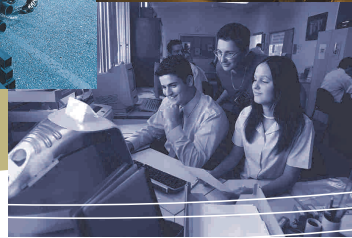


South Australian Government Submission

House of Representatives
Standing Committee
on
Education and Training
Inquiry into

Vocational Education in Schools



Prepared by the
Department of Education and Children's Services
on behalf of the
South Australian Government

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Coordinated Funding Model

The South Australian Government believes that the transition of our young people into their adult lives needs a holistic approach that addresses the development of their personal, family and working lives in the context of their community. In order to achieve this we aim to provide a seamless and coordinated approach to youth education, training and employment that involves the schools, their communities, all levels of government agencies as well as business, industry and unions. Our coordinated approach to service delivery to young people is a vital aspect of our strategy to connect them with their community and their future contribution to the social and economic development of our state.

Under our leadership, South Australian schools will continue to strengthen their ability to contribute to the social capital and economic development of the state using a more inclusive approach to the delivery of vocational education by:-

- Increasing the focus on the retention of young people to 12 years of schooling.
- Focusing on social inclusion, that is, ensuring that the benefits of vocational education extend to all young people including the value of working within their community.
- Ensuring that government agencies and local community services providers that deal with youth issues, as well as business and industry groups, participate in and influence the implementation of vocational education in schools.
- Improving the services that help young people to make the transition from school into their adult life, and particularly their involvement in education, training and employment.
- Developing a more strategic approach to the delivery of VET options by linking to the State Training Profile with relevant regional data.
- Researching the impact of vocational education on school retention rates to reflect on the efficacy of vocational learning in schools.
- Addressing the needs of those young people who are leaving school early without clear plans for post school options.

The South Australian Government's efforts to provide a coordinated and seamless approach to ensuring outcomes for young people are continually hampered by the uncoordinated dissemination of Commonwealth funding. For example there is no "map" which highlights the access school/TAFE sites and other organizations have to Commonwealth funding. It is often realized after the fact that the state has received a significant amount of funding. This adds unnecessary complexity to the State's efforts to address its own priorities and goals even though funding appears to be linked to education and employment outcomes. As a result of organizations being able to access funds from many different buckets, the effort required to account for the grants creates unnecessary workload. As well, accountability requirements are not consistent.

The South Australian Government requires a more coordinated strategy that involves the accumulation of all of the related funds to the State, so that the Commonwealth funding can be more readily aligned to State priorities. This will avoid duplication and competition of effort particularly in relation to the accountability for the funds.

Measuring the participation of youth in education and training

South Australian senior secondary students have the opportunity to participate in their senior secondary certificate on a part-time basis, therefore the data collected at the national level

distorts the figures for South Australia as there are higher number of “part-time” students. The Government recognizes the work being undertaken by the MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce but agreement is required on the recognition of both full-time and part-time students.

Resourcing of VET in Schools

South Australian secondary school students have responded to the opportunity to study VET courses, resulting in a 430% increase from 1997. In that time, the Commonwealth provision for this development fell slightly in real and absolute terms. The South Australian Government acknowledges work being undertaken at the ANTA MINCO and MCEETYA in regards to the future of VET in Schools funding and the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) analysis in relation to the costs of delivery of VET in Schools programs.

Our own costing analysis is beginning to highlight the actual resource requirements for the addition of VET in the secondary school program. Evidence is mounting that VET delivered in secondary schools is more expensive than the current general education provision. In light of the national agenda for supporting young people’s transitions, VET in Schools is a key component of the pathways available for students. It is therefore critical that continued financial support be provided to the states and territories to ensure that young people achieve a successful transition into their adult life. The South Australian Government through its schools and VET sector has absorbed most of this resource burden as demand and delivery has increased. For instance, funding is provided to Institutes of TAFE to provide the quality assurance service to school sites. Schools have reorganized provision, trained teachers and invested in equipment. At the same time, ANTA funding has translated from \$6.57 per student hour in 1997 to \$0.70 per student hour in 2001.

VET is required to meet national standards and accountability measures and needs on-going development and refinement. Therefore continued funding to the states and territories is required beyond 2004. If the funding is not to be sustained there is a risk at the local level that partnerships between the two sectors would be disadvantaged leaving students unable to access VET training in their senior secondary years of schooling.

Initial Teacher Training (Secondary)

Senior secondary school teachers involved in the delivery of VET are required to meet the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) Standards. Initial teacher education needs to involve the appropriate national qualifications and possibly industry placement so that VET delivered to secondary school students is sustainable. In South Australia, work is being conducted to incorporate appropriate VET qualifications including the broader vocational learning now required by the South Australian Curriculum Standards Accountability (SACSA) Framework.

The South Australian Government recommends that a national response to initial teacher education is required to ensure that the national standards required by the AQTF are met.

Efficacy of VET in Schools programs

There is anecdotal evidence of industry, businesses and employers not “happy” with the delivery of VET in Schools programs. However, South Australian businesses and employers commit to the enhancement of student’s learning by supporting students in structured work place learning. Industry are involved in the implementation of school related programs, in the development of learning materials and the implementation and reviews of Training Packages. It is therefore recommended that further work being undertaken to research the efficacy of VET programs undertaken by senior secondary students which identifies both qualitative and

quantitative outcomes. The research will need to address conflicting industry perceptions and clarify what industry requires for the employment of staff, the effectiveness of VET programs within a school environment and how the VET in Schools program has assisted students in making an “informed” decision about their future. The Government recognises that work has been undertaken but further work is required as there is confusion within the market place with some industry and union groups.

NOTE: South Australia understands that the current arrangements for employer subsidies as they relate to employer incentives, have changed. It is noted however, that in the past employer incentives have worked against some students undertaking higher level qualifications under a Contract of Training having completed lower level qualifications while at school.

SECTION 1

1. ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In South Australia, the following issues impact significantly on operations and effective delivery of vocational education:-

1.1 EFFECTIVENESS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN PREPARING STUDENTS FOR POST-SCHOOL OPTIONS

1.1.1 Coordinated funding model

It is acknowledged that there is a broad range of Commonwealth funds available to states and territories for the government sector enabling them to connect with their state priorities in respect to education, training, employment and regional development. The funding allocations provide opportunities for initiatives that seek to ensure a skilled and responsive workforce. The initiatives also aim to assist in the renewal of the social and economic capacity of all members of the community.

A more connected approach to the allocation of funds that link to the strategic directions at both the Commonwealth and local level would ensure a cohesive and coordinated approach across all the sectors.

Currently, funding allocations appear to be “uncoordinated” and generally do not support a “joined-up-approach” to the services being offered. There is also significant time spent by all sectors applying for, reporting on and evaluating the initiatives. A model of seamless funding would offer a more effective and efficient service to strategic priorities.

Recommendation 1

That a national model be developed and implemented for the allocation of funding to government sectors which ensures a coordinated and seamless approach to the achievement of Commonwealth and local strategic priorities related to youth education, training and employment, and economic and regional development.

1.1.2 Measuring the participation of youth in education and training

Currently there is lack of agreement on the “definition and impact” of full-time and part-time enrolments involved in education and training. In South Australia senior secondary education enables students to participate in the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) on a part-time basis but at the national level, South Australia has significantly higher numbers of part-time Year 12 enrolments than other states. To ensure national consistency, performance indicators need to include those students participating in study and or training (its vocational equivalent).

The calculation of apparent retention and participation rates needs to recognise the seamless transition that is encouraged at the national level between schools, training and part-time employment. Recognition needs to be given to those students who are undertaking senior secondary schooling on a part-time basis. This would enable a more accurate

indicator of the actual participation of students enrolled in senior secondary education or its vocational equivalent (training) across all states and territories.

The South Australian government recognises and acknowledges the work already being undertaken by the MCEETYA Performance Measurement & Reporting Taskforce in the development of more relevant performance measures but consideration is required on the flexible approaches taken to senior secondary education and training by some states and territories.

Recommendation 2

That performance measures be developed, which accurately reflects the flexible participation of young people in senior secondary schools and or training.

1.2 TERM OF REFERENCE 1

1.2.1 Resourcing

Since 1997, the Commonwealth has provided funds (\$20m per annum nationally, \$1.7m to South Australia) to support the growth of VET in Schools. In South Australia, the uptake of VET by school students has been considerable representing a 430% increase from 1997 to 2001. The Commonwealth funding has remained constant. In 1997, funds to South Australian senior secondary school students translated to \$6.57 per student hour and in 2001 they represented \$0.70 cents per student hour.

VET courses are more expensive to operate than non-VET SACE courses. Initial costing analysis conducted by the South Australian Government has identified that schools are funded for about \$8.50 per hour for a SACE unit for an average class size of 22. VET courses however, need to be delivered in class sizes of 12 – 20 and can cost from approximately \$8.60 to \$15.60 per hour.

It is noted that a request to the Commonwealth for on-going and increased funding to support VET in Schools from New South Wales and agreed to by all States and Territories, has not been supported.

Recommendation 3

That the level of Commonwealth funding to support VET in Schools be reviewed and increased in light of the growth and additional costs incurred in the delivery of VET to senior secondary students.

1.2.2 Initial Teacher Training (Secondary)

Senior secondary school teachers involved in the delivery of VET are required to meet the Australian Qualifications Training Framework Standards. To ensure national consistency in the training of secondary teachers, it is recommended consideration be given to a unified approach enabling universities to include the AQTF Standards (Certificate IV in workplace assessor training), industry as well as school placements and vocational learning in the initial teaching degree.

Recommendation 4

That a national response be prepared to support Universities in meeting nationally legislated standards (AQTF) in the initial Teacher Training Degree.

1.3 TERM OF REFERENCE 2**1.3.1 Research into the efficacy of vocational educational and training programs undertaken by senior secondary students**

In the last 5 years there has been:-

- A rapid expansion in the number of senior secondary students undertaking VET courses
- A concerted effort by schools to apply resources and make structural changes to accommodate VET in senior secondary study
- Increased involvement of employers and industry in the development and implementation of VET in Schools programs and support offered to structured work place learning. That is, young people have had improved opportunities to learn in real work settings while they are students, particularly by increasing the levels of employer involvement.

Notwithstanding the research already undertaken, there is still uncertainty in the workplace about the desired outcomes of VET courses, the lack of quantitative data on the level of industry acceptance and whether the programs are adequately preparing young people for employment and further training.

The State also acknowledges the work undertaken at the national level to improve the barriers to further training leading to higher qualifications under contracts of training. As of 1 July, 2003, it may no longer be a barrier for students furthering their studies at a higher level of qualification under a contract of Training.

Further research is required on the on the effectiveness of VET activity and how it has assisted in shaping students decisions for the future.

Recommendation 5

That a comprehensive national evaluation be conducted of VET in Schools programs which measures the efficacy of VET programs undertaken by senior secondary students. Research is required that clarifies both qualitative and quantitative outcomes.

That is:-

- Industry, employer and union perceptions
- effectiveness of program delivery within a school environment
- VET students employment and training options
- effectiveness of those options
- educational outcomes and personal growth of students involved in VET programs
- whether the experience of the VET in Schools program assisted students in making an informed decision about their future.

SECTION 2

2. OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

In March 2000 the Ministerial Committee for Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA), agreed that it was timely to re-conceptualise Vocational Education in Schools so that, in addition to VET in Schools programs, it also encompassed a broader range of initiatives and elements. Accordingly, MCEETYA has defined Vocational Education as

“assisting all young people to secure their own futures by enhancing their transition to a broad range of post-school options and pathways. It engages students in work related learning built on strategic partnerships between school, business, industry and the wider community.”

In 2001, MCEETYA endorsed the **New Framework for Vocational Educational in Schools** to be fully implemented by the end of the 2004 school year. The six key elements of the framework are:-

- Vocational education and training
- Enterprise and vocational learning
- Student support services
- Community and business partnerships
- Effective institutional and funding arrangements
- Monitoring and evaluation.

2.1 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In response to the national directions, changes to school curriculum were implemented across South Australia and schools were introduced to the concept of “vocational education”, “vocational learning” and “enterprise education”. Vocational Education and Training had been implemented into schools during the mid 1990s. In South Australia, Vocational Education is recognised as being a whole of school approach to student learning and is a vital and mainstream aspect of the South Australian school curriculum. It responds to one of the purposes of school, that is, to prepare each student for their working life.

In South Australia, the term vocational education consists of:-

- Vocational Learning embedded in the K-12 curriculum
- Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the senior secondary curriculum.
- Community involvement and participation

2.1.1 VOCATIONAL LEARNING IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Vocational Learning assists each student (K – 12) to understand the world of work by developing the knowledge, skills, competencies and attributes relevant to a wide range of work environments.

Strategies include:-

The South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability (SACSA) have integrated enterprise and vocational learning skills and key competencies into the framework.

The South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) is the two year senior secondary certificate and encourages vocational learning by offering all students, through the curriculum, opportunities to critically reflect on the nature of work in society. It assists students in understanding the role that education and training plays in fostering informed citizenship and by emphasising the knowledge, skills and dispositions that are the basis of life-long learning. The SACE records achievements in work-related studies, such as career education, work experience and work placing learning. *(see attachment 4)*

Career and transition services assist students to explore their interests and abilities, develop career goals and individual learning plans through the school curriculum. Each student compiles evidence of their own skills, competencies and achievements gained from their school experience as well as work and community based activities, into a transition portfolio. *(See attachment 1)*

Work and community based learning involves structured programs designed to promote understandings about the expectations and responsibilities of the workplace. Students also have the opportunity to be involved in activities where they can develop their initiative in enterprising activities. *(See Attachments 14 – 20)*

Targeted Intervention programs for students at risk aims to address the needs of young people who are at risk, especially Aboriginal students, those in low socio-economic areas, and students with disabilities.

2.1.2 VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) for SENIOR SECONDARY STUDENTS

Vocational Education and Training (VET) is nationally accredited industry specific training which offers competencies endorsed within the National Training Framework (NTF). VET is offered to senior secondary school students and is accredited by the Registered Training Organisation. In this context VET is “a valued contributor” to the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).

2.1.3 CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

The Australian Student Traineeship Foundation (ASTF) established in 1994 as a result of the Commonwealth Government’s initiative on education and training, implemented a regional structure model that supported student participation in VET in Schools and structured workplace learning. This model has continued to expand with significant state government funding.

SECTION 3

3. EFFECTIVENESS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN PREPARING STUDENTS FOR POST-SCHOOL OPTIONS

3.1 Effectiveness Issues

3.1.1 Funding

The effectiveness of VE programs in general has been complicated because the Government is unable to accumulate the full range of funding sources available to the state. There is a plethora of funding opportunities available through the Commonwealth into the local context but the State government has no way of identifying what has gone to local sites for the implementation of initiatives and how they link to existing state funding sources and the achievement of state priorities.

It is therefore recommended that a more coordinated and seamless approach be applied to the dissemination of funds to the state. This would ensure that efficiencies and effectiveness of the delivery of a range of outcomes for students, employers and the economic and social growth of the community would be improved.

The school and VET sectors, community providers, local government, youth and employment sectors and regional communities are able to access through a range of Commonwealth sources funding for a range of youth related education and training initiatives. For example:-

- Department of Employment Science & Technology (DEST)
- ANTA, (VET sector including School based new apprenticeships, Skills Centres)
- ECEF(Career & Transition Services, Pathways Outreach Services)
- Area Consultative Committees
- Department of Transport and Regional Services "Sustainable Regions"
- Community service groups such as Mission SA,
- Department of Health "Strengthening Families"
- Job Network Providers
- Indigenous Education Strategic Initiatives Program (IESIP)

3.1.2 Data Collection

Students participating in a range of Vocational Education activities including VET in their senior years of schooling, have been motivated by their learning experience, realised the relevance of the learning and have chosen to remain at school to complete their course of study. Others have chosen to study part-time, undertaking training with the local Institute of TAFE. This training has taken the form of either VET in Schools programs or School based new apprenticeships (SBNAs). The students are involved in education and or training (vocational equivalent). The "effectiveness" of VET programs is not being accurately measured because of the lack of agreement at the national level on the definition

and impact of full time and part time enrolments in education and training. Students are “engaged” in learning in either the school or VET sector therefore clarification is urgently needed on the “definition” of retention and participation.

As the SACE provides flexibility and enables students to study part-time, one in every four students enrolled in Year 12 have chosen to study in “part-time” mode. National retention rates are reported for full time students only. Consequently the statistics indicate that South Australia has a low level of participation in Year 12 and that we have a high number of students at risk, whereas this may not be the case as students could be involved in schooling, training (VET sector) and part-time employment.

There is a need for national agreement on the definition and impact of full-time and part-time enrolments in both education and training. With a more consistent approach to the “counting” of students, it would provide a more reliable and accurate indicator of the “actual” participation of students enrolled in their senior secondary certificate or its vocational equivalent. Work is currently being undertaken by the MCEETYA Performance Measurement and Reporting Taskforce but agreement is required on the recognition of both full-time and part-time students.

3.1.3 Employer perception

The government acknowledges that there are a range of stakeholders with an interest in the effectiveness of VET programs, including employers and training providers. A key measure of the effectiveness of VET is employer acceptance and satisfaction with the skills and work readiness of students who participate in VET in Schools programs, in terms of generic employability and entry level skills. As outlined in Term of Reference Two there is minimal quantitative data to assess the “effectiveness of VET” from an employer perspective. Further research is required to clarify the qualitative and quantitative outcomes of VET in Schools programs.

3.2 Achievements

3.2.1 School and cultural changes

In 2000, South Australia implemented the Enterprise and Vocational Education (EVE) Strategy to promote enterprise and vocational education across all government schools. The 3 year strategy included changes to curriculum, professional development for teachers in enhancing teaching methodology, the establishment of community partnerships and schools working in collaboration (cluster model delivery), initiatives for students most at risk within the schooling sector and improved outcomes for all young people. Examples of the effectiveness of these community and industry partnerships can be seen in Attachments 16, 17, 18 and 19)

An independent review of the Strategy was conducted in late 2001 which identified a range of outcomes, one of these being that 92% of stakeholders agreed there had been an increase of post school options for young people.

School Principals are reporting that Vocational Education has assisted schools with retention by ensuring that young people are focussed, have clear career and life goals and are on course to achieve these goals. Data on the efficacy of Vocational Education however is difficult, as the “concept” of Vocational Education is relatively new with MCEETYA only endorsing a “broader range of initiatives for school students” in 2000.

VET statistics however have been collected for several years and there is a marked increase in both activity and outcomes. (see *attachment 2*)

3.2.2 Student learning and experiences

Senior students studying vocational education in the SACE are able to gain an understanding of the nature of and opportunities in their community including what the world of work is like beyond the school ground. They have learned the relevance of their educational program by having opportunities to link their school based work to the community with work based learning projects and in some cases structured work place learning experience.

Comment: *“For the construction industry in South Australia vocational education in schools is the most significant initiative to positively impact on our recruitment practices since technical high schools. As a result of the VET in Schools program for construction – ‘Doorways 2 Construction’, we are seeing a better quality of applicant for apprentice positions. Students are entering their trade with a comprehensive understanding of what is expected of them, have basic industry knowledge and skills and thus are better equipped to complete their first year. Already, early graduates of the program are winning awards and are proving themselves to be the industry leaders of the future.”*

Kate Smyth, Manager, Entry Level Training, Construction Industry Training Board.

3.2.3 Economic and Social Growth

Schools have been able to make links with local business and service providers which provides opportunities for students. Refer to Attachment 20 which describes the partnerships with the local community in a large rural town in South Australia (Port Lincoln Special School) to assist young people with the move towards an improved integrated provision of education, training and employment youth services.

Teachers have gained experience with members of their community, employers and industry and have a more informed understanding of what the work environment requires. Teachers have worked in the industry (industry placement) to gain knowledge of the industry’s specific skills required when teaching VET programs.

Vocational Education in South Australia has involved a *joined up community* approach where the community has an opportunity to share responsibilities and achievements of young people involved in education and training. This *community approach* encourages “ownership” by all for the economic development and the building of social capital for the whole community.

Partnerships have been established between all sectors of the community to advance the opportunities for young people at school. For

example Industry Training Advisory Boards (ITABs) work collaboratively with schools, education and training to ensure pathways programs are industry relevant. Examples have been the Seafood Industry Pathways Program, the Engineering Pathways Program, Doorways 2 Construction, Nursing Pathways Program and Careers into Manufacturing.

SECTION 4

4. TERM OF REFERENCE 1

The range, structure, resourcing and delivery of vocational education programs in schools, including teacher training and the impact of vocational education on other programs.

The information described below describes the models of delivery in relation to vocational education across schools, resourcing, professional development for teaching staff and delivery of programs to senior secondary students

South Australia established in the mid 1990's a "partnership" model of delivery where students involved in the learning of vocational education and training (VET) did so in partnership with an Institute of TAFE. Schools in South Australia have not chosen to be RTOs in their own right. In fact, there are only 4 government school sites registered as training organisations.

The partnership model for South Australia appears to be an effective and efficient use of public funds in the delivery of VET to senior secondary school students.

4.1 Vocational Education and Training (VET)

VET is offered to senior secondary students in 19 industry areas (see *attachment 3*) and is nationally accredited. VET in Schools means education and training that:

- is undertaken by school students as part of their program of senior school studies and contributes to the achievement of the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)
- is delivered and assessed in accordance with the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF);
- is aimed at achieving competencies to industry standard, as specified in endorsed Training Packages or nationally accredited (VET) curriculum;
- leads to qualifications within the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

VET is offered to students enrolled in the SACE and can be delivered either in school or off site. Schools provide VET options for their students in two main ways:-

- (a) Schools arrange for RTOs to deliver VET to their students
- (b) Schools deliver VET in partnership with RTOs

The South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) is administered by the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA). SSABSA (Board of Studies) recognises all nationally accredited VET for the purposes of contributing to the SACE. The SACE allows for flexibility for both the school and student to undertake a range of subjects including VET. It also offers the flexibility to students to undertake the study on a part-time basis. (see *attachment 4*).

4.2 Range of VET undertaken by South Australian school students.

School students undertake VET competencies in all 19 industry areas as defined by the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA).

The vast majority of competencies undertaken by students in government schools fall within the Certificate I and II range of AQF qualifications (see *Attachment 5*).

Attachment 2 provides data that illustrate the extent of participation in VET by school students in 2001. The data also shows the growth that has occurred since 1997.

It is estimated that students successfully completed 85-90% of the VET competencies undertaken in 2001.

4.3 Structure of VET undertaken by South Australian school students.

From a curriculum perspective, VET competencies can be packaged in two ways. They can be integrated within school subjects (embedded), delivered and assessed independently of school subjects (stand-alone), or consist of school subjects in their own right (SSABSA-VET subjects). In either case, the competencies are assessed in accordance with industry requirements as specified in the Training Packages from which the competencies are drawn. (see *attachment 6*)

Structured workplace learning is not mandated in all Training Packages except where the Training Package specifies that a student must develop or demonstrate competence in the workplace.

In general, competencies at the Certificate I and II levels do not require students to spend time in the workplace. In South Australia, the Department of Education and Children's Services has advised its sites that VET delivery is enhanced by student learning in the workplace.

Structured workplacement offers another level of "credibility" to the VET in Schools program because students are spending time involved in the work environment and in most cases being assessed "on-the-job". (see *attachment 7*)

4.4 Resourcing of VET undertaken by South Australian school students.

VET undertaken by school students is funded from a number of sources. These are:-

4.4.1 Commonwealth funds

4.4.1.1 ANTA funds provide \$1.73 million per annum to support the expansion of VET in government and non-government schools. The funds are allocated to the three school sectors on a population share basis, through the State Training Authority.

4.4.1.2 ECEF funds provide approximately \$900 000 per annum to approximately 20 regions across the State, to assist schools in linking with businesses and other community groups with a view to facilitating students' work placements.

4.4.1.3 Employer subsidies to employers of apprentices and trainees, including school students who are employed under contracts of training.

4.4.2 State funds

4.4.2.1 Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) support the planning and coordination of VET in government schools. These funds also support other aspects of the New Framework for Vocational Education in Schools. Non-government schools have been able to access the services provided by this funding.

4.4.2.2 School funds generally support the salaries of school staff who either provide the training, or coordinate training provided by external bodies, including employers. In some cases, schools identify funds to purchase training from external providers such as Institutes of TAFE and other registered training organisations.

The South Australian government is currently undertaking a costing analysis and initial calculations show that schools can sustain some activity associated with the delivery of VET using their existing per capita grant (global budget). However, secondary schools need further resources to sustain the higher cost of VET programs associated with:-

- Smaller class sizes
- Cost of professional development for teachers
- Coordination and management
- Costs associated with the maintaining and updating of facilities, equipment and machinery

The South Australian government awaits the findings of the Ernst & Young Costings Report which has been commissioned by the Department of Employment, Science and Technology (DEST) in respect to cost efficiencies and cost effective VET delivery in Schools.

4.4.2.3 SSABSA administers the SACE, and as such it has responsibilities for the provision of subjects within the SACE and the reporting of achievement. The implementation of the *Recognition of VET Outcomes Towards the SACE policy* is being funded through state funds.

4.4.3 VET FUNDS:

4.4.3.1 User Choice funds are provided through the State Training Authority, for the off-job training of apprentices and trainees where the training is delivered by a registered training organisation. Nationally, no distinction is made between apprentices and trainees who are either secondary school students or in employment and employed through a contract of training.

Schools can only claim User Choice funds if they are registered as a training organisation.

4.4.3.2 Public Provider (TAFE) funds enable some students to enrol in publicly funded classes offered by Institutes of TAFE. These students are treated as normal TAFE students for funding purposes, and pay the normal TAFE fee. The number of students in this category is relatively small.

The majority of VET undertaken by schools students in South Australia is delivered by schools under the auspices of Institutes of TAFE (*see Delivery section below*). A review is currently being conducted on the Auspicing Arrangements in South Australia.

4.5 Delivery of VET undertaken by South Australian school students.

South Australian schools have four options for providing VET to their students. They may:

- apply to be registered as training organisations in their own right. Under this option a school's ability to meet the VET quality standards is assessed on the same basis as any other RTO that applies for registration in South Australia; and/or
- purchase training from registered training organisations on a fee for service basis; and/or
- enrol students in VET programs offered by RTOs; and/or
- deliver VET under the auspices of registered training organisations (RTOs)

Four government schools have been registered in their own right. A Feasibility Study is currently being undertaken of government schools seeking RTO status. The study will identify issues and complexities for training on school and TAFE sites and the efficiencies of such a model.

4.6 Teacher training for VET delivery

Teacher Training (professional development) has been offered through National funding in the past (National Professional Development Program) but this cost has now shifted to the state.

There are additional costs associated with school teachers delivering VET. One of these is the school and teaching staff being AQTF compliant. That is school teachers may require industry relevant training and or additional training to meet the requirements of Certificate IV in Workplace Assessor Training. this training is identified in partnership with the RTO and the school.

It is recognised that professional development motivates staff and renews energy but there is a cost to schools in ensuring quality processes are adhered to. In addition, ongoing professional development of teachers needs to ensure that teachers can keep up to date with changes in industry requirements and new technology as relevant.

Teachers also need to be aware of the more general changes in the labour market. Teachers will need to consider young peoples experience of the labour market and the skills required to navigate these changes to realise their goals, if they are to prepare young people for working life. For example, managing a portfolio of work or several part-time roles requires additional skills compared to managing one full time role, which is increasingly a reality for young people entering the workforce.

The following indicates the type of training and support that Institutes of TAFE provide to school teachers to ensure that standards of student achievement in

VET programs undertaken in schools match outcomes from the same programs undertaken at the Institutes of TAFE.

- Secondary teachers are included in Maintenance of Course Standards days with TAFE staff in the Vocational Preparation area (AQF levels I & II)
- Seminars for teachers are held in specific program areas, in particular when there is a change to a training package (e.g Business Services),
- Support materials such as assessment tasks are prepared and supplied to teachers (e.g. Information Technology)
- All new partnership agreements with schools are preceded by a 'pre-VISA' process to ensure that teachers are appropriately qualified to deliver to required standards (e.g. Multi Media)
- Support to school staff in the attainment of the appropriate qualifications (AQTF Standards).

Since 1997, approximately 2500 teachers across South Australia have been involved in professional development activities (Plan, Conduct and Review Assessment which is part of the Certificate IV in Workplace Assessor Training) to ensure that National standards are met and that industry relevant training occurs.

A Self Assessment Guide (*see attachment 8*) has been developed by South Australian Institutes of TAFE to assist schools in meeting the AQTF requirements. These new Standards will assist teachers in gaining the relevant industry skills and units of competence required to deliver VET and will in due course, continue to improve the standards of VET delivery and the "industry perception".

4.7 Impact of VET programs on other programs

4.7.1 *Pedagogical impact*

The introduction of VET in the senior secondary certificate has made an enormous impact on how the senior secondary certificate is constructed and conceived, and how teachers approach their work.

In South Australian schools, VET was introduced in the early 1990s in three industry areas with further systematic integration of VET across the SACE curriculum from 1997. This policy of recognition of VET outcomes towards the SACE has had a positive impact on programs which students undertake to complete their SACE. For some it has meant an introduction into the VET sector, and for others the gaining of dual accreditation and development across the mainstream subjects of the SACE. As all subjects in the SACE are able to embed units of competency, this has meant a considerable change to the pedagogy adopted by teachers in schools.

The impact of workplace learning in the delivery of outcomes for students is significant, as the experience has enabled students to gain an understanding of the environment of the workplace and in most cases be "assessed in the workplace".

4.7.2 *Impact on the range of subjects offered in SACE*

The SACE offers over 60 areas of study at both Stage 1 and Stage 2 (e.g. History, Information Technology, and Agriculture and Horticulture).

Schools have been able to embed units of competency within many of these subjects, particularly those that have a framework structure and encourage the use of a range of assessment instruments.

4.7.3 Impact of school organisation and structures

In the senior secondary years, the SACE provides a flexible framework to cater for all students. Students are able to plan a course through the SACE that corresponds to their career aspirations. The SACE's flexibility is extended by the accreditation of VET within its framework, while the integrity of the SACE pattern and its accreditation remains intact. Students who choose VET courses can gain double accreditation. The development and implementation of SSABSA-VET subjects that attract a Tertiary Entrance Rank (TER) score also provides added flexibility and options for students.

The provision of VET to senior secondary school students is a local decision and schools have responded to the changing needs of their students and their interest in vocational learning and VET. These changes include more flexible timetables, explicit assessment plans, opportunities to accredit part-time work, opportunities to be involved in enterprise activities.

Other school organisational changes include the packaging of subjects into identifiable vocational pathways et automotive, food and hospitality, retail, business and the growth of systems to manage the individual programs of students who need to achieve VET course outcomes, workplacements and other general SACE subject outcomes.

SECTION 5

5. TERM OF REFERENCE TWO

The differences between school-based and other vocational education programs and the resulting qualifications, and the pattern of industry acceptance of school-based programs.

The following section describes the quality assurance processes established in South Australia and the industry and employer support offered to the education and training sectors in the delivery of VET in Schools. The key point however, is that VET in Schools programs offered to senior secondary students in South Australia have not been modified or developed especially for school students. In South Australia, there is no distinction between a “school based program” and that offered by another RTO. It is this consistency that underpins the SSABSA (Board of Studies) policy on the recognition of students’ VET achievements for the purposes of the South Australian Certificate of Education.

Quality assurance processes have been established to ensure that continuous improvement occurs and the key stakeholders involved in VET delivery to senior secondary students, recognise that there are a range of issues both nationally and local that need addressing.

The issue of “industry perception” needs further research. There is anecdotal evidence of employers being “dissatisfied” and that teachers lack the industry relevant expertise. There is a view from industry that they require prospective employees with general skills that equip them for the workplace rather than industry specific skills. Further work is required on the clarification of this perception including a defining statement on skills expected of school students exiting school for the world of work. The Australian Quality Training Framework implemented in 2002, will assist in the clarification of these claims as all stakeholders involved in the delivery of VET will be required to meet these Standards. In South Australia, stakeholders involved in VET are complying to these Standards.

5.1 Differences between school-based and other VET programs

The VET competencies undertaken by South Australian school students are all drawn from endorsed Training Packages or in some cases, VET courses that have been accredited by the Accreditation and Registration Council or its interstate equivalents.

That is, they are the same competencies that are expected to be assessed to the same standard as competencies delivered by TAFE and other registered training organisations.

They have not been developed or modified especially for school students.

The quality arrangements for the delivery of VET to school students, described above, ensure that the competencies achieved by students meet industry standards as defined in Training Packages.

RTOs, not the schools, certify students’ competencies. This means the Parchment and academic statement are issued by the RTO. Students receiving this qualification meet the same standards as any other student participating in a VET program with an RTO. (Refer to attachment 9) .

5.2 Quality assurance of VET undertaken by South Australian school students

In South Australia all VET undertaken by school students is either delivered or quality assured by a registered training organisation, and the achievement of competencies is certified by RTOs.

A majority of the VET undertaken by school students is delivered by schools in partnership with Institutes of TAFE.

The process, the VET in Schools Agreement (VISA), (*see attachment 9*) describes in detail the responsibilities of the RTO, the school, the requirements and instructions on how to implement a VET program within a school.

In recent years a sizeable minority of schools have chosen to purchase VET services from RTOs, rather than deliver VET themselves. This option may be used increasingly as government schools realise the flexibility inherent in the global budget approach to school funding.

A key feature of the delivery arrangements is that VET undertaken by South Australian school students satisfies the quality standards that apply in the VET sector proper.

5.3 Qualifications achieved by schools students who undertake VET

Students who achieve VET competencies to the required standard receive certification under the Australian Qualifications Framework (Statements of Attainment and AQF qualifications) issued by authorised registered training organisations.

While the VET competencies undertaken by school students contribute to the achievement of nationally recognised VET qualifications, students engaged in VET in South Australian schools, generally do not complete the whole Certificate. However, the newly introduced SSBAS-VET subjects were developed not only to provide students with a Tertiary Entrance Rank, but also to provide students with a manageable pathway that allows them to complete a full qualification.

Note:

The South Australian approach ensures that when school students are certified by an RTO as having achieved competence, they have achieved the same standard as other non-school trainees/students who are certified by the RTO for the same competencies.

5.4 Industry acceptance of school-based programs

Industry has since the inception of VET in Schools, worked with the South Australian government to ensure that VET in Schools programs were industry relevant and have supported the development and expansion of programs across the State. Further work is required because there is minimal quantitative data available on the level of “industry acceptance” of school based programs even though industry supports students in structured work placement, contributes to the development of programs and learning materials, participates in career expos and other local school activities. Anecdotal evidence suggests that despite a level of involvement in VET in schools, employers perceive that:-

- VET is seen by schools and parents as a second class option compared to University pathways
- Teachers do not have an accurate picture of work within industry (both from the perspective of providing career advice as well as teaching students
- Teachers are not given sufficient support in their initial teacher training and ongoing professional development
- Schools do not have sufficient resources to keep equipment and technology up to date
- There is a shortage of technically trained teachers
- Students are not always “work ready”

Further investigation is required to establish the strength of these views, the degree of commonality across each industry sector and the underlying causes, so that effective responses can be developed. It should be recognised that industry needs to continue to be involved in supporting and developing VET in Schools if these programs are to meet industry needs.

The independent review conducted in December 2001 of Vocational Education in South Australia (EVE Strategy), identified the need to promote a greater understanding of the needs and operation of industry within schools. These partnerships need strengthening. Examples of employer support for VET in schools involving schools, Institutes of TAFE, industry and the community are:

- The involvement of major employers such as Mitsubishi Motors Australia Ltd (MMAL), Holden Motor Company (GM), Woolworths and BP in VET programs for school students. Support has been in the structured work place learning experience where students are assessed in the workplace.
- Toyota and Holden motor companies are supporting school based apprenticeships in the automotive industry by developing and implementing a training program for school students which will ultimately see students progress through an identified pathway to a full time apprenticeship. In 2003, other automotive manufacturers and businesses will join the partnership indicating strong industry support.
- the involvement of employers in providing more than 550,000 hours of structured work placements for some 9000 school students in 2001.
- The uptake of school based apprenticeships by employers including small businesses in metropolitan and rural regions of the State. There were approximately 850 contracts of training involving school based apprentices in 2001.

- The development of programs by Industry Training Advisory Boards (ITABS) for their industry sectors eg Seafood Industry Pathways Program, Engineering Pathways Program and Doorways to Construction.
- The development of “Models of Good Practice” in partnership with industry which provide clear guidelines for schools in the implementation of VET in Schools programs. (see attachment 10)

In South Australia, employers have accepted students into their organisations in the form of students undertaking either work experience, structured work placement (where students are assessed in the workplace), traineeships, school based new apprenticeships and employment.

Fact: Employers supported approximately 9000 students (550,000 hours) in structured work placements.

South Australian employers are seeking maturity and experience, rather than VET competencies per se in their entry level employees. For example they have identified that students who:-

- Take responsibility for their actions, meet deadlines and produce quality outputs, often as a member of a team
- Articulate where they are up to, eg when they leave at the end of the day
- Identify who to pass information on to at the end of the day
- Phone in when late or unable to be there etc. (absenteeism – its not ok to be away without valid reason).

are of more benefit to their organisation than someone who has the industry specific skills.

Comment from the MERSITAB:

Employers are seeking potential employees with less specific trade skills but with a desire to be involved in the particular industry. For example a student exiting school could possibly fit the level of a first year apprentice, where students are expected to have had experience in a variety of employment related skills including preparatory access and participation skills, broad-based induction skills and or specific workplace skills. They may also include participating in a team or work group. These skills would “prepare” a student to perform a defined range of activities most of which may be routine and predictable.

SECTION 6

6. TERM OF REFERENCE THREE

Vocational education in new and emerging industries

The generic and transferable skills that prepare young people for ongoing learning and change as well as for the expectations of the workplace, have been identified as a more important outcome of schooling than the specific industry skills.

Students exiting school with a set of “employable skills” are generally recognised by their future prospective employers as being of benefit if they have “transferable skills”. These skills have been defined by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) and the Business Council of Australia (BCA) and include communication, teamwork, problem solving, initiative and enterprise, planning and organising, self management, learning and technology.

The broad purpose of schooling first and foremost, is to prepare young people for their personal family, community and working life. Educational outcomes are achieved over a long period (12 years of schooling) and it is recognised that during the learning experience, student’s skills and abilities are enhanced for the world beyond school. Schools will need to address their role in preparing students for the workplace and the partnerships they have with key members of the community including training organisations to assist them with this goal.

There are a range of initiatives to support these advancing needs and the education, training, industry representatives, other government agencies including local government and SSABSA (Board of Studies) work cooperatively to ensure that pathway options are nationally accredited, recognised within SACE and are accepted by industry. For example, in South Australia, one of the growth areas is Health and Aged Care. The education and training sectors have worked closely with the industry and other stakeholders to develop a “Nursing pathways program” which has sought to attract students into the industry. Students at the end of their schooling will have the opportunity to articulate into the nursing profession.

At the local level where emerging needs are evident, schools have the capacity to respond in a way that meets both students and local industry/community needs. For example Willunga High School initiated VET programs in viticulture to meet the needs of the local vine growers and have over a period of five years has been able to meet the employment trends within the community. In 2000, Willunga High School was the winner of the ANTA National Training (VET in Schools) Award. In Cowell on the West Coast of South Australia, the school identified the potential to meet the growth of oyster farming and is training young people for the industry as well as exporting oysters to Japan and other international markets.

SECTION 7

7. TERM OF REFERENCE FOUR

The accessibility and effectiveness of vocational education of indigenous students

Participation of Indigenous students involved in Vocational Education has increased over the past two years and this is due to specific targeted programs to address the needs of the communities. (see Attachment 11) Participation in senior secondary schooling has also significantly increased due to the expansion of a range of options for students in their senior years of schooling.

In 1999, SSABSA (Board of Studies) was granted Commonwealth funding under the Indigenous Strategic Initiatives Program (IESP) for the development of VET pathways for Indigenous students in the area of music. Entitled *Transition to SACE Studies*, this program embedded Certificate II AUSMUSIC modules within SACE music subjects. The project provided the opportunity for three rural and two metropolitan high schools with significant numbers of Indigenous students to pilot a program which would give students a successful start to their senior secondary studies. This program provided many students with the opportunity to study music for the first time. In fact, it allowed one rural school to introduce music as a subject for the first time.

An external evaluation of the project, which included parents and other community members, demonstrated significant increases in the level of attendance of Indigenous students in senior secondary studies. The program required that the curriculum be developed in partnership with the community, and include local Indigenous artists. This project demonstrated that VET has the capacity to engage students in areas of the curriculum that have perhaps traditionally alienated them. The program developed in Ceduna Area School, for example, was tailored around music production techniques and community radio.

Indigenous students like all students, gain benefit from VET programs because it provides a clear pathway to achieve their SACE. It also develops generic and transferable work related skills and competencies.

Achievements:

15 young women from Yalata participated in a Hairdressing program on Eyre Peninsula and achieved status for one unit of SACE. (see attachment 12)

Students in the South of Adelaide (Southern Futures) have been involved with the Department of Health, Local government and the community elders in developing a medicinal herb garden. (see Attachment 13)

Commonwealth and State funding has assisted schools in a variety of initiatives which have provided additional learner support to students enabling them to achieve their senior secondary certificate.

Example:

At Pt August Secondary School (rural) there is evidence of increased school retention of Aboriginal Students involved in Year 12. 25 Indigenous students are currently undertaking the SACE with additional learner support, career and work based community learning projects which have assisted the students in a range of career options.

State funding to regions such as the Anangu region in northern SA has enabled local community decision making. The provision of Vocational Education in Anangu communities is a particularly important initiative as it is closely linked to community development/sustainability and the ability of individuals and communities to be self-determining. The community approach has enabled community members to have meaningful employment and life opportunities that are commensurate with those available to other Australians. *(see Attachment 11)*

In each local community, vocational education committees have been established which has ensured that community members and other local key stakeholders are actively involved and set the agenda for the delivery of Vocational Education on the Lands. *(see Attachment 11)* The findings from the consultation process have identified the need for continual negotiation and discussion with community elders and involvement of the community to ensure that the local needs of the community and students are met.

Government funding has supported schools in the Indulkana Anangu regions (rural) to engage Indigenous students in vocational education which has had a focus on school students involved in their senior secondary years. *(see attachment 14)*. Another initiative in rural South Australia has provided opportunities for students across all year levels to engage in the development of a Visitor Information Centre which has had a focus on the Indigenous history of the region. *(see Attachment 15)*

GLOSSARY

ACCI	Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
ANTAMINCO	Australian National Training Authority Ministerial Council
AQF	Australian Qualification Framework
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
BCA	Business Council of Australia
DECS	Department of Education and Children's Services
ECEF	Enterprise and Career Education Foundation
ITAB	Industry Training Advisory Board
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council Employment Education Training and Youth Affairs
RTO	Registered Training Organisation
SACE	South Australian Certificate of Education
SACSA	South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework
TER	Tertiary Entrance Rank
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VISA	Vet in Schools Arrangement

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