

Protocols for the Collection and Reporting of VET Statistical Information

This document presents a set of rules governing the access to information on Vocational education and training (VET) activity held in national collections at NCVER (administrative collections, regular surveys and ad hoc surveys). It sets out the principles and commitments for the storage and disclosure of VET information. It does not include access to an individual's own student record data (student names are not held by NCVER).

These protocols allow different stakeholders (government, training providers, peak bodies and the general public) to have access to timely and accurate information, and increase the value of the national vocational education and training data collections to stakeholders.

Guiding principles

The key principles upon which these protocols have been developed relate to the need for transparency in processes and access to information about vocational education and training. In particular, the protocols aim to:

- Provide access to as much information as possible to stakeholders consistent with the protection of an individual's and their employer's privacy (consistent with the information Privacy Principles under the Privacy Act of 1988) and subject to the protection of commercial-in-confidence training provider information.
- Ensure the processes used to access the data will be transparent and publicly available to all contributors of data and to other stakeholders.

Scope/coverage of protocols

These protocols cover data in the national vocational education and training collections held at NCVER, including:

- National VET Provider Collection, National Apprentice and Trainee Collection, National VET Finance Collection, National VET in Schools Collection, Student Outcomes Survey, Survey of Employer Use and Views (of the VET System), Apprentice and Trainee Destinations Survey.
- Data items include:
 - *Students*
 - Demographics including age and sex
 - Background characteristics such as prior education and language background
 - *Training*
 - Course and modules taken
 - Qualification name
 - Where the training activity took place
 - *Outcomes*
 - Modules passed
 - Qualifications achieved
 - Satisfaction with the training
 - Employer satisfaction with the VET system.

Data access

This section describes how vocational education and training data held in national collections at NCVET can be accessed.

- All stakeholders (government, training providers, peak bodies and the general public) will have access to aggregate information (e.g. student numbers, student demographics, completion rates, load pass rates, student satisfaction). This will include aggregate information at the training provider level.
- No financial data will be published at the training provider level.
- No individual or employer will be identified in aggregate information.
- External users are only granted access to national vocational education and training data holdings (unit records stored at NCVET) where they have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the National Training Statistics Committee (delegated to NCVET) that they have a research interest in information at this level, and sign an undertaking agreeing to abide by the data protocols.
- No unit record file released will identify individuals (by name, address or traceable unique student identifier), employers (by name or address) or training providers (by name, address or RTO identifier as listed on the National Training Information Service).
- Estimates based on survey data will be accompanied by appropriate estimates of reliability.
- Training providers will have access to their own data and reports on their information that are not available to other stakeholders.

Privacy statement for enrolment forms

- A privacy notice, which advises students how their data may be supplied to and used by governments and other agencies, should be included on all enrolment forms so that individuals are aware of how their data will be used and what will be published.
- The student should sign the privacy notice and enrolment form to confirm that the details they are providing are correct and that they understand the privacy notice.

Security / Confidentiality

- Information is held in the national vocational education and training data holdings at unit-record level. It is necessary to collect the data at this level so that it can be aggregated in different ways to meet the information needs of policy makers, researchers and other data users.
- NCVET, as the administrator of the national collections, may access all data, where it exists, for the purpose of quality assurance and data derivations.
- NCVET staff sign an information management policy agreeing to abide by protocols covering privacy and confidentiality of data and the release of information.
- This information is stored on a secure server with restricted access, in accordance with the rules set out in this document.

Complaints

- If you believe that these protocols have been breached in any way, complaints should be directed, in the first instance, to the Managing Director, NCVET. If the complaint cannot be resolved in 30 days, it will be forwarded to the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

Monitoring and review

- These protocols were approved and endorsed by the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment (MCTEE) in November 2010. It is recommended that the Data

and Performance Measurement Principal Committee of MCTEE review this document every two years.

- No changes may be made to these protocols without ministerial agreement.

Related documents

The following links provide access to NCVER policies which deal with privacy, data quality, access to data, and charging policy for data requests and NCVER library information services.

- NCVER Privacy policy
- NCVER Data quality policy
- NCVER Data access and charging policy
- NCVER Data access and charging procedure