

Vocational education, Indigenous students and the choice of pathways: support document

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Interview and Focus Group Questions

This section contains the interview and focus group questions.

Interview Preamble

- Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is [first name only] from Charles Darwin University
Indigenous interviewer explain background/country.
- The research is about vocational education and training, or training/education that you have done. The information can then be used to help improve training for Indigenous people and communities. We are speaking to 30 Indigenous students in the Northern Territory. This interview will take about one hour.
- Going through a list of questions - If anything is confusing just tell me and I will explain it better. There are no right or wrong answers. The project is not linked to any training organisations, so feel free to tell us what is on your mind.
- Have you got any questions before we get going? What should I call you?

If interviewee is unsure what the research is about - read:

We are gathering information from people like yourself about your experiences of vocational education. We are doing this for a research project for Charles Darwin University

Once the interviews are completed, your name and contact details will be deleted. We' ll also combine all of the interviews we are doing across the Northern Territory , so it won't be possible for anyone to find out what you have said.

Check identity

Before we start, I just want to check your details. Your name is _____

And you studied [COURSE ABOVE] at [NAME OF INSTITUTION] is this correct?

If did not study what is recorded, clarify what they studied, the year and where.

Identity Check	√
Yes, details correct	
If details incorrect. Record correct details	

Gender (No need to read this)

Gender	√
Male	
Female	

Interview Questions - all students

The first few questions I want to ask are about “you”.

Q1. How old are you? *If unsure: prompt with age range*

Age	√
19 or under	
20-24	
25-34	
35-44	
45 and over	

Q2. What is your usual place of residence?

Q3. Do you have any children, family members or others in your care?

If interviewee is unsure explain: Family members can mean parents, elders, brothers or sisters, or other family members that you look after

Dependents	√
Yes (GO TO Q4)	
No (GO TO Q5)	

Q4. How many people are you caring for? *Single response*

Number of dependents	√
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
>8	

Now I would like to ask you some questions about what you are doing at the moment.

Q5. Which of the following things are you doing now? Are you currently doing? *Multiple responses allowed*

Employment status	√
On CDEP?	
Are you doing paid full-time work?	
Are you doing paid part-time work?	
Doing unpaid community or voluntary work?	
Looking for work?	
Looking after kids/family or taking care of community business?	
Are you doing anything else?	

I now want to ask you a few questions about language and communicating in English.

Q6. Which language do you mainly speak at home? *Single response*

Language spoken at home	√
English	
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander language	
Other language	

Q7. Would you say that you: *Single response*

English Language Competence	√
Are fluent in English, no problems understanding English, or being understood by others	
Speak English, but sometimes have trouble understanding people or being understood by others	
Do not speak English well or at all	

Now I would like to talk to you about the [COURSE LEVEL and TITLE from front page] you have undertaken.

Q8. What year did you start that course? *Single response*

Year commenced course	√
2012	
2011	
2010	
2009	
2008 or earlier	

Q9. Are you studying this course full time or part time? *Single response*

Mode of study	√
Fulltime student	
Part time student	

Q10. Did you go and live somewhere else to do this course? *This includes block release.*

Relocate to study	√
Yes (GO TO Q11)	
No (GO TO Q13)	

Q11. Did you move?

Place of Relocation	√
Within the same state/territory	
To another state/territory	

Q12. Why did you move? *Multiple responses allowed*

Reasons for Moving	√
No training/HE provider in the area	
Training/He study was by block release	
This course not offered in the area	
Just wanted to move somewhere else	
Had family/friends at the location	
Other	

Q13. Did you receive any of the following types of financial help while you were doing the course?
Multiple responses allowed

Financial Assistance	√
Abstudy	
Austudy/youth allowance	
Other government support	
Financial help from employer	
Financial help from family members	
Financial help from Community	
Other	
No support received	

Q14. Did you get any other kind of help, like the things on this list. *Multiple responses allowed*

Additional support	√
Tutorial assistance	
Help with transport	
Help with accommodation	
Help with books	
Use of a computer	
Help from the Aboriginal advisor/student support officers	
Time off study to help family, for funerals or ceremonies	
Time off work	
Extra time to complete the course	
Help from family or community with the study	
Help with childcare/looking after family members	
No support received	
Other (<i>write description of "other"</i>)	

Q15. Is there any help you would have liked to receive?

I'd now like to ask you what you thought about certain parts of the training that you did/are doing in [COURSE LEVEL and TITLE from front page].

Q16. For each thing I read out I would like you to tell me if you thought it was good, bad or just OK.

Quality of Course	Good	Bad	Okay
The quality of the teachers and tutors			
The cultural appropriateness of the course			
Having Indigenous teachers and staff			
Flexibility of the course, teachers or institute, for example, allowing time off for family/community business, course delivered in language			
The quality of the course materials, for example course outlines, books			
The quality of help or assistance you got from admin staff, liaison officers			
The quality of the facilities, such as buildings, classrooms			
Being able to communicate with others			
Understanding what was being taught			
Understanding what you had to do to finish the course			
Being with Indigenous people in the course			
Dealing with non-Indigenous people			
The commitment of other students			
The length of the course			

The following items might not be relevant to you. That's OK . If they are not, just let me know. What did you think about:

Quality of Support	Good	Bad	Okay	N/A
Childcare facilities				
Access to computers				
The level of financial help you received				
The help or assistance you got to find work				
The distance to travel to do the course				

Q17. Is there anything else that you particularly liked or didn't like about the training/study that you did ?

Q18. Apart from this course which we've just talked about, have you done any other study before that?

Previous Study	√
Yes (Go to Q19)	
No (Go to Q22)	

Q19. You mentioned you have done other courses. Did you complete all of these courses, some of them, or none of them? *Single response*

Study completed	√
Completed all	
Completed some, but not all	
Did not complete any	

Q20. What were the reasons you did not complete some (or all) of those courses?

Q21. What levels were these courses? *Multiple responses allowed*

Course level	√
Certificate 1 or 2	
Certificate 3 or 4	
Diploma or advanced diploma	
Bachelor degree	
Graduate diploma or graduate certificate	
Postgraduate degree	
Not sure	

Now I would like to ask you some questions about how all the study you have done has helped you.

Q22. Has the study helped you with work or when looking for work?

Q23. Has the study helped you personally?

Q24. Has the study helped you with community and family business?

Q25. Apart from these things, has the study helped you in any other ways?

Q26. What are the reasons why you are studying this course? *Three responses in order of priority*

Motivation to study	√
To get a job	
To develop a business	
To move into a different career	
To get a better job/promotion	
It was a requirement of my job	
I wanted extra skills for my job/to help me in my job	
To help me apply for a job	
To get an education	
To get into another training course	
To get into university	
Only course available	
So I could help in the community	
To get skills to help in the family	
Knowledge and understanding of managing money	
Skills to develop local business enterprise	
Had to for mutual obligation / Centrelink requirements	
Financial gain / money	
Sense of achievement	
To improve my knowledge For confidence/self esteem/ to feel better about myself / well being	
To get skills for community/voluntary work	
For something to do	
Thought it would be interesting	
Other reasons <i>(list here)</i>	

Go to Q 35 if VET student

The following section is for Higher Education Students Only

Interview Questions VET to HE students

Q27. What was your highest Vocational Education Qualification? *Single response*

Highest VET Qualification	√
Certificate IV	
Diploma	
Advanced Diploma	

Q 28. Did your previous Vocational Education study help you in your current course?

Previous VET Experience	√
Yes (Go to Q29)	
No (Go to Q30)	

Q 29. In what ways did your previous Vocational Education study help you in your current course? *Go to Question 31*

Q30. In what ways did your previous Vocational Education study not help you in your current course?

Q 31. Did you receive any Credit for your previous Vocational study?

Credit	√
No (go to Q33)	
Yes (go to Q 32)	
Not sure (go to Q33)	

Q 32. How much Credit Transfer did you receive? *Single response*

Credit received	√
< 4 units	
4 Units	
>4 units but <8 Units	
Units	
> 8 units	

Q33 . What have been the major challenges of undertaking study in Higher Education?

Q 34. What have been the barriers/ opportunities have you experienced in your Higher Education course?

Q35. That's the end of the interview. On behalf of myself, and Charles Darwin University thank you very much. Is there any other comments you would like to make?

Focus Groups Questions

Please introduce yourself to the group

Why have you chosen to undertake a course in Vocational Education and Training?

What do you hope to achieve by undertaking Vocational Education and Training?

In undertaking your course what challenges have you faced?

What opportunities has your course provided?

Are there any ways in which your course can be improved?

(For HE students) Did your experience in VET prepare you for studying in HE? -