story/6d779deabbc7500523fce1052932cb9](http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/wa-back-in-the-market-for-international-students/news-story/6d779deabbc7500523fce1052932cb9)

The Grattan Institute's April 2018, 'Costs and Benefits of Dropping Out of University' report in, it noted that every year 50,000 students in Australia drop out of university even though universities have for a long time tried to address this issue by using a range of responses. The report raises the issue about whether it is up to universities to implement strategies to assist students who 'were never very serious about university'. It also speculates whether it is the problems rather than the symptoms that should be addressed.

**Source: Asia & the Pacific Policy Society**

[www.policyforum.net/universities-dont-have-a-drop-out-problem/](http://www.policyforum.net/universities-dont-have-a-drop-out-problem/)

### TAFE SA and TasUni Australian Maritime College sign an MOU on shipbuilding

TAFE SA and the University of Tasmania's Australian Maritime College (AMC) have established a Memorandum of Understanding to work collaboratively on developing skilled workers especially in maritime engineering, design, project management, logistics and supply chain management, for major Australian naval shipbuilding projects, and for associated industries.

**Source: Defence Connect**

[www.defenceconnect.com.au/key-enablers/2597-tafe-sa-partners-with-tasuni-australian-maritime-college-on-shipbuilding](http://www.defenceconnect.com.au/key-enablers/2597-tafe-sa-partners-with-tasuni-australian-maritime-college-on-shipbuilding)

### STEM is critical to future economic growth

In a speech to the Australian Teacher's Federation the former federal minister for education, Simon Birmingham emphasised the critical role for the economy of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) education. He referred to the work of past scientists, namely Sir Francis Bacon and Alvin Toffler. He also cited the Thai cave rescue as an example of the combination of crucial and successful application of skills in science, technology and engineering.

**Source: Australian financial review**

[www.afr.com/news/policy/education/beware-the-cult-of-tech-education-20180721-h12zh7](http://www.afr.com/news/policy/education/beware-the-cult-of-tech-education-20180721-h12zh7) or request from Kelly

### Where to find Australia's jobs of the future, and it's not in tech

Australia's workforce is set to transform within six years with teachers, nurses and farmers in line for a future jobs boom. But positions in retail, mining and the public sector will be on the way out by the mid 2020s, according to a study from the **National Centre for Vocational Education Research**. As millions of baby boomers retire to make way for a new generation of workers, it details where the jobs of the future lie.

**Source: The West Australian**

[thewest.com.au/business/economy/where-to-find-australias-jobs-of-the-future-and-its-not-in-tech-ng-b88909664z](http://thewest.com.au/business/economy/where-to-find-australias-jobs-of-the-future-and-its-not-in-tech-ng-b88909664z)

### Teenagers drifting away from university options, especially those at risk

A 2015 survey conducted by the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), which manages the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in Australia, found that where almost 63% of 15 year-olds in 2003 were aiming for university studies and 8% for a TAFE diploma, this had dropped to 54% and 3% respectively in 2015. ACER concludes that both these findings should not be of concern, as students may be undertaking different pathways, including apprenticeships and other training.

**Source: The Conversation**

[theconversation.com/fewer-teenagers-plan-on-further-study-with-disadvantaged-teens-most-at-risk-99648](http://theconversation.com/fewer-teenagers-plan-on-further-study-with-disadvantaged-teens-most-at-risk-99648)

### It is time to regulate the gig economy

In their review of the future of work, the Select Committee on the Future of Work and Workers, recommended a revamping of regulations of the gig economy. The committee was of the view that these gig workers were to be regarded as employees and that practices which had exploited them to date needed to be abolished.

**Source: www.innovationaus.**

[www.innovationaus.com/2018/09/Senate-on-the-future-of-work](http://www.innovationaus.com/2018/09/Senate-on-the-future-of-work)

### Waiving some of the student debt from VET-Fee-Help

Around \$1 billion of debt that students have accrued from their VET-Fee-Help loans may be waived.

**Source: The Australian**

[www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/1bn-debt-waiver-for-rippedoff-vet-students/news-story/e690d4e32f4f3fd62c944322cbb2493e](http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/1bn-debt-waiver-for-rippedoff-vet-students/news-story/e690d4e32f4f3fd62c944322cbb2493e) and attached

### VET in Schools: numbers relatively stable

NCVER has just released VET in schools (VETiS) data for 2017, along with a data slicer to help users interrogate the data and delve deeper. Another NCVER report, published last year, looks at post-school employment and training.

**Source: VDC**

[vdc.edu.au/vdc-news/vet-in-schools-numbers-holding-steadyish/](http://vdc.edu.au/vdc-news/vet-in-schools-numbers-holding-steadyish/)

### Total VET Effort Steady

The reporting season for 2017 VET data is in full swing. Data on total VET activity shows that estimated number of students participating in VET has remained steady at 4.2 million. This contrasts with government-funded activity, which declined by nearly 6% from 2016 to 1.2 million in 2017.

**Source: VDC** – [vdc.edu.au/vdc-news/total-vet-effort-steady/](http://vdc.edu.au/vdc-news/total-vet-effort-steady/) ■

## New VET Research Perspectives

*Issues, practices, insights*

**Friday 26 October 2018**

**Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT),  
Reid Campus, Constitution Avenue, Canberra, ACT**

**9.00 am–4.30pm**



### About the forum

This day-long forum continues the AVETRA tradition of research presentation, critique and engagement within the vocational education and training (VET) sector. It is designed for VET researchers to present their research, to learn from each other and to engage in dialogue with other stakeholders in the nation's VET system. It will be of interest to researchers, practitioners and policy makers.

### Content of the day

- Opening remarks: Suzi Hewlett, Group Manager, Industry Skills and Quality, Department of Education and Training, Australian Government; Paula McKenry, Executive Director, Education and Training Services, CIT.
- Twelve peer-reviewed presentations and symposia, in two parallel streams, on current and recent research in Australia and internationally. Presented by experienced and emerging researchers from universities, TAFE, government and the NCVET. Topics include: VET policy issues – funding, equity, training provider types; apprenticeships – policy, practice; VET teachers and teaching; Training Packages; research overview from AVETRA's journal; and applied research.
- A chance to discuss the implications for policy and practice; and to pose questions to a panel of experts.

### MORE INFORMATION

See AVETRA website for updates and registration

[www.avetra.org.au/pages/-avetra-research-forum-26th-october-2018-.html](http://www.avetra.org.au/pages/-avetra-research-forum-26th-october-2018-.html)

#### Cost:

- \$120** Presenters or AVETRA 'taster-members'
- \$220** Non-presenters
- \$160** AVETRA members who are not presenters.

#### Forum organising committee:

Erica Smith, Damien Pearce, Robin Shreeve and Michele Simons.

Any queries about the forum may be directed to:

[avetra2018resforum@gmail.com](mailto:avetra2018resforum@gmail.com)

# ACDEVEG

Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group

## Building confidence in VET Practice: 4th Annual Conference on VET Teaching and VET Teacher Education

6-7 December 2018

CQ University's Melbourne Campus, 120 Spencer St, Melbourne  
(opposite Southern Cross station)



Major Sponsor

- **Practitioner-led workshops: Thursday, 6 December 2018, 1.30–5.00pm**
- **Research-based conference: Friday, 7 December, 2018, 9.00–4.00**

### Keynote Speakers

**Christine Robertson,**  
Pro Vice-Chancellor VET, CDU

Indigenous student pathways: The role of the VET educator in facilitating learner and community engagement, retention and student outcomes

**Lou Mycroft, Further Education researcher & teacher-educator from England**

'The Dancing Princesses': A movement for professional development of further education practitioners in the UK

### Also featuring:

Eight research-based parallel papers; a panel of experts in VET teaching and VET teacher-education; and presentation of ACDEVEG awards including the new VET teacher-educator awards in conjunction with PwC's Skills for Australia

### Cost:

**\$120** Conference

**\$60** Workshops

**\$150** Both days

The conference website including registration is at: [www.federation.edu.au/acdeveg2018](http://www.federation.edu.au/acdeveg2018) and will be updated regularly.

For any queries and to be placed on the mailing list, please email: [acdeveg2018@federation.edu.au](mailto:acdeveg2018@federation.edu.au)

### More information

For more information about ACDEVEG including previous conferences please visit the ACDEVEG webpage at: [www.acde.edu.au/networks-and-partnerships/acde-vocational-group/](http://www.acde.edu.au/networks-and-partnerships/acde-vocational-group/)

### Other conference sponsors:

