

VET in Schools: A post-compulsory education perspective – Support document

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<<http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/proj/nr1029.pdf>>

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Appendix 1: Issues paper

This paper summarises the main issues for schools and technical and further education (TAFE) institutes which emerged from the study of the place of vocational education and training (VET) in school culture and policy funded by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER). It focuses on the relationship between TAFE institutes and the school sector, in the context of increasing delivery of VET programs to school-aged students, both within the school system and within TAFE institutes. This paper addresses key issues which emerged from discussions with school personnel from 12 schools in New South Wales, Victoria and Queensland, and reports commissioned from the three TAFE research partners in this project.

Part 1: The school view

The role of VET

In most of the schools in this study, VET in Schools was perceived as useful and valuable. Some schools saw VET as an opportunity to find appropriate subjects and pathways for all students and have adopted VET programs to cater for and retain students who are not regarded as candidates for university entry. Several schools commented that students enjoyed their VET learning, responding well to its modular structure and competency-based assessment, with some students experiencing success for the first time. Schools also valued the role of structured workplace learning in giving students first-hand experience of the world of work and careers.

Increasing the numbers of students going to TAFE was not necessarily the first priority for some schools. Many schools saw VET as valuable as an end in itself for the reasons cited above, rather than as a pathway to tertiary-level VET. Indeed, some schools explicitly cited VET in Schools as a means for improving students' chances of entering university.

Several factors were proposed which affect the ability of schools to offer good VET programs. Some are internal and involve physical and cultural resources, while others involve the relationship with the TAFE sector. These factors are outlined below.

Perceptions of VET

While factors such as the nature of the school's clientele, school size, teacher attitudes and parent expectations all impact on the acceptance of VET, the principal's leadership and support (or lack of it) was highlighted in many schools as the key factor making the difference between a successful VET program and an unsuccessful one.

Resistance to VET has its origins in school policies and culture which see VET as a poor alternative to academic studies. Only where the needs of students are diverse and pressing does the provision of VET become a priority.

Within schools, teacher resistance to VET was evident in teacher reluctance to accommodate VET activities, such as removal of students from classes to attend VET-related activities or to timetable changes to accommodate structured workplace learning and workplace assessment. Several schools demonstrated innovative strategies for addressing this issue.

Parents were also viewed as a source of resistance, many of whom continue to equate VET with traditional trades and blue-collar occupations. Schools commented that migrant parents are particularly resistant, wanting their children to aspire only to university entrance and white-collar

occupations. Encouraging for schools were examples of shifts in parental attitudes as a consequence of their children being involved in VET and happy and successful at school for the first time.

It was felt that negative attitudes to VET would persist until its role in improving student learning is more widely recognised and a broader view of VET—one which includes the technological, artistic and commercial fields—gains acceptance in the community.

VET and the senior certificate

An issue which impacts heavily on the acceptance of VET is the relationship between VET curriculum and the senior certificate in each state. The status of VET is heavily dependent on the institutional value accorded to VET through recognition (or non-recognition) of the contribution which VET subjects make towards satisfying the requirements of the senior certificate and the calculation of a tertiary entrance rank.

States take different approaches to VET in relation to recognition issues, but a recurring difficulty was uncertainty associated with the effect of subject choices on tertiary entrance rank outcomes. These issues reduce incentives for enrolling in VET and therefore undermine its role as a viable aspect of (or alternative to) conventional Year 12 studies.

Moreover, Board of Studies regulations in some states which prevent students from enrolling in VET before Year 11, place a further barrier between schools and the VET sector. Any VET courses completed by these younger students while at school cannot be counted towards fulfilment of the senior certificate and this presents a strong disincentive to enrol in VET for students who may stand to benefit greatly from VET courses in Year 10.

Resourcing VET in Schools

The resourcing of VET involves both the provision of adequately trained teachers and the availability of facilities appropriate for the delivery of industry-recognised training (or the ability to buy such training from an outside provider, such as TAFE). On both these fronts, schools are aware of severe shortcomings. The costs associated with releasing teachers for industry experience and retraining were also considered a major impediment.

The expense of updating aged facilities or building new ones was often weighed against the need to fund non-VET facilities (science laboratories, music facilities etc.). Schools also have to assess the relative costs of providing VET themselves or buying in VET provision from a TAFE (or other) provider. This relatively simple solution—outsourcing VET—comes at a cost. The need for TAFE institutes to recover costs means that charges are passed onto the school (or directly to the student). VET programs can become unviable if the school is unable to subsidise students who cannot afford to pay the fees which TAFE charges. It was felt that VET in Schools numbers would greatly increase if costs to students were lower.

Another obstacle to access is distance. Time spent travelling to a TAFE location and the costs of transport can remove this option from consideration.

Schools with higher student numbers and good facilities were in a much stronger position to offer VET, buying in resources or staff where necessary, and offsetting these costs with income from school-delivered courses.

Relationship with TAFE

As discussed above, cost emerged as the major issue affecting the relationship between schools and TAFE. While TAFE insists, with justification, on cost recovery, schools are differently placed in their ability to pay for courses or to charge their students for these costs.

Some schools have addressed these issues by expanding the range of programs they can provide themselves, or by turning to private providers.

Other issues which emerged in relation to TAFE provision were teaching methods and timetabling considered inappropriate for school-aged students, poor communication (including the inaccessibility of TAFE staff) and administrative inefficiency.

However, the nature of any given TAFE–school relationship appeared to depend heavily on the players involved. TAFE institutes experienced in dealing with schools appeared to be better able and prepared to offer services sensitive to the needs of school-aged clients, while schools with a stronger commitment to VET and some experience in dealing with the TAFE sector were better able to negotiate and maintain a relationship which was mutually beneficial to both parties.

In general, the following characteristics appeared to be associated with sites which were able to offer more comprehensive VET programs:

- ✧ high enrolments
- ✧ ability to offer courses on a cost-neutral basis or to charge students for courses
- ✧ proactive principal
- ✧ positive, modern view of VET
- ✧ proximity to a TAFE institute
- ✧ good relationship with TAFE.

Part 2: The TAFE view

This section presents a TAFE perspective on the relationship with schools and on the role of TAFE in dealing with school-aged students, including early leavers.

TAFE and VET in Schools

VET in Schools programs were seen as effective in providing a ‘taster’ of the options available in training. However, with the possible exceptions of information technology and office administration courses, schools were not judged to be capable of delivering accredited vocational training.

Concerns with the quality of VET delivery in school were consistently expressed in TAFE. Chief among these concerns was the ability of teachers to deliver vocational competencies to acceptable standards. They believed that a key weakness of school-based delivery was teachers’ lack of relevant and recent industry experience.

TAFE staff were particularly concerned that the accreditation of poor-quality training in schools would result in students entering TAFE without the competencies implied by their school-delivered qualifications. A view was also proposed that such poor-quality training would have a negative impact on the way industry viewed VET qualifications.

These concerns extended to school facilities, which were judged to be inadequate for most VET programs. TAFE personnel were concerned about inappropriate and outdated resources and equipment in some schools, and the occupational health and safety conditions in school workshops. They also questioned the suitability of the school setting for teaching skills relating to the adult world of work.

The alternative to school delivery of VET—TAFE delivery—creates its own problems and is perhaps the greatest single source of friction between TAFE institutes and schools. As discussed

above, the purchase of TAFE delivery involves considerable expense to the school or to the student, which is not fully covered by the school's operating grant. With the exception of special taster courses, funded by some states in order to market VET courses to school students, TAFE institutes are not funded to deliver training to these students, and must recover their costs. Schools, unused to the commercial and contractual realities of VET, are consequently critical of TAFE's businesslike attitude to recovering its costs. There is also a perception in both sectors that there is competition for the limited resources associated with student enrolments. One TAFE institute noted that schools are reluctant to allow their students to enrol in TAFE courses while at school because of the threat this poses to their funding and staffing entitlements.

One of the strongest incentives for schools to persist with school-level delivery appears to be the administrative and financial problems created by the purchase of delivery from TAFE, whether this involves students attending a course at TAFE or bringing TAFE staff into schools.

In the context of the concerns raised here, it is no surprise that TAFE institutes are highly critical of VET in Schools. There is a view that schools do not fully cater for the needs of their clientele, either in their general courses which do not meet the needs of the weaker students or in their VET delivery which is perceived as being increasingly less accessible to the academically weaker students, and not accessible to at-risk students. There is also a view that needless and inefficient duplication of resources is occurring, with schools trying (ineffectively) to imitate what TAFE is already doing.

This was not always the case. One TAFE institute reported close collaboration with about 100 schools in the management and delivery of VET in Schools programs, and commented on the value of this partnership in delivering high-quality and consistent training.

In general, a process of accommodation seems to be emerging in which a narrow range of industry areas (such as business, information technology, and tourism and hospitality programs) are becoming the domain of school-based providers while TAFE is increasingly relied upon to deliver the more resource-intensive programs.

TAFE and early school leavers

The respondents in this study unanimously agreed that TAFE institutes have an important role to play in catering for the needs of early school leavers, and all were able to outline this role in the context of a strategic plan, giving evidence of strenuous efforts to develop relationships with local schools.

Respondents felt that the adult environment and teaching style of TAFE was better suited to some students and that the variety of training options available in TAFE placed it in a strong position to meet the needs of 'at risk' students.

Despite this clear commitment to early school leavers, several concerns were expressed. Reflecting a view common in schools, respondents acknowledged that the TAFE environment may not be appropriate for very young students. As adult learning facilities, TAFE institutes cannot always offer relevant pastoral care, appropriate levels of supervision of minors and a classroom environment designed for adolescents. Given the additional costs associated with providing these services, TAFE respondents argued strongly that if TAFE were to be expected to deal with early school leavers, then it should be funded at the same level as schools for the same clientele.

Even for the 'older' early school leavers, 15- and 16-year-olds, the provision of adequate services and facilities was regarded as potentially problematic. Classrooms in which noise or boisterous behaviour might be disruptive to neighbouring classes were mentioned as examples of such difficulties. Safety, 'duty of care' to minors and issues such as smoking were also raised. On a

number of sites, this problem has been addressed, at least partially, through the provision of special courses on separate campuses or in separate locations on campus.

With regard to the youngest early school leavers, a common view was that TAFE should not be dealing with this group at all. For many respondents, the perception was that 15 should be the minimum entry age to TAFE. It was not deemed appropriate for 13- and 14 year-olds to be attending TAFE. In particular, the placement of very young teenagers among adults and in classrooms and programs designed for adults was considered inappropriate.

However, some exceptions to this view were evident, with some TAFE institutes offering programs for very young school leavers and youth at risk. Respondents emphasised however, that students were encouraged to stay at school and were only referred when it was clear that they could not cope, in academic or social terms, in a school environment. Aware that TAFE is not the ideal setting for such a young clientele, another TAFE institute enrolls students on a short-term basis, with the ultimate aim of getting them back into school.

The second concern raised by staff was the inexperience (and sometimes reluctance) of TAFE teachers in dealing with groups of young, disengaged learners, and the need for professional development to equip TAFE personnel to meet the needs of these students.

The third reservation regarding early leavers related to the provision of appropriate programs, and again there are differences in the approaches taken by individual TAFE institutes.

Literacy and numeracy issues were paramount in the discussion of appropriate courses for these students. The Certificate in General Education for Adults (CGEA level 1) was regarded as particularly strong in this respect, with its emphasis on literacy and numeracy. However, the point was also made that some students would be better served by a 'taster' vocational course which made them aware of the range of VET options available, or a specific vocational program at a very basic level (pre-certificate I). A number of respondents made the point that some certificate courses were too advanced for early leavers, and recommended pre-vocational courses, which are available in some TAFE institutes.

Reflecting the concerns of schools, TAFE acknowledged the difficulties for young people accessing TAFE and the need for liaison staff who are trained to work with young people. There was evidence of increasing collaboration between TAFE institutes and schools directed towards better serving the needs of these clients; for example, by providing dedicated liaison officers to work with schools. Taking this concept further was the initiative of one TAFE institute to develop a TAFE-based senior college (Years 11 and 12) as a means of providing an appropriate learning environment for this clientele.

TAFE and school completers

If the role TAFE plays for school students is fraught with difficulties, then its role vis-à-vis school completers may be described as fraught with uncertainties.

Public perceptions of TAFE are seen as a significant barrier to the uptake of TAFE courses, and reflect outdated notions of the range and levels of TAFE training. TAFE expends considerable effort marketing its courses to school completers, but meets significant resistance from schools, students and parents who tend to view TAFE as a fall-back position should a student's attempts to enrol in university fail.

Where students are able to apply for their course through a university admissions committee (as in Victoria or New South Wales), TAFE is disadvantaged because TAFE courses, lined up against the university offerings, will always be placed lower on students' lists of preferences. Many students in fact reject their offer of a place in TAFE.

The rapid growth in the numbers of VET in Schools students enrolled in TAFE was cited as evidence of a fundamental change in attitudes to VET. TAFE personnel believed that this trend, as well as changes in the clientele of schools, is contributing to a change in perceptions which should translate into increased acceptance of VET as a post-school destination.

Conclusions

This paper outlined several issues for schools and TAFE institutes which emerged from this investigation of the place of VET in school culture and policy. Schools generally perceived VET in Schools as a useful and valuable means of managing diversity and improving student learning, as well as broadening students' ideas about post-compulsory pathways. Several factors were identified which influence the scope and success of VET in Schools programs. The most important factor was the commitment and leadership of the school principal. Other factors which impacted on success included perceptions of VET as a legitimate option, school size, provision of adequately trained teachers and the availability of facilities appropriate for the delivery of industry-recognised training. Where TAFE delivery was involved, cost and distance were identified as the main constraints.

TAFE institutes were generally critical of the ability of schools to adequately deliver vocational competencies to acceptable standards. The delivery of VET in Schools was enhanced and duplication minimised when TAFE institutes and schools worked in partnership to deliver VET programs. A process of accommodation appeared to be emerging in which a narrow range of industry areas are becoming the domain of schools, while TAFE is increasingly relied upon to deliver more resource-intensive programs.

Schools and TAFE institutes commented that outdated views of the scope of VET and its role in providing training for a wide range of careers is the main source of community resistance to VET (both within and beyond secondary school). These perceptions are changing slowly, as VET in Schools continues to expand. This project will also report on the impact of VET in Schools on the post-school destinations of students.

Appendix 2: Brief for TAFE paper

VET IN SCHOOLS
CULTURE, POLICY AND
THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING IMPACT

BRIEF FOR DEVELOPING A TAFE PAPER
ON THE ROLE OF TAFE IN CATERING FOR
POST-COMPULSORY SCHOOL-AGED YOUTH

An NREC-funded project involving

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE/RMIT UNIVERSITY
CENTRE FOR POST-COMPULSORY
EDUCATION & TRAINING

and

THE UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA
THE LIFELONG LEARNING NETWORK

and

SYDNEY INSTITUTE OF TAFE
BENDIGO REGIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAFE
KANGAN BATMAN INSTITUTE OF TAFE

What is required

The following questions/headings are suggestions only and are intended to guide the development of a paper on the role of TAFE institutes in catering for post-compulsory school-aged clients and in dealing with schools.

The paper is divided into three broad sections:

- ✧ the role of TAFE in relation to early school leavers
- ✧ the relationship between TAFE and schools
- ✧ TAFE and school completers.

It is intended that this paper will outline relevant aspects of your TAFE institute's actual approach to these issues, but that it will also offer opinions on how these issues should be approached (i.e. what is happening and what should happen).

These papers will be used in two ways in our report to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER). Firstly, they will be presented as unabridged appendices to the final report. Secondly, aspects of the data they provide will be incorporated into the main body of the final report. In both cases, the data will be presented anonymously such that the authors of the reports and the TAFE institutes from which they originate cannot be identified.

Plan

Section 1: In your opinion, what should the role of TAFE be in relation to early school leavers?

Should TAFE institutes be dealing with this group at all? Does your institute target this group or should it be the responsibility of schools?

What are appropriate programs in TAFE to deal with students who leave without completing Year 11 (AQF level? Literacy/numeracy? Pre-voc)? Is there a need for new programs? If so, what should these comprise?

What are appropriate programs in TAFE to deal with students who leave with Year 11 but no senior certificate (AQF level? Literacy/numeracy? Pre-voc)? Is there a need for new programs? If so, what should these comprise?

Is there currently any liaison between your institute and schools regarding this group? Could you please describe the nature of any such liaison? Are there aspects of school–TAFE liaison which could be improved with regard to early school leavers? What should happen ideally?

Section 2: In your opinion, what should the nature of the school–TAFE relationship be?

In what ways does your institute support schools in the delivery of VET in Schools programs? Should TAFE institutes have a role in VET in Schools programs? If so, should this be a major role (delivery and accreditation, provision of staff, provision of courses on-site at TAFE)? Or should this be a minor role (advisory etc.)?

In your view, are schools well-equipped to deliver VET in Schools? If not, why not (where are the problems)?

How can the relationship between TAFE and school be improved with regard to the delivery of VET in Schools programs?

Should there be greater cooperation between TAFE institutes and schools in the delivery of VET courses (both VET in Schools and VET generally), e.g. site sharing, sharing of staff, programs etc?

What is your view of the current range of qualifications offered to school-aged clients (AQF and senior certificate)? Do these all the needs of young people? What else is needed? Who should deliver it?

Section 3: What role does your TAFE play in relation to school completers?

Does your TAFE send material to schools to promote itself, e.g. brochures which advertise TAFE courses and programs?

Does your TAFE institute offer places in diploma courses to school leavers through a university admissions centre?

Is there an issue about school leavers being offered places in your institute and then not taking them up?

Do you feel there is a perception amongst teachers in schools that TAFE is a 'second choice' option? Can you provide any evidence or examples?

Appendix 3: Partner TAFE submission

The role of TAFE in catering for post-compulsory school age youth A perspective from Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE in regional Victoria

Barry Golding and Kevin Vallence

Quality & Research, Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE

Introduction

Preamble

This paper is designed as an appendix to a major report on VET in Schools—its culture, policy and the employment and training impact—being undertaken for the NCVER through the University of Melbourne/RMIT University Centre for Post-compulsory Education and Training and a number of other tertiary (university and TAFE) research partners.

The purpose of this paper is to guide the development of the main report—essentially elaborating the role of TAFE institutes in catering for school-aged clients and in dealing with schools. It is one of three papers being prepared by researchers in TAFE institutes, the others being Sydney Institute of TAFE and Kangan Batman Institute of TAFE in metropolitan Victoria.

The guidelines for this paper were identified in a brief authored by John Polesel from the University of Melbourne. Those guidelines stressed the desirability of being normative as well as objective; that is, to go beyond ‘what is happening’ and ‘offer opinions’ as to ‘what should happen’.

It anticipated an anonymous response (both in terms of the author and the institute). This report has been written by Barry Golding from Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE in a way whereby references to ‘Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE’ can be simply changed, if required, to TAFE, although this is not necessary from the institute’s perspective. In this version ‘Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE’ has been left in to enable it to be used for dissemination within the institute as well as meeting the external research project requirements. **Amy note this!**

Method

Information for this paper was compiled by conducting focus group interviews with key stakeholders within the institute responsible for early school leavers, the school–TAFE relationship and school completers. This included perspectives from institute managers (including a regional campus manager), institute staff, the VET in Schools manager and program coordinators. It also included personnel involved in both the local learning and employment network (LLEN) and managed individual pathways (MIPs) initiatives, currently being implemented between schools and post-school destinations in Victoria.

The interview schedule was based closely on the three themes (and associated sets of questions) identified in the brief:

- ✧ In your opinion, what should the role of TAFE be in relation to early school leavers?
- ✧ In your opinion, what should the nature of the school–TAFE relationship be?
- ✧ What role does your TAFE play in relation to early school leavers?

All interviews were taped and accurately transcribed by Trish Shaw of Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE. Our thanks to all informants who generously contributed information and agreed to be interviewed. Information was provided on the understanding that informants would not be identified in this report. All informants were given an early draft of the report to ensure that the information supplied was accurate and properly cited.

The role of the institute in relation to early school leavers

Should the institute be dealing with early school leavers (and whose responsibility is it)?

Institute manager

Absolutely essentially, yes. To a large extent schools are unable to cater for all of that group and that's largely why some of them leave before getting to the end of Year 12. Schools have a different culture and they'll have to do a complete rethink to be able to cater with many of the sort of students that we deal with here. There's an overlap between secondary schools and TAFE. TAFE really is a 'safety net', [particularly] for kids who are 'push-outs' or early school leavers. And we've got to be there with that. It's only a small part of our business but ... it's essential we are there and we do have products for them. They have very highly specialised needs and we've got to target to meet those needs.

Head of a teaching centre

I think we definitely should. [However it's] not a homogenous group of students. I don't particularly believe we should be working with all students. And I guess when we talk about early school leavers, are we talking about the 15 post-compulsory school age, or are we talking about 14-year-olds? Because there is a difference.

I have some concerns about 13- and 14-year-olds coming here. TAFE is an adult environment and maybe from 15 upwards they're already moving towards that transition area stage into adulthood. And given that we've been teaching those young people, my experience highlights that we can offer them appropriate programs. We need to make sure we have professional development for teachers so that they are skilled in working with this age group. There's a difference between working with a 15-year-old and a 16-year-old ... But I think for the 14-year-

olds, that lower age group, I have concerns. I don't think we've got the right physical environment. The attitudes of some staff means that we're not necessarily an open, inviting environment for young people.

Teaching a 15- to 17-year-old, is very different from teaching a 25- to 30-year-old. Even though we all say we're into individualised sort of teaching and learning and need to acknowledge different learning styles. I think there's also a difference about working with a young person and building rapport with a young person. And not all teachers have the skills needed.

Many young early school leavers are still developing to adulthood. They're still going through adolescence. There are issues there around duty of care and should a 15-year-old be smoking or not? Or what happens if something happens in the classroom? What's our responsibility for that when they are only 15 and still living at home?

Safety is the big issue. How well you get along with your peers is just so important in the classroom. [Adults] have more resilience or can last a lot longer in a classroom. If they don't get along with their peers then they're not going to turn up. Part of it is about just physically having posters and displays which are more youth-friendly and more inviting to young people. Young people tend to be a bit more boisterous. It's just the nature of that particular age. So there needs to be a bit more tolerance or we set up classes a bit further away from other areas.

Manager VET in Schools

I believe TAFE needs to take a stronger role with the delivery of VET in Schools. And I can probably see TAFE and secondary schools having a very close relationship in that. Whether it's a pathway and whether they become one or whatever.

We're really not allowed to talk about the 'old tech school system' where there was a tech school and high school. But people are identifying that [this] type of system, whatever you want to call it, is missing. Where there's students [who aren't] academically inclined [and don't want] to proceed with the traditional VCE [Victorian Certificate of Education] subjects. They're looking for more of a 'hands on' type of trade for those students at risk. And interestingly enough, TAFE offers a broader range of subjects, like your horse studies, hospitality, sport and recreation. The variety that TAFE can offer is something that secondary schools haven't got.

The secondary schools are starting to identify those students now. And they're certainly looking as early as Year 9 or Year 8 for some 'structured' programs. I don't even know if it's structured. It's more like a supermarket of schools which, during those early years perhaps the students will click with a particular competency and sort of see if there's a pathway there for a career or something like that.

[If you take students out of] the traditional secondary school environment and place them into a TAFE environment where there are no bells and no whistles, then the students accept and really like that environment.

Marketing person

We do target this group. We conduct campus tours and talk to young people via local youth group programs, [ACE providers] and Centrelink. Young people eligible for Youth Allowance can also apply for the Youth Voucher which subsidises 400 hours of institute time. Personal and careers' counselling and disability support is available free of charge to students.

VET in Schools program coordinator

I think TAFE should take a stronger and a more committed role in regard to early school leavers. I think with VET in Schools we're catering reasonably well at the institute. However I believe early school leavers are a different group of young people who have different needs.

TAFEs can play a key role with VET in Schools. However, I think that TAFE can still play a role with the really 'at risk' students who I don't think go into the VET in Schools programs. I'm talking about the younger kids, the kids that just are not making it, and don't seem to see a reason for being at school.

I think you've got varying levels of early school leavers or at-risk students. There are some which need intensive work and care and programs which suit that particular 'end of spectrum-type' situation. And then you've probably got a couple of varying levels of alternative-type programs that are gonna suit that particular at risk [group] better than mainstream.

But one the key factors of early school leaving is the relationship with teachers. So, if the relationship with the teacher or the teachers is not good, it doesn't matter what program you've got in that school, they're still not gonna want to be there. So that's a key issue, relationships and rapport with young people. That's gonna help the institute keep them in a setting.

I've watched over the years and I don't believe [the institute] has made a solid commitment. I'm not talking about VET in Schools. I'm talking more about the 'at risk' kids. You know there'll be funding that comes up periodically and they'll run a ten-week course and then the funding disappears so the course disappears. So there hasn't been a solid commitment from the institute in regard to ongoing [programs].

Regional campus manager

I think our major role is to provide sort of entry-level training into TAFE courses for these particular students such as a pre-vocational-type program. In the regional campuses there has been a distinct lack of particularly trade-type training over the years. It was centralised, our syllabus changed and more resources were needed for delivery. When it became centralised it made it very difficult for young school leavers to get into trades. Unless they were apprenticed they couldn't do the pre-vocational programs because of travel problems. So there's certainly a role for [the institute] there.

There's a blurring of the line [between TAFE and schools]. We've provided training in the pre-vocational area using the voucher system for students and that's worked reasonably well—although it's fairly narrow, we only operate in two specific areas; that is, retail and building and construction. But there's some demand from people in other areas where they'd like us to do some training, but perhaps it's an unrealistic demand. They expect us to be able to deliver a mirror of whatever's being delivered in [the major regional campus]. And of course we can't do that because of resources and also numbers.

Managed Individual Pathways worker

I think that TAFE has an obligation to provide appropriate training for early school leavers. I think that TAFEs really should work with that target group because of the resources that they have. [BRIT] targets this group in terms of providing services for young people who are entitled to the TAFE youth entitlement voucher. I think that that is a great start, but I don't think it goes far enough. I think that we have a huge population in [this regional city] of young people who have either school-refused or made choices, not in a clinical school-refuser sense, that school is not the option for them. We should be providing options for them regardless of their parental income threshold. Which is what happens with the voucher.

I use the term ‘school refuser’ because I think that it’s a little bit different from a young person who doesn’t feel like they need to be at school. School refusal may be around issues such as bullying. It’s where a young person has made a choice and they have stood their ground and they will not attend school. That’s different from a young person who may be attending school and not getting the most out of it, and different from a young person who maybe playing truant every now and then. It’s actually a young person who has made a conscious decision that they’re not going to school anymore.

Local Learning and Employment Network manager

There is a role for TAFE in relation to this group. That [view is] partly based on the understanding that alternative settings rarely work very well unless they’re for very small groups of young people who really have such severe learning difficulties or needs that they actually can’t manage them at all. Once you start setting up alternatives it’s stigmatising and I think that there’s a citizen’s right for every young person to have access to mainstream education through secondary schooling or TAFE.

Even if the secondary school insists it isn’t suitable for all young people, there is a role for TAFE. But that role should be negotiated with the secondary system on the end of the continuum, with high-level support, ACE and other employment and education support services on the other end.

There is a decision to be made about TAFE and this age group that’s about resourcing and the planning. And TAFE as it’s currently constructed doesn’t really offer an environment which is friendly enough for young people generally. Some like it because they are looking for a more adult environment. They don’t mind that there are no basketball courts and there’s not a lot of planned activities they can link into. Nor a lot of support networks. But I think there are quite a lot of young people who would still prefer to have a proper, planned community. Not just in the adult learning sense to come in and out as you please and you may not speak to anyone all day. Or you may. I think that if TAFE’s going to take on this age group, they need to think in terms of how they deliver the general support and other services in a different way.

That actually raises questions about the appropriateness of the staffing to deal with these younger school leavers. Primary school teachers learn how to teach. Secondary school teachers don’t do a lot of learning how to teach. [In a] TAFE environment we can focus on professional development to make people a bit more skilled and encourage people to learn how to learn. I think that’s some skilled stuff that we may need to train people up or get new people in for.

Summary: Should Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE be dealing with early school leavers?

There is a consistent view from respondents that the institute, along with a number of providers and community stakeholders, does indeed have a responsibility for, and should have a commitment to, early school leavers, and in particular, school refusers. Discussion around the assumption of this responsibility by the institute revolves around four issues.

1. Schools are unable to cater for the group since the culture of schools is inappropriate for the group. The Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE can and should provide a ‘safety net’ for school refusers.
2. Although the institute has not had recent, extensive involvement in this client group, it does offer a suite of appropriate programs and physical resources. It also has the advantage of having vestiges of a traditional learning culture closer to the old ‘tech system’ than do secondary schools.

3. The 'early school leaver group' is non-homogenous and a 'one-size-fits-all' approach is inappropriate. The group generally and individuals need intense and highly specialised intervention.
4. Structural and resource (funding) factors inhibit the institute's ability to provide a proper, planned community environment for young people. Few teachers have the skills or experience to connect with or create learning environments for groups of young, disengaged learners.

What are the appropriate programs?

Institute manager

What you're essentially dealing with is the concept of bridging ... from what their current knowledge is to some level where they're capable of doing some sort of vocational course to get skills and get a job. I've never been totally satisfied with the products we offer in this area. We normally offer some sort of 'cut down' VCE [Victorian Certificate of Education] or a different state version of that and that's the sort of thing that most of those students have been repelled from already.

One of the mistakes we've made in vocational education over the last few years is our lessening of the availability of true pre-vocational programs. They were very, very valuable indeed. And as far as AQF [Australian Qualifications Framework] level, you're looking essentially at levels one and two products which have a fair amount of general learning in them but are vocationalised. A pre-voc type of course is required. There is a responsibility on government to produce products which are appropriate within the TAFE sector.

[There is little difference in what's required] between someone with Year 10 and someone with Year 11. We all know to survive in this world you need to be educated far beyond Year 11 so one has to assume that they are also a push-out. They didn't like the product delivered in secondary schools. So there has to be something for them because a person educated to Year 11, essentially is going to be a labourer for the rest of their lives.

Head of a teaching centre

People who have completed Year 10 but not Year 11 are 15- or 16-year-olds and higher. And the kind of programs we're offering at the moment are usually [at a] low certificate level. So we've got the CGAE [Certificate in General Education for Adults] ... which is a very good course in terms of the literacy and numeracy [modules].

A lot of the young people who come to us have literacy and numeracy issues and that course is quite appropriate for them. There's also the Certificate II in Vocational Education, which we're currently using for that group as well. Both the CGEA and the Certificate II in Vocational Education and Training have the opportunity to have electives or modules which have vocational kind of placements. 'Tasters', so to speak.

Some of them, even though they're leaving and haven't completed Year 11, may have a clear idea of what they want to achieve. So these kinds of programs may not necessarily be appropriate. They may not necessarily need them, they may actually want to go off and do some other study. A lot of our social and community studies courses are for students who are a lot older. I have a limited understanding of some of the other programs across the college. But if [early school leavers] are not sure what they want to do, and if they do have literacy and numeracy issues, or one or the other, then these programs are quite good.

[The programs we offer] give [early school leavers] some opportunities to have a taster of different areas, but they also build on some of those, not only literacy and numeracy skills, but

life skills. Living skills emphasise connectedness. A lot of it's about getting them connected with their peers so that they're not at home by themselves, getting them connected back with employment possibilities. And it's about transition, about putting them on a pathway or negotiating with them where that pathway may lead. But also acknowledging that, with some young people, it's like they need to have several stepping-stones before they eventually get to some point. So I think we do have a role here.

We need to be seriously looking at partnerships with schools. Schools do have a responsibility, and I'm sure they're accepting that to some extent, but I'd like to look at more options where TAFEs and schools are doing things jointly. And it may be that [young people] are at school still for two days a week and they're at TAFE for two days a week. Because one of the things that we can offer, particularly now that tech schools are no longer around, is some of those vocational options. Those certificate levels I and II stuff.

We're talking about 15-, 16-, 17-year-olds coming in to do vocationally orientated programs: at that age you do need the lower-level competencies ... but the difficulty is that the competencies at a certificate II level, even in construction, are still a bit too advanced for them.

It's like there's another step that they need to go into. Another more basic level of competency which they need to go through before they can then work on to that later. And that's the dilemma: we have to offer accredited training and we can only go with what's around. So it's kind of like there's still a gap at that lower level.

Marketing person

For pre-Year 11 students we offer bridging course in maths and English and numerous certificate I courses. These 'pre-apprenticeship' courses are skill-based and prepare people for specific employment areas, giving them a 'taste' of a particular study area before embarking on a particular apprenticeship.

For post-Year 11 we offer a range of courses through to advanced diploma. All certificates have specific employment objectives. The institute also offers tutorial assistance for students experiencing difficulties.

Regional campus manager

We chose building in particular [at our regional campus] because we had a number of people who had expressed interest in that area. It's a hands-on trade-type project. We've looked at auto[motive studies] but it's difficult to set up an auto shop resource-wise. We also chose retail because we were looking around for something else that we could offer, particularly for females. I mean there's no bars to females doing the building construction course, but historically there haven't been many enrolments in that area.

It seems as though the VCE has failed for some people and there's been a gap there. Early school leavers and the community generally are looking to fill that gap. Now the schools have realised that they're moving towards changing their syllabus and now is the time to talk about the new proposed program. They're talking about offering TAFE programs down as low as Year 10. And I really have some major concerns about that. I believe [school] staff in particular don't understand training packages and the fact that training packages were framed around assessment, particularly on-the-job assessment. Year 10s in my view really aren't mature enough to go on the job and to actually do the assessments as they're written down in the training packages.

I think secondary schools, when they've realised they've got to do something else, have looked around and reached out and grabbed at TAFE rather than trying to develop programs of their own. I believe that's what they should do. I think that there's nothing wrong with them developing programs which fit into the training packages, but for them to come and use a

training package and have participants in say Year 12 coming out with level III qualifications, I believe, is just way out of line. It's not targeted to the workplace and that's what the packages are really written for. And the [school] staff don't really understand the training packages. I mean it's hard enough for us to understand and they're our bread and butter.

I'd go back to the pre-vocational type courses in which they benefit from mixing with adults. That's another benefit I suppose of the TAFE system where if the program's run entirely at a secondary school, they haven't done all that cross-fertilisation.

It's a good role model where you've got adults who have perhaps got a bit of wisdom. It's wisdom, it's work ethic, it's responsibility, it's the fact that someone, adults, they'll have financial burdens on them. They realise that they do have to work and they're better, I know it's a generalisation, but some of them meet deadlines better. And they take the responsibility of going to a workplace at a higher level. The younger students perhaps won't dress appropriately, whereas the adult knows they've gotta present if they're going into an office to work. In one of our major factories and they need to dress appropriately and some of the secondary students don't realise that even though it's pointed out numerous times.

Managed Individual Pathways worker

I think that the appropriate programs are taster programs. Many courses which TAFE offers for vocational training are not open to young people, because they haven't made a conscious choice 'I want to be a tradey' or 'I want to be a carpenter'. If they think that they might want to work with timber [for example], it's important to put in taster programs which allow young people to have a snapshot of a different profession, so that they can make an educated choice about where they're going.

Young people who leave before Year 11 often haven't had work experience so they haven't had that traditional experience of having a taste of a career or an option. Or that may not have been an option for them when they were at school if they'd stayed on 'til Year 11. Most young people who leave school before their VCE, their Year 12, they will often have made a decision that they don't want to do the final year, because they have a particular direction in mind or Year 12 is too stressful.

We have an obligation to provide some options which are more vocational and hands-on. I think that [for those who leave earlier than Year 11] we have to provide hands-on learning training, not academic learning, for those young people who have different learning styles from the traditional 'sit down and shhh' model. So I think that the taster model is one which has not been explored enough and should be more widely offered.

People [who] have finished [Year 11] are in a different situation. What they need is often a lot of support around them recognising that whatever course they are doing is equivalent to VCE. I think there's a lot of pressure in the community. Young people see VCE as the only option and if you don't do Year 12 you've failed. Traditionally young people if they'd finished Year 10, would be looking at an apprenticeships and creating pathways for themselves into apprenticeships or traineeships. And often they've done Year 11 because they were waiting for those apprenticeship or traineeship to come along.

So their needs for support are very different. Often they come with a lot of baggage about feeling like they've failed, about feeling like the option that they thought would be easy has not happened. So they are very disillusioned. And I think that we really need to look at giving them hands-on learning once again so that they can experience some success as soon as they walk through the door. And in some ways that's the same for under-Year 11 leavers.

The Certificate in General Education for Adults is becoming more and more understood in the community. I think that's a good one to go with because if you start a new literacy or numeracy

course or a new label for it, then the community isn't aware of it. But people who are offering apprenticeships and traineeships aren't aware of it. I like the CGAE.

Local Learning and Employment Network manager

Given the [state] government's commitment to 90% of young people having Year 12 or equivalent by 2010, we do need to be looking at equivalent programs within the TAFE system. But I think there also needs to be an understanding that bridging is still always an important role that TAFE need to play. Literacy and numeracy skills may need further development ...

The new Certificate of Applied Learning model offers some potential for broadening the VCE. And I hope that it is implemented in a way that actually just broadens the VCE and doesn't become an alternative path but divergent path. I like the model. If you think about an Arts Degree, if someone's got an Arts Degree, it doesn't really tell you much all about what they might have done. You then need to say to them, 'Well what were your majors?' If we look at VCE, it's, 'So I've got my VCE'. 'Well what were your major areas of study?' It may be vocational. It may be academic.

I think, what I've learnt about the young people who are exiting early is that it really is about learning styles. And sometimes it's about social and personality issues which they bring with them to the school context. I think they really need to learn how to learn because that hasn't happened for them in their formative years in the secondary system.

When they are exiting [school] that early, there is a high chance that they don't actually understand how to learn and [therefore] reject learning. The ideas around project-based learning would promulgate the need for 'hands on', particularly for boys. They need to have some meaning in what they're doing. What is in it for them? How does it work? And how to actually do that and redirect interactive learning rather than rote. At that level when they're exiting they need to learn to learn.

Summary: What are the appropriate programs for early school leavers?

Respondents identified few specific programs, but identified three program design criteria for successful programs. Those factors were:

1. The group needs a vocational outcome and this probably requires a pre-vocational commencement point. Respondents referred to 'taster' courses which lead to a range of potential options—including work—which re-connect them to their peers and to the community. Delivery will need to respond appropriately to their idiosyncratic learning preferences.
2. They need literacy and numeracy competence and self-esteem which underpin and affect vocational participation and success. In responding to these requirements, the Certificate of General Education for Adults and the proposed Certificate of Applied Learning are possible models.
3. Seriously negotiated partnerships and collaborations, such as those between secondary schools and the institute as equals are required. At the moment there is a perception that schools see the institute as quite separate from what they do and have little understanding of vocational competence and the training package infrastructure which supports teaching of those competencies.

Nature of the liaison between Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE and schools

Manager

There probably isn't as much liaison as there needs to be because there is too much competition between the TAFE sector and secondary schools. And that competition stops them from talking frankly about such issues. They try to keep the market to themselves. The liaison which is occurring probably isn't enough, which is why they created the LLEN [Local Learning and Employment Network]. There's obviously a discontinuity between schools and TAFE just to create the whole concept of the LLEN. People are falling through the gaps. Somehow we've got to make it a seamless transition.

The LLEN is trying to essentially hold together some sort of pathway between different education systems, so kids aren't lost. Now it's early days yet, but I don't see how one person with a budget which [a Local Learning and Employment Network manager] has got, could possibly cover the area and carry out the tasks [identified]. All [they] could possibly do is identify one or two key things that might make a difference, and concentrate on those.

Head of a teaching centre

[Our current relationship] has an underlying competitive sort of element to it. On the one hand, some of our VET in Schools programs in our area are certainly working quite well. I know on the other hand, that schools see us as very businesslike and think that we're too expensive and so on.

With our youth access program we're actually going around more and more to the schools. We have to be very careful though. We don't want to put an option in front of young people which says: 'Come here'. But we want to be able to say to schools, 'Look, if this person is a school refuser for whatever reason, a couple of days at a TAFE would be appropriate to give them some [time at TAFE and some at school]'.

It's a tension around trying to promote a program which should be seen not as an alternative but as a legitimate choice, but not wanting to open up a door which many young people may not have gone through had they not heard about it but stayed on at school. There needs to be some kind of selection process or assessment process. Because I don't think we [TAFE] are the answer to everyone.

Manager VET in Schools

Part of my role as manager is to liaise on behalf of [the VET in Schools program coordinator] or on behalf of the institute. And sometimes it can be a confusing role. You can talk to a secondary college coordinator and their VET in Schools is a big role and they'd probably like to see us doing all of the organisational structure of it and it can be difficult talking with them. Because you can walk away and think that we've clearly outlined what's going on, not in all cases, but in some cases. And you find that the message that comes back is totally different. They still want to proceed with their methods ...

It can range from auspicing a course delivered at the secondary college by the secondary college themselves, a total course. It could be a combination of Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE delivering part of that course and the secondary school delivering part of that course. Or it could be the institute delivering all the course. So there are lots of combinations.

Secondary schools are really paranoid about a memorandum of understanding. That's been drilled into them somewhere along the line. So part of the communication process is to get that memorandum of understanding right in the first place. And sometimes that takes quite a while. And fortunately enough this year we've changed our memorandum of understanding over to an ongoing contract—which will take the pressure off us going back and negotiating for sometimes months on end about a memorandum of understanding and how we should deliver. So there's lots of work there just in that negotiation.

We also find, even this year, it's quite interesting because we've got [one secondary college] requesting multimedia studies. People [in schools] as far away as [50 to 100 km away] want to do furniture studies. There's lots and lots of new secondary colleges coming, coming and asking for VET in Schools programs. They come to us because in the end it's the quality of the delivery that's accepted, it's a standard that we deliver and the support we can offer. You hear a lot about the 'tick and flick' people who are in and they're gone, but they don't offer the support. Their quality's not as good as what we offer [this institute].

Marketing person

We regularly talk to students, including some at risk of leaving school early and take them on campus tours. This contact is nurtured through our meeting with careers teachers via the [Regional] Careers Association which meets monthly. We also talk to students and encourage them to attend open day and Tertiary Information Service evenings.

VET in Schools program coordinator

It's mainly communication on the phone about delivery of VET in Schools. Basically it's about nuts and bolts delivery.

When we started with VET in Schools in 1994, it used to be called 'dual recognition'. And you build up the rapport and the relationships with the schools over time. I think that's really critical because I know that this institute is reasonably pricey compared to other deliverers and yet they still don't seem to be talking to other deliverers. Because we've set up a really good rapport with those schools, they seem to just keep coming back, even though there are cheaper alternatives. We provide training delivery, venues, coordination.

Regional campus manager

We've had historically, had a thing called the 'local network that's been operating in [our regional town] for three years. It started off really well with a focus particularly on students who were in this difficult age bracket: the ones who weren't coping at school and they gave terrific support. It was mutually helpful. There has been a change in focus in recent times. The networks [like Local Learning and Employment Network] have become increasingly more bureaucratic and focused on secondary school activities.

Managed Individual Pathways worker

Currently as part of the Managed Individual Pathways project, or MIPs, we work with all the pathway workers in junior and secondary colleges. We consult with them about what options we're providing for young people and see if that's going to meet the pathways which young people are identifying. What happens [here] with the junior schools is at the end of Year 10 they can actually identify who's not going onto [the local regional senior secondary] and why not. So they've actually got some information there about what pathways would be useful and what would be appropriate. So we're trying to tap into that pathway of knowledge and that information and create some more options: which is why we're doing a taster course next year.

Managed Individual Pathways have got a long way to go. We've only been running for three months at this institute. I think that there are some real issues around how they work in TAFEs in terms of it only being for young people who are on the youth voucher. I think, taking off my pathways hat, that the target group who is actually the most needy are those young people who cannot afford to choose and switch courses because they're not voucher-eligible. They often have to pay a couple of hundred dollars or more in some cases to do a course. If they change their mind half way through because it's not the course they wanted to do because they haven't been given the right guidance, then there's a real issue about their being able to afford access to training.

Local Learning and Employment Network manager

Yes, obviously the liaison in relation to VET in Schools has been almost a business-based one in terms of [the institute] delivering programs for the schools or in partnership with them. So I don't think the liaison has really ever focused on looking at sharing the issues about the needs of young people who fall through the gaps. That is an aspect that we [at this institute] need to get more involved in. I think the pathways project gives an opportunity for that. And currently we are pretty involved through [the Managed Individual Pathways worker]. I think they're doing a very good job of starting to connect with schools, with the young people and what's happening for them and where they're going.

Summary: Nature of the liaison between Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE and schools

Some of the issues about liaison were highlighted and summarised in relation to earlier questions. Additional points about 'liaison' were that:

1. Schools see Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE as too businesslike and competitive. Because the two sectors don't liaise, there is a perception that some young people 'fall through the cracks' between the sectors.
2. Because schools tend to be very set in their ways and not used to the commercial and contractual realities of vocational education and training, a lot of personal contact is necessary to develop and nurture collaborative and sustainable relationships.

The relationship between Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE and schools through VET in schools

Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE's role in VET in Schools

TAFE manager

VET in Schools is structured not to succeed in my opinion. So it's not a matter of us getting on better with a local high school or looking at what we do and how we work together. It's a matter of governments sitting down at a very high level and working out how they are going to properly manage vocational education in the secondary education sector.

What they've created now is a hybrid system where they are pretending that high school teachers with a general education and who have lived in high schools all their life, are capable of delivering vocational competencies after completing a few hours of some course related to 'train the trainer' or the certificate IV with a 'top-up' from a degree to a Certificate IV of Workplace Assessment and Training. Anybody who knows serious vocational education knows that's hopelessly inadequate. So basically the system is structured for high school teachers to attempt to interpret

vocational competencies without the experiential base to successfully do so. Therefore there is a complete and utter compromise of standards of what occurs in VET in high schools. The structures that have been put in place will cause failure. There's no question. It's only a matter of time until the politicians realise that this is the case.

Managed Individual Pathways worker

I think the VET in Schools is a good program in terms of providing the vocational snapshot. I think that VET in a lot of schools, even though it was set up for young people who perhaps couldn't cope with formalised education for a long period of time, has become another 'high achiever' program. And only those young people who are doing well who could represent the school well to the community are getting access to it. So I think that's a huge issue in itself and the criteria [for selection] needs to be refined.

Other than that I think VET as a principle, as a concept is a really good concept. It's about access and equity and the hands-on learning. I also think that maybe VET shouldn't always be run in schools. Often young people make a choice about leaving school because of some sociological things which are going on. They feel like they are labelled, they feel like the teachers don't like them, they feel bullied. Some of that other stuff means they really should have access to a choice about where they study. And that access is fairly limited in terms of where they can choose to do that.

[The situation in rural town is quite different from that in cities]. The labels that are put to young people are very different. In our situation we have junior schools which feed into the one VCE college. What happens with that is that often young people go up to [the senior secondary college] with this vision of having this 'fresh start' but their labels have followed them. 'This young person a troublemaker, rah de rah'. So, that is an incredible difficulty: once a name is there for a young person, it does follow them. It's probably a little bit more of an issue in a regional or a rural area—because young people don't get the fresh start that they are told that they will get when they go to their senior secondary college.

Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE is a big institution. I think sometimes the smaller agencies feel that they are best suited because they are a small place and should get [the funding]. I think there's a bit of 'nose out of joint' stuff about some of the funding that this institution gets that they don't.

This being a big monolithic three-storey place is something that we're gonna be working on desperately in terms of our Managed Individual Pathways. What we're looking at doing is creating an area that is known as a 'youth information spot' or ... trying to create a 'youth unit'. But I don't necessarily know if that's the title. The difficulty that we have currently is that there is no one person [here who] young people can speak to. So we can't do any promotion around the theme, 'See so and so, they're friendly'. And word of mouth is the most effective way to promote things. We can't actually do that because there's no one person that they can speak to.

As part of Managed Individual Pathways we are hoping to set up a process that workers, parents and young people can [recognise about] this particular spot in TAFE. That they can ring on a certain number and they will get someone who is trained to work with young people. I think that long term we need to work on some other structures about, say, the [institute] information centre or other places being more youth-friendly. As a short-term measure, we need to get young people feeling comfortable with the environment and having relationships. The research says that the most effective way to engage a young person is to have a relationship with them, and get to know them one on one. So that's what we're hoping to do. And I think that any TAFE that doesn't do that would have trouble accommodating young people's needs, unless the young people have got an incredibly high maturity level.

Some of the staff here feel that young people having a right to participate in TAFE is an imposition. And that imposition [may be] about their own career goals, that they don't want to work with young people or kids, they wanna work in the adult learning sector. I think a lot of staff feel that the young people are being pushed upon them. That has huge implications for how classroom activities are undertaken. It has huge implications for how much support a young person receives in an adult classroom. So there certainly are a lot of noses out of joint. Having said that, there are a lot of people who are going, 'Yeah, great, just tell me how I can do it'.

Local Learning and Employment Network manager

This institute is obviously involved in some VET delivery. From the schools' point of view they see us as far too expensive and they're often looking to private providers or ACE providers to pick up some of the roles. So that's an issue that needs to be addressed in the whole planning of VET in Schools delivery. TAFE should have a major role, not only because it makes sense in terms of user-fee sources but also in the issues around trainers needing to have currency and needing to be closely linked with industry. TAFE is set up to focus on those aspects.

If the schools are to set up a strong vocational learning centre within them, they would need to develop that culture and that ideology and have more of a sense of industry people coming and going in jobs. And really, in that sense, the duplication doesn't make a lot of sense. But I do think that perhaps the schools could be delivering some of the certificate I and II stuff at an earlier level. Certainly some of the transition vocational training and the Certificate of Applied Learning may have areas which would be leading into certificate III and IV in TAFE.

Summary: Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE's role in VET in Schools

This question about Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE's role in VET in Schools elicited two responses about VET in Schools itself. These were:

1. VET in Schools is a hybrid, unsustainable and 'pretend' system. It actually destroys the credibility and value of vocational education and training by using poorly prepared and inexperienced staff in inappropriate environments.
2. VET in Schools shouldn't be run in schools. VET in Schools has tended to become elitist, with only the smarter and 'more presentable' students being successful.

There are some important repercussions for Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE practice.

1. This institute is perceived by several informants as a daunting institution and not particularly youth-friendly. Earlier comments suggested staff were poorly prepared or unwilling to work with younger participants.
2. In whatever planning the institute undertakes, it is essential that [it is understood that] students don't refuse to attend school because of factors associated with VCE or VET. They leave for social reasons as well. Systems have to respect these choices.

The ability of schools to deliver VET in Schools

TAFE manager

Fundamentally, high schools are not in a position to teach vocational competencies. In a small range, a range of narrow areas [like computing] they are. But most of the areas are so vocationally focused on the job that high school teachers are not equipped to do it. And the problem for us is that their misinterpretation of the standards within competencies produces for us, a whole range of training that we have to recognise but we know is largely second-rate. Industry knows it's second-rate, every TAFE institution in the country knows it's second-rate. The only people who

don't know it's second-rate are the high schools and apparently our political masters. Now eventually you know what's going to hit the fan, and industry's going to be up in arms about the watering-down of the standards of training in their industry training areas.

We are going to be blamed for it. You can go down to any area in [this institute] and talk about VET in Schools and they will give you horror stories about the quality of the graduates we are getting and the training we have to accept. And the retraining costs we are wearing because of the poor previous training. So fundamentally, when I talk about government making decisions, they've got to decide—where is vocational education taught? Or indeed how is it taught? And I believe government has got to force a situation where proper vocational educators are used in high schools to teach vocational training.

And by that I'm not talking about TAFE teachers. I'm talking about vocational educators with industry experience. And it means that either high schools have to reduce the number of generalist teachers they actually employ and employ people similar to the way TAFE does, out of industry, part time. Or they use TAFE lecturers or lecturers from another RTO [registered training organisation]. Or they send their people here to TAFE with other registered training organisations to do their training. It's the only way they're going to do it.

Manager VET in Schools

It depends on the area: it's a yes and no. In hospitality and in office administration, secondary colleges would normally be set up with their own labs for office administration and information technology. When you start getting into engineering studies, automotive, furniture and some of those subjects ... the secondary colleges haven't got the resources there but interestingly enough, they may claim they've got the qualified staff. But that's part of our role: to check the qualifications of the people delivering the course. A good example is we had a secondary college maths teacher delivering automotive. When it came to the issue of issuing a qualification, we were strong enough to say, 'No. We won't give those students that qualification because of the qualifications of the person delivering the course'. And they accepted that and fixed that up.

VET in Schools Program coordinator

In hospitality you need a trade certificate. You need to be a chef to be able to deliver the cooking components. And you need to have had food and beverage experience for front of house. That's critical from a quality point of view, because if you're delivering it in a 'Mickey Mouse' way, then it's just not worth doing from the student's point of view. And I think the students really like the change of venue and atmosphere that TAFE has. They really enjoy coming to a TAFE college, they say. And they're being treated like adults.

A regional campus manager

VET in Schools is a good thing. It's a way of introducing students to a different environment. But I've concerns about it actually being delivered in the secondary schools. There's the staffing. They have wound down the workshops in the secondary schools and the trade staff haven't been replaced. Some trade areas are being run by teachers who are craft teachers, not tradesmen. And even the maintenance of the equipment in the workshops is deteriorating.

There are major occupational health and safety problems in [school] workshops. The whole area needs to be re-invigorated in the secondary schools. They need to perhaps take their focus away from VET programs to develop their own programs, which would link into VET programs, into our training packages. But in some areas, like the computer area in particular, those programs have worked quite well. The barriers between qualifications at a secondary school and a TAFE are much reduced in that they'll fit in much better.

The negotiations between the provider and the regional schools as to costs and charges and classroom times are difficult. The money's paid to the secondary school. They want to hang onto as much as they can. We wanna get paid a reasonable rate so it doesn't cost us money and all that stuff becomes real murky. The [person] has proved to be fairly difficult to deal with, because he's always looking for a deal. He wants to change the rules and get a better deal for his kids. Which is reasonable, but all those things then mess up the waters and it becomes more difficult, more time-consuming and then at the end, quite often the results are their responsibility to process and they're not done. That happens frequently.

You can't turn the clock back but I think back to prior to 1987 we operated TAFE out of the regional [tech] college. It was a good system where staff members could move between both areas. It gave the staff a bit more variety. They had secondary school students and they had a part load of TAFE students. For them, for us, and I was one of them at that time, that was a terrific way to operate.

Local Learning and Employment Network manager

Well, I think that the culture of teaching is very different in the school system and that there is not as much focus on adult learning as a model. And I think that the old [school] pedagogy and cultures are still alive and well. That doesn't equip them well for the lead into VET. As it is currently constructed with competency-based learning, there are problems in terms of resourcing. The whole idea of doing mock, artificial learning environments doesn't work in many areas of study. The real opportunity is in hospitality. TAFE usually have a restaurant that's a real one. They usually have a hairdressing facility that's a real one. And that's a better environment I think for learning.

The VET in Schools relationship

TAFE manager

There is tension between TAFE colleges and high schools right across this country and it's caused by competition for students. And the current government is encouraging competition and it is being dysfunctional, well and truly.

The average high school ... is funded on the basis of the number of students they have and that determines their structures, how many of this they can have, how many of that, their salaries. The entire lot is there. And then a school goes ahead and forms a program of education to deliver, covering a wide variety of subjects. They are given an amount of money which funds VET in addition to the budget they get for their normal delivery. But it's a top-up amount of money. It doesn't fully fund the VET delivery. The top-up they get is meant to fund the difference between the teacher-pupil ratios in a high school and the teacher pupil ratios in a TAFE college. They're funded at about 25 to one most of them, something in that order. We're funded at 14 to one. They're funded for the additional ten.

So to make the funding work, they've got to drop off a couple of their traditional subject areas, use that money plus the top-up to buy VET to replace those subject areas. What they actually do is deliver all the usual ones, have the small amount of money which is the top-up to buy a bit of extra VET and then blame TAFE because they're too expensive.

That fundamentally is the stress between TAFE colleges and high schools. It's going to require someone at a very senior level to sit down and say, 'Hey, sort this out, let's put a structured place that properly does it'. And the answer is, to drop off those two subjects and to then employ vocational educators instead with the top-up money or drop off those two subjects and that money comes to TAFE for us to deliver it. They're the only serious answers, they really are.

Manager VET in Schools

[Schools would] love to see the cost of the delivery reduced or removed. If that happened we'd have an enormous influx of students. I think cost is the big issue. Secondary colleges say that they are bearing the burden of the costs of delivery and that TAFE's too expensive. Whereas what TAFE is saying is that we need to recover our costs for that delivery. That's fair enough on both parts. So to improve the issue there really needs to be someone looking at the delivery of fees and charges.

The other interesting thing in improving delivery is school busing. Most secondary colleges have school buses. Within [the institute's] region and the large area that we cover, the issue of getting students to us for training is a big one. Students could travel by bus from [another town half an hour away] to here.

I'm not really sure how we improve [the relationship between TAFE and school]. It's an administrative thing, it's a careers thing, it's visits to us, it's visits backwards and forwards between TAFE and secondary. It might be training some of the secondary staff in some of the programs that we do so that they do know what's going on. It certainly is a big issue. If that relationship was improved, the flow-on benefit, whether we're looking at students at risk or we're looking at pathways for the young people, would certainly be great.

VET in Schools Program coordinator

I think [the relationship can be improved] by going and chatting and getting to know people. And it's that rapport which you build up over meetings and so on. It's networking and PR [public relations] and to be seen to be providing a supportive, quality service. The fact that TAFE students do get jobs is proven. There are job pathways there.

TAFE doesn't play a big enough role at the moment but can, in regard to skilling up. Whether it be for jobs or whether it be for life skills. And there's a lot of work that could be done in that area that TAFE currently isn't doing. There's a huge area out there that could be explored in regard to alternative type-life skill programs. People could learn how to build their own home, they could learn how to set up their own vegie garden and be more self-sufficient.

Local Learning and Employment Network manager

There's a funding issue that needs to be addressed because I think that's partly causing big problems in the [school-TAFE] relationship. There needs to be a sense of who owns the programs or who owns the students when they're getting the programs, and sort that out for a funding base. I think there also needs to be more cooperation and partnership in the planning that's focused on what's the best outcome for the young person. Not necessarily what's the best thing for the profile and budget of [the provider]. It should be done in a way that's going to create the best opportunities for the young people about being able to do a certain course. So I think concentrating on the partnerships and sorting out areas of responsibility [is important]. And one dovetails into the other.

Things like site sharing or sharing of staff are important. That sort of cooperation needs to occur at the senior level. For instance in [this regional city] the principals meet [at the same time day each week]. I believe that the [TAFE manager] should be a part of that to get issues raised at that level rather than the leadership not driving and understanding what some of the issues are. The cooperation should start there. There should be task groups formed to look at the idea of sites here and there. Not only for cost-efficiencies but for better delivery. We obviously do it in a couple of [institute regional campuses].

Summary: The ability of schools to deliver VET in Schools

The inappropriateness of staff in secondary schools to teach to an acceptable level of competence was the main and consistent concern in response to this question. There were some specific exceptions (information technology was noted). The end result is seen to be a problem for industry having to accept second-rate graduates, and for the institute having to retrain under-skilled graduates at our own expense.

Schools have few acceptable physical resources and little experience of an adult learning model and none with competency based training and assessment.

Is VET in Schools meeting the needs of young people?

TAFE manager

My answer is no. I don't think they possibly could because the culture [of secondary schools] is one of general education, developing the person, their thought processes rather than vocational skills. And VET is seen as an add-on.

So the bias is always toward general education. I would argue that in the cohort Year 11 and 12, there is a very strong argument that the emphasis should be on vocational education, not general education. Vocational education should be the main thrust with a bit of general education in there to support it, which is really the TAFE model. I don't believe that most generalist educators in high schools would agree with that statement at all. And because of that they don't offer a range of products in Year 11 and 12 which meet the needs of that group, which genuinely need vocational education.

And you get absurdities such as—there are high schools and indeed the Department of Education in this state currently talking about pushing TAFE courses and certificates down to grade 10 and grade 9. You know, again they're only doing that because they've got kiddies that are playing up in that area because their products aren't meeting their needs and they're trying to solve it by throwing them into a TAFE course. I do believe there is an argument to maintain a generalist education to a certain level before going vocational. And I think you've got to think very seriously before pushing vocational courses to that level. Because really, you're locking in some kid to a future career when they're 12 or 13 years old, which is a little bit unfair.

Manager VET in Schools

I think the current qualifications which TAFE offer are actually new and exciting to secondary school students. Where you have horse studies, hospitality, you have sport recreation, you have, you know, things that they've never heard about. On a recent visit from one of the secondary colleges with the students over to our industry-training centre, the first thing these people wanted to see was the plumbing department. Because, 'That's what we do back home'. Everyone does plumbing, and the mindset wasn't even opened up to furnishings and carpentry. What's carpentry? Building houses. What about cabinet making? What about all these sorts of things? So the scope of offerings is quite exciting.

The secondary colleges are starting to back at say Years 8 and 9. They're not asking us to deliver a full course of whatever it may be, but they're asking us to deliver 'sprinklings' of competencies. Like a little bit of a supermarket of skills to entice the student to continue on. The other thing that would worry me about VET in Schools ... is the pressure that's put on those young kids to do another course on top of another course. So they're doing their VCE even though VET in Schools and the programs we do is part of that, but suddenly a student finds that they've got a

full engineering program on their plate. Almost an apprenticeship in the same year as they're doing their VCE. So lots of pressure on the kids.

VET in Schools Program coordinator

I think the VET in Schools programs are terrific. However, I do believe that some kids, that real 'at risk' category, are not really being catered for that well. I think there are some programs that could be developed for the more at risk. And I wouldn't say a VET in Schools student now was an at-risk person at all. I think the quality of the student has improved over the years. Maybe originally it was seen as a 'soft option'. I don't think it is anymore. I think it's seen as something that's worth having. Kids who don't even get to VCE are needing programs that suit their needs. But I think that's where we are lacking [at this institute].

Regional campus manager

I have some concerns that people can come out with a level III qualification that may not match our standards. That's really the major concern. The other is starting TAFE programs in Year 10. Now it may be certificate I, and perhaps if it is then we're right, but I'm sure they'll be looking to go higher than that.

Local Learning and Employment Network manager

In terms of the way the qualifications have been constructed, the moves are to take away the predominance of the Board of Studies and everyone aiming towards getting their VCE going to university, and then if they fail, ending up doing it at TAFE. There should be a broader range of qualifications within the VCE. There's areas like the arts that will maybe get picked up but as part of applied learning. But we should be creating a much broader education base for young people as a qualification. If you look at emerging industries, there's a whole lot of areas where we're not preparing young people for the new jobs. Some of the stuff around maybe environmental issues, greenhouse gas, that we're not really thinking ahead to start preparing young people with qualifications for the jobs which haven't even happened yet. And we can only do that if we start making better connections between the educators and industry and the innovation ...

Summary: Is VET in Schools meeting the needs of young people?

1. Previous references to culture, standards and staff, predicted a negative answer to this question. A number of reasons have been given.
2. VET in Schools students are under additional pressure—they are doing one course on top of another.
3. Regardless of the success or otherwise of VET in Schools courses, they are not catering for the group of school refusers.
4. VET in Schools isn't catering for students wanting access to 'emerging industries'.

Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE and school completers

Marketing the institute to school completers

TAFE manager

We not only send materials to schools, we send personnel to brief students. We do have resistance there because the high schools tend to be general educators. Most of their counsellors are general educators and most counsellors in the high school sector show a bias towards

continuation of general education, not vocational. But nevertheless, the material we do get to them we get to them quite well. We certainly do offer TAFE diploma alternatives through the university admissions system and we get a lot of our students in that way.

Head of a teaching centre

We send materials to schools to promote this institute. Marketing [people] are often involved or have a connection with careers counsellors at schools and we send information along to them. We wouldn't necessarily send along information about all our courses. That information is sent to careers officers from marketing. There's probably a bit of a gap there though in terms of what careers officers see, or how they perceive TAFE's, and whether they see them as a legitimate choice or not. We need to make stronger connections with schools. It's happened on a fairly ad hoc basis but is part of [the Managed Individual Pathways Manager's] role, to have those stronger connections with all the schools around here.

Marketing person

We prepare a monthly flyer for the [Regional] Careers Association which is distributed via email. We send flyers on particular courses such as pre-apprenticeship courses on a request basis from departments. Open day is promoted widely as a showcase day for all campuses with postcards targeted to Year 11 and Year 12 students throughout our catchment area. Some of our courses are also listed on the VTAC [Victorian Tertiary Admission Centre] guide. Other publications included the 'short course' guide, the course handbook and all the information available on our website.

Regional campus manager

We send out brochures but quite often our timing's not right. We do attend publicity days when they have all the schools. To some extent we could be overlooked by some of the local school population because there's only three programs that we offer full-time—office administration, retail and building construction.

Local Learning and Employment Network manager

I don't think [marketing] has much impact. Brochures really may be waste trees ... I don't think young people actually engage much with brochures. They get a whole lot of them in a bag and then they go out in the rubbish. In the expos ... I think they're more interested in the lollies other than the bags. I think it's the basic marketing tool, it's relationship marketing. And the material that we should send, should be much more interactive. We could use the website in a more constructive manner. To promote learning generally in the community we should, instead of brochures, have some stuff happening in the local papers about learning. That would have more impact on people than moving out to the paths that lead them into TAFE.

Summary: Marketing Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE to school completers

1. Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE expends considerable effort in marketing to schools but young people don't relate much to brochures.
2. Careers counsellors in schools are seen to be a barrier. Some informants do not see the institute as a legitimate choice for school completers.
3. Relationships with schools need to be re-thought.

Offering Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE places to school leavers

TAFE manager

School leavers are being offered places in the institute then not taking them up [It's a huge problem]. I've seen it in every TAFE college I've been in. It's a complete and utter mess. This concept of centralised enrolments through an admissions centre is fraught with difficulties for TAFE. They're trying to fit us into a university mould and it doesn't meet our client needs. Our clients want to wander through the front door of this place, enrol and be guaranteed a place. That's basically the client base we're dealing in.

Marketing person

Some courses require Victorian Tertiary Admission Centre entry as for uni courses for young people. For non-Victorian Tertiary Admission Centre courses, students apply direct to this institute. If they are suitable, they are sent a letter of offer.

Local Learning Employment Network manager

In the past young people often put TAFE down as a lower priority. If they get an offer at university they would then take that up and not take up the place. But I don't think it creates issues that are not [insurmountable]. It just means that someone further down the list gets an offer.

Summary: Offering Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE places to early school leavers

1. School leavers not taking up places is a problem. Many see applications as a 'sifting process'.
2. A Victorian Tertiary Admission Centre model doesn't suit institute participants.

Is Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE a 'second chance' option?

TAFE manager

The majority of high school teachers would see TAFE as a second option without question, although the number of enlightened ones who see TAFE as a genuine alternative to university is increasing. It has increased significantly over the last four to five years, no question. But the vast majority still see TAFE as a second option.

Head of a teaching centre

I think that [a 'second chance'] is the general perception within the community. Teachers are part of that. Schools are part of that. That's a long historical sort of attitude that's going to take us a long time to shift and change.

With the VET in Schools program it's shifted a bit. Being a parent ... I've actually been along to some of these sessions. Where schools have talked about options ... the emphasis is still on the road into universities, that's the pathway. That's the best pathway for your children. They are certainly talking more about TAFE, but it's usually only TAFE in terms of like a VET in Schools program. Not as a legitimate long-term goal to do a traineeship or an apprenticeship. Or even a diploma course at a TAFE institute. I don't hear that when I go along to these forums.

Manager VET in Schools

A lot of teachers think it's about the tenth choice. There are some teachers who really encourage pathways into TAFE, but normally you'd find the direction from career advisers that you should be going to uni and you should be reaching for the stars. And down the bottom of the list, if you fail all those, then you can go to TAFE.

Marketing person

It's definitely the widely held perception, but we're working towards altering this perception by highlighting our strengths. When some teachers contact us for campus tours they typically say: 'I have a group of kids who aren't going to make uni. I would like them to look at TAFE' or similar.

VET in Schools Program coordinator

I do definitely. Yeah, I think probably because teachers have been to university and they've got a mindset on what they've done. It's easy for them to give advice about how a young person can continue on in the university mode. I don't think they know a huge amount about TAFE. But I do think they consider that it is way down the list. It's not as prestigious obviously as getting a university degree ... in their own little mindset.

Regional campus manager

A lot of people [in county towns like this] see that tertiary education's a way of spreading their wings and getting out of [town] and doing something different. The local population seem to think it's a great thing if the kids stay in [town] and they are part of the whole picture. And they don't go out of the town and that's a good deal too. But gee. I'm quite pleased that my kids left town. They grow more, they see more ...

Managed Individual Pathways worker

I think that's an actual community perception. That unless you're looking at some of the trade certificates where the institute has been known as 'the trade provider' in terms of the training, yes. In a lot of courses and a lot of options people think that TAFE is like a cop-out. You couldn't make it in school. I think the perception's improving because of the name and the quality of training we provide. But I certainly don't think that we're alone in that. A lot of other places like [ACE providers] certainly have that reputation. Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE has done a lot of marketing around that and I think the issue is becoming smaller and smaller.

If we want to get anything happening for young people, whether we're looking at promoting it to young people, to parents, to community groups, to schools, to whoever, it needs to be an individual relationship with someone they trust. And I think the best way to promote things to schools is through providing the option of secondary consults. Our enrolments or the number of possible enrolments for next year has increased, the schools say, three-fold to how many they would have referred last year. Because they feel safe talking to someone they know they've got the right answers. They know that whoever they're speaking to is not just pushing this institute. They're pushing what's best for the young person. We need to have good staff with good reputations, who the community trusts and we need to promote that, the individual relationship stuff. For young people, for teachers, for everyone.

We need staff with proven a history in the field. A reputation around providing quality services, which is always a hard one to check out in an interview. Someone with an understanding and knowledge of networks, someone with a knowledge and understanding of what secondary

consults means. So secondary consultation in terms of saying ‘You can ring me if you’ve got a young person, don’t use names, maintain confidentiality’. ‘Give me a ring, check me out, I’m accountable to my community, see what I say.’ And secondary consults really is just a way of providing information without meeting that young person. But I think that secondary consults are more than that. I think they’re a way to hold yourself up into the community and be accountable.

I think that in a lot of ways, a lot of staff in TAFE institutions haven’t necessarily proven themselves in the field and I think that’s a huge implication. Because we’re trying to promote services and training and say ‘Come to us, we’ll train you really well’. And people are looking at the teacher going, ‘God, they couldn’t even cop it in the field, how can they train people to cop it in the field?’ So I think that’s a real issue and I think we need to promote and make ourselves more accountable [if we are to be seen as something other than second chance].

Local Learning and Employment Network manager

Yes, anecdotally from young people [we are seen as second chance]. They report that that’s what’s said to them by careers advice teachers quite directly. That you can always go to TAFE if you don’t get into the uni. So there’s not positive planning for coming towards TAFE. And there’s anecdotal stuff around about metals manufacturers. And teachers taking books to the factory and saying, ‘If you don’t study hard you’ll end up being left like this’. It needs quite a bit of marketing to turn it around. That TAFE is certainly the second option.

Summary: Is Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE a ‘second chance’ option?

1. Society and community think it is!
2. The conventional ‘pathway’ doesn’t have Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE (TAFE) identified as a destination.
3. It’s not a legitimate ‘second chance’ option.
4. (Careers) teachers are a real problem.
5. Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE is still perceived as a ‘trade’ school.
6. Again, it is individual relationships based on the specific needs of young people which will make the difference.

Appendix 4: Partner TAFE submission

VET In Schools
Culture, Policy and
The Employment and Training Impact

A TAFE paper on the role of TAFE
in catering for post-compulsory school-aged youth

Paper Prepared by:

Mr.

Manager

Post Compulsory Educational Pathways Department

ABC TAFE

Ms.

Coordinator

Vocational Pathways Program

ABC TAFE

Section 1: In your opinion, what should the role of TAFE be in relation to early school leavers?

Should TAFE institutes be dealing with this group at all? Does your institute target this group or should it be the responsibility of schools?

ABC TAFE undertakes its role as a public provider with careful consideration of the needs of its key stakeholders and the broader community. The core organisational values embrace ABC's commitment to its role as a public provider. These values include:

- ✧ providing quality educational services in an atmosphere of social justice
- ✧ being community focused
- ✧ being a leading and vibrant institute
- ✧ equal opportunity for all
- ✧ working together in teams
- ✧ an environment based on trust and loyalty
- ✧ business success
- ✧ a responsible approach to environmental issues in the workplace.

As the 2001 Victorian Training Provider of the Year it is appropriate that ABC TAFE takes a leading role in the delivery of education and training programs for the post compulsory years. The discussion paper of the Victorian Qualifications Authority, *Broadening opportunities for young people*, stated that 'The Ministerial Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Pathways in Victoria identified the range of qualifications available in the immediate post-compulsory years as a critical obstacle to enabling students to take full advantage of potential educational and training opportunities. This is especially the case for those students whose aspirations and preferred learning styles have been unable to be accommodated adequately within the VCE'.

While schools are more resourced than TAFE to provide educational, personal development and pastoral care programs suitable for the school-aged cohort, many early school leavers look to TAFE for a new environment or for different programs. It is our responsibility as a public provider to respond to this community need. This response is an integral part of the provision of an 'atmosphere of social justice', since the overall educational, training and employment outcomes of early school leavers are poor.

ABC TAFE as a public provider has broad responsibilities for providing vocational education for 15–19-year-olds. We have been particularly successful in the area of apprenticeships and traineeships. We currently provide training for around 5000 of Victoria's apprentices and trainees, and approximately half of these are 15–19 years of age, which is higher than the national average. In 2000, the position of a dedicated apprenticeship and traineeship coordinator was initiated to establish, develop and implement the coordination of apprenticeships and traineeships across the institute.

Our response in terms of VET In Schools has also been effective. In 2001, we had over 3000 VET In Schools students and almost 100 school partners. Our 'Options For Work and Education' (TAFE taster) program has also grown quickly, and serviced more than 300 students in 2001. This program targeted Year 10 students. It is our desire to enable this age group to access vocational education and training, and create connections for these young people to the VET sector, and to ABC TAFE. We have actively sought this connection by providing, since 1998, a key contact for all schools program in the schools liaison coordinator.

Yet, we recognise that we need to do more to cater for this cohort in our provision of pastoral care, extra supervision and available courses. We are currently reviewing all of these areas in parallel with the ongoing development of our Managed Individual Pathways Program.

What are appropriate programs in TAFE to deal with students who leave without completing Year 11 (AQF level? Literacy/numeracy? Pre-voc)? Is there a need for new programs? If so, what should these comprise?

Students who leave school without a Year 10 pass have limited options at TAFE. They can consider:

- ✧ Certificate I in Automotive
- ✧ Certificate I in Hospitality
- ✧ Certificate in Engineering (Basic)
- ✧ Adult Literacy Program—English as a second language/literacy units from the Certificate in General Education for Adults, levels I–IV
- ✧ Young Adults Industry Training Scheme (YAITs)—literacy and numeracy plus automotive skills
- ✧ other pre-apprenticeship programs.

At this stage, students with a Year 10 pass are eligible to enrol in the following pre-apprenticeship and pre-vocational courses:

- ✧ Certificate II in Automotive
- ✧ Certificate I in Furnishing
- ✧ Certificate II in Furnishing
- ✧ Certificate II in Building
- ✧ Certificate in Engineering (Basic)
- ✧ Advanced Certificate in Engineering (Welding)
- ✧ Certificate in Engineering (Avionics)
- ✧ Certificate in Engineering (Aircraft Mechanical)
- ✧ Certificate in Engineering (Aircraft Structures)
- ✧ Certificate II in Horticulture
- ✧ Certificate II in Sport and Recreation
- ✧ Certificate I and II in Retail Operations
- ✧ Certificate I in Business/Office
- ✧ Certificate I–III in Millinery
- ✧ Certificate I in Cookery
- ✧ Certificate II in Business (Office Administration)
- ✧ Certificate II in Information Technology
- ✧ Certificate III in Community, Health and Services (Personal Carer)

The following basic education courses are available:

- ✧ Adult Literacy Program—English as a second language/literacy, units from the Certificate in General Education for Adults, levels I–IV

- ✧ Basic education—reading and writing stream/oral communication stream, units of the Certificate in General Education for Adults, levels III and IV
- ✧ Bridging Program (maths/science skills)—units of the Certificate in General Education for Adults (students must be over 18 and at least 12 months away from full-time education, and have literacy skills)
- ✧ Young Adults Industry Training Scheme (YAITs)—literacy and numeracy plus automotive skills

Young Koorie people are eligible to enrol in:

- ✧ Coorong Tongala Course—certificate I
- ✧ Certificate II in Koorie Education, Training and Employment

The following programs are available to young people in the juvenile justice system:

- ✧ Melbourne Juvenile Justice Centre offers 14–17-year-old males educational assessment and vocational counseling. Courses commenced there can be completed later at as part of mainstream ABC TAFE classes.
- ✧ Senior Youth Training Centre offers an extension of the programs offered at the Melbourne Juvenile Justice Centre.
- ✧ Parkville Youth Residential Centre offers 14–21-year-old women educational assessment and the Certificate In General Education for Adults.

There is a need for new programs. Currently, young people who have reasonable literacy but who have met with limited success at school, have to choose between adult Victorian Certificate of Education at TAFE or a specific vocational program, focusing on an area they may know very little about. There is no general education (at less than VCE level) or general vocational program (offering a taste of different industry areas) offered as an introduction to the TAFE adult learning environment.

While units of the Certificate in General Education for Adults (CGEA) level I may be offered as part of basic literacy programs, the whole level I CGEA is not offered at ABC TAFE because it has been considered too low a level. The level II CGEA requires a level of literacy that some of this cohort have not achieved at school, particularly those who have not passed Year 10.

This year the institute has well over 200 youth voucher students (who are aged 15 to 17-years-old) enrolled in many different departments across the institute. This comes about because these students identify their area of training or education, with limited knowledge or support from their school. Most students enrol in automotive, administrative studies, pre-apprenticeship programs in building furniture and electrotechnologies, and the VCE group. Completion rates for these students tend to be lower than other students, probably at least partly due to their ill-informed choices at the point of entry. Often students will be enrolled in the VCE as it represents the option to which they have been taught to aspire and they have limited awareness of other options. Those students have exited the school system without any clear goals and who only know they wish to work and don't necessarily desire to undertake the VCE in the manner delivered by secondary schools, or indeed TAFE. This group, usually made up of significant numbers of youth voucher students, would probably benefit more from a generic vocational program which could link them back into the traditional VCE, a VET-focused VCE or apprenticeships.

Some options we are currently considering to address this concern in the future are:

- ✧ A general certificate II in VET
- ✧ Victorian Certificate in Applied Learning (VCAL)

✧ Certificate in General Education for Adults Level I

What are appropriate programs in TAFE to deal with students who leave with Year 11 but no senior certificate (AQF level? Literacy/numeracy? Pre-voc)? Is there a need for new programs? If so, what should these comprise?

The situation for Year 11 completers is not much different for those who have not completed Year 11. Compared with Year 10 completion, the only additional courses available after completing Year 11 are:

- ✧ Certificate III in Information Technology
- ✧ Certificate I in Electrical

For these students, the same concerns arise:

- ✧ the need for a broad vocational option which enables them to test their interest in different industries/VET programs
- ✧ the need for focus on personal development, communication skills, literacy and numeracy.

We would look to the same options we are considering for those who have not completed Year 11.

Is there currently any liaison between your institute and schools regarding this group? Could you please describe the nature of any such liaison? Are there aspects of school–TAFE liaison which could be improved with regard to early school leavers? What should happen ideally?

In 2000, the Post-Compulsory Education Pathways Department was established in recognition that liaison between ABC TAFE and schools needs to be coordinated. The functions of this department comprise:

- ✧ Schools Liaison Coordinator—key contact for school–TAFE partnerships for VET in Schools delivery and Year 10 Options for Work Education (TAFE taster) programs.
- ✧ North West Work Education Development Group (North West WEDG), an Enterprise and Career Education Foundation (ECEP) funded cluster—for work placement coordination for VET in Schools students in the north-west of Melbourne
- ✧ North West Pathways, an ABC TAFE service which provides pathways negotiators to local secondary and coordination and pathways negotiators for ABC's own program.

Ideally there should be more staff for each of the areas above. With increased staffing there could be:

- ✧ There should be improved response time for school requests for information, which at peak periods can be slower than desirable.
- ✧ More work placements should be available for VET in Schools students in a wider range of industries.
- ✧ Larger numbers of young people in schools could be serviced by pathways negotiators.
- ✧ ABC TAFE's Managed Individual Pathways program could more quickly implement broad changes within the institute and more dramatically improve intake and advisory services as well as outcomes for students.
- ✧ Staff are required to drive the decision-making and implementation of new courses to suit the school-aged cohort.

In addition, ABC TAFE has made a strong commitment to the Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs) in the area. This includes:

- ✧ Hume Whittlesea LLEN
- ✧ Maribyrnong Moonee Valley LLEN
- ✧ Inner Northern LLEN.

This, of course, involves planning in conjunction with schools.

Section 2: In your opinion, what should the nature of the school–TAFE relationship be?

In what ways does your institute support schools in the delivery of VET in Schools programs? Should TAFE institutes have a role in VET in Schools programs? If so, should this be a major role (delivery and accreditation, provision of staff, provision of courses on-site at TAFE)/ or should this be a minor role (advisory etc.)?

ABC TAFE developed a philosophy of supporting schools in their delivery of VET in Schools from as far back as 1999 when it developed the full-time position of secondary college liaison coordinator. The purpose of this position was twofold. Primarily the role was established to facilitate partnership arrangements between the institute and the secondary colleges, and to coordinate the delivery of the VET in Schools programs. Secondly, the position was about liaising with schools, students and parents in regard to the TAFE sector, training options in the post-compulsory area and arranging attendance by institute staff at careers nights, careers network meetings and Tertiary Information Service events.

TAFE has a key role in the VET in Schools programs. As registered training organisation, ABC TAFE is responsible for the quality of delivery, appropriateness of staff qualifications, accreditation of courses. The institute also provides staff to schools for delivery of programs, as well as students attending the institute. Our partnership model, where schools deliver some or all of a program, includes at least 3 visits to each school, for each program being delivered by relevant institute staff to oversee delivery and assessment. As ABC TAFE has partnership agreements with around 100 secondary colleges in 2001 we have also found a side-effect of having staff regularly in schools is that we have been as a moderator for programs. All programs across the 100 schools with the institute are achieving the same standard of delivery and assessment. We are creating a level playing field for more than 3000 VET in Schools students.

In your view, are schools well equipped to deliver VET in Schools? If not, why not (where are the problems)?

ABC TAFE works with many schools in 17 program areas from Pakenham, Werribee and Corio to Whittlesea, Benalla and Seymour. Our experience indicates there is a wide range of expertise/resources in schools.

Some are very well equipped to deliver VET in Schools programs, having invested funds to develop and maintain facilities. Others however, have very limited resources. What were previously 'high schools' were never equipped to deliver in the trade areas and so these schools have to be limited to delivering internally courses such as office administration and information technology. Most past 'technical schools' still have facilities and equipment, but unless ongoing investment has been maintained, this tends to be fairly old and dated.

How can the relationship between TAFE and school be improved with regard to the delivery of VET in Schools programs?

Schools have become familiar with dealing with TAFE institutes to source specialist facilities and equipment. Open partnership arrangements can be structured to limit movement of students and maximise access to appropriate facilities.

The biggest problem now facing the school sector is the level of vocational competencies and relevant recent industry experience of the teaching staff. Under the new Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) this is an area of significant concern for all registered training organisations. Strong partnership arrangements, with appropriate supervision, are a way to address this issue. To address this shortfall in knowledge, skill and experience, the school sector will need to look at programs such as industrial release, vocational training, certificates in VET etc.

ABC TAFE's relationship, on the whole, is very good with the secondary sector. The result of over 3000 students from almost 100 schools demonstrates that a customer service model is one which schools appreciate. Creating a position which covers all departments within the institute to coordinate relationships and delivery has been a large improvement.

Currently schools regularly make contact to discuss a range of issues, which include welfare and discipline, attendance, delivery issues etc. by department staff developing relationships. Through the 3-visit partnership arrangements, actual teachers of classes at the school and their TAFE mentor regularly communicate and discuss issues. In most areas these coordinators of VET programs have developed networks of staff made up of TAFE, VET coordinators and VET teachers in schools.

Should there be greater cooperation between TAFE institutes and schools in the delivery of VET courses (both VET in Schools and VET generally), for example, site sharing, sharing of staff, programs etc?

I agree that there could be even greater cooperation between the sectors than currently exists; however, this is now dependent on meeting the new requirements of the Australian Quality Training Framework which must be complied with by June 2002.

What is your view of the current range of qualifications offered to school-aged clients (AQF and senior certificate)? Do these meet all the needs of young people? What else is needed? Who should deliver it?

As outlined earlier, there are issues with the current offerings for this cohort. The training sector is not funded along similar lines to schools to address areas other than specific vocational training.

Section 3: What role does your TAFE play in relation to school completers?

Does your TAFE send material to schools to promote itself, for example, brochures which advertise TAFE courses and programs?

ABC TAFE's Marketing area and Customer Service Centre (established in October 2000) are primarily responsible for the promotional material and coordination of events which serve to promote the institute and its courses.

In past years, we have distributed careers kits annually to all secondary government, Catholic and independent schools, as well as local community organisations. The kits comprise: course brochures, career options and a corporate video and we are currently in the process of converting the kits to CD-ROM in an effort to minimise costs and keep information up to date.

The Customer Service Centre also coordinates an annual Tertiary Information Service (TIS) event (held at Broadmeadows Campus) to promote the courses on offer at ABC TAFE and provide information to prospective students. During this event the institute plays host to over 1000 local Year 12 students who are able to obtain general information about the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre process before moving on to the 'supermarket' which consists of various individual stands displaying in full detail, the range of courses offered.

In addition to this, the Customer Service Centre also coordinates Careers Expo events upon request, where they visit secondary schools and showcase the range of services and courses ABC TAFE has to offer.

Does your TAFE institute offer places in diploma courses to school leavers through a university admissions centre?

ABC TAFE offers a range of courses from certificate IV level to advanced diplomas through the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC).

Is there an issue about school leavers being offered places in your institute and then not taking them up?

Upon consulting a range of departments across a number of diploma areas at ABC TAFE, it was revealed that, in areas such as administration studies, accounting, public relations, advertising and marketing, approximately 50% of students who have been offered places do not turn up to enrol. Areas such as hospitality and tourism, experience approximately 5–10% not accepting offers where the course has been their first preference and approximately 50–60% not turning up where the course has been their sixth preference.

In any of the above cases, a letter is then sent to the prospective student to determine whether they wish to enrol in their selected course. If they are no longer interested, the TAFE will then accept direct entries.

Do you feel there is a perception amongst teachers in schools that TAFE is a 'second choice' option?

In speaking to a number of schools in Melbourne's north-west region, the perception that TAFE is viewed as a secondary option certainly seems evident. Yet what also appears evident is that this perception amongst teachers is slowly changing with the gradual promotion of TAFE within schools and the broader community in recent years.

The status of TAFE is certainly improving which is clearly evident through the increased offering of TAFE programs through VET in Schools. Since the inception of VET in Schools at ABC TAFE in 1996, the number of VET students has jumped from 40 in 1996 to 3128 currently in 2001. In spite of this rapid growth, although VET coordinators and careers teachers are very committed to the promotion of TAFE in their schools, some teachers still undervalue the VET sector avenue and thus choose not to promote it as strongly to their students.

Many teachers in schools are in fact very supportive of TAFE, yet find that their obstacle lies with the student's parents, who still harbour more traditionalist ideas seeing university as the only valid option for their child. This can severely limit the student's options in an example for instance, where the student achieves a high ENTER score, hence having numerous university options, yet wants to become a chef and therefore pursue an apprenticeship in commercial cookery, a course which would not be available to them at university.

In an effort to bridge these gaps and educate parents, schools often conduct evening seminars specifically targeting parents to demonstrate valid alternative pathways to Victorian Certificate of Education and the benefits of TAFE.

On a statistical level, a study of our Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre reports in conjunction with the growth of VET in Schools (mentioned above) reveal some contrasting information. For instance, looking at a section of our business group division which incorporates hospitality, travel and tourism and finance, management and marketing, from 1997 to 2001, these areas have experienced a decline in enrolment numbers (from first and second preference students) of approximately 20–40%. These findings are in direct contrast with the growth of VET in Schools which has steadily increased from 449 students in 1998, 1506 in 1999, 2518 in 2000 and 3128 in 2001.

Through speaking to these schools and examining the statistical data, there certainly seems to be evidence of a generic perception amongst schools that TAFE is a second choice. This may further be supported by the above findings, illustrating a decline in TAFE enrolments. Yet the rapid growth in VET in Schools and discussions with teachers indicate that teachers are definitely recognising that, although university and TAFE are indeed different, they are both valid and complementary educational options. As a result, teachers in schools are increasingly both acknowledging and promoting TAFE as a valid avenue for career advancement.

Appendix 5: Partner TAFE submission

VET IN SCHOOLS
CULTURE, POLICY AND
THE EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING IMPACT

BRIEF FOR DEVELOPING A TAFE PAPER
ON THE ROLE OF TAFE IN CATERING FOR
POST-COMPULSORY SCHOOL-AGED YOUTH

An NREC-funded project involving

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE/RMIT UNIVERSITY
CENTRE FOR POST-COMPULSORY
EDUCATION & TRAINING

and

THE UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA
THE LIFELONG LEARNING NETWORK

and

SYDNEY INSTITUTE OF TAFE
BENDIGO REGIONAL INSTITUTE OF TAFE
KANGAN BATMAN INSTITUTE OF TAFE

Section 1: In your opinion, what should the role of TAFE be in relation to early school leavers?

Should TAFE institutes be dealing with this group at all? Does your institute target this group or should it be the responsibility of schools?

- ✧ TAFE should be a public provider which provides second-chance opportunities for early school leavers.
- ✧ There is strong evidence suggesting many young people leave school after Year 10 and then for various reasons decide that a TAFE college is a more appropriate learning environment to renew their studies, especially at higher school certificate level.
- ✧ There is equally strong evidence that many school leavers leave after Year 10 because of the academic nature of Years 11 and 12. A preferred option for these school leavers is to find suitable employment through apprenticeships or traineeships and then complete an appropriate VET course. Recent developments in New South Wales which have led to a change in higher school certificate curriculum are perhaps resulting in this cohort remaining at school.
- ✧ XYZ Institute does target early school leavers. Institute promotion campaigns advise students of a range of available non-vocational and vocational courses. XYZ Institute's strategic plan anticipates that early school leavers will be part of the institute student population up to 2005.

What are appropriate programs in TAFE to deal with students who leave without completing Year 11 (AQF level? Literacy/ numeracy? Pre-voc)? Is there a need for new programs? If so, what should these comprise?

- ✧ XYZ Institute provides a Certificate II in General and Vocational Education. This course is for people who want to improve their chances of entering the workforce or completing further study. Completion of this course allows early school leavers the opportunity to continue their studies at TAFE through enrolling in higher level certificate III or IV courses.
- ✧ XYZ Institute also offers pre-vocational courses in literacy and numeracy. These courses are designed to assist young people and/or adults to improve their reading, writing and maths skills in order to improve job opportunities and pathways to further study. There is current debate in New South Wales that a delivery model should be established at XYZ Institute which would allow Year 11 and 12 students opportunities to participate in pre-vocational and vocational studies within the institute environment.
- ✧ There might be other opportunities for providing specific pre-vocational courses in occupational areas, for example, TAFE NSW offers a pre-vocational course in printing for young people who leave school in Year 10. The course develops skills which will allow students to seek work in the printing industry.
- ✧ Recent developments in apprenticeships and traineeships are also providing enhanced opportunities for students who leave without completing Year 11 to enter vocational education and training.

Is there currently any liaison between your institute and schools regarding this group? Could you please describe the nature of any such liaison? Are there aspects of school–TAFE liaison which could be improved with regard to early school leavers? What should happen ideally?

- ✧ There are strong liaison between XYZ Institute and schools regarding students who leave without completing Year 11 and also students who intend to complete Years 11 and 12 and include a VET in Schools component.
- ✧ XYZ Institute has a full-time VET in Schools coordinator who liaises with various school stakeholders in both the public and private secondary education sector.
- ✧ Generally, the relationships between XYZ Institute and both school sectors is good but there are instances where particular schools appear to have a policy of not advocating TAFE as an alternative option.
- ✧ There are also strong linkages between the secondary school sector and TAFE NSW at the Department of Education and Training level which result in the developments of policy and planning practices.
- ✧ As indicated above, there are current considerations to establish a ‘senior college’ at XYZ Institute which would allow the development of a particular learning environment for young people within the TAFE institute.

Section 2: In your opinion, what should the nature of the school-TAFE relationship be?

In what ways does your institute support schools in the delivery of VET in Schools programs? Should TAFE institutes have a role in VET in Schools programs? If so, should this be a major role (delivery and accreditation, provision of staff, provision of courses on-site at TAFE)? Or should this be a minor role (advisory etc.)?

- ✧ XYZ Institute strongly supports the current VET in Schools program.
- ✧ This support is demonstrated by the institute delivering a range of VET in Schools programs on site at XYZ Institute and also providing teaching staff to deliver programs within the school environment.
- ✧ Enrolment statistics for VET in Schools at XYZ Institute were 907 enrolments in 2000 and 723 in 2001 (data collected 25/5/01). Major areas of study for VET in Schools are:
 - ◆ child studies
 - ◆ construction and furnishing programs
 - ◆ design
 - ◆ hospitality and accommodation services
 - ◆ agriculture/horticulture
 - ◆ library services
 - ◆ information technology
 - ◆ manufacturing.
- ✧ All VET in Schools programs delivered at XYZ Institute can be accredited towards enrolment in a higher level course. Most VET in Schools students would receive an AQF qualification on completion of their course.

- ✧ TAFE also plays a major role in the training of secondary school teachers who wish to deliver VET in Schools programs within their school environment.
- ✧ Experience at XYZ Institute has demonstrated that the role of the VET in Schools coordinator is significant in building relationships with both public and private schools who engage in the VET in Schools programs.
- ✧ Recent developments in funding models have seen a decline in VET in Schools enrolments at XYZ Institute with a corresponding increase in the secondary school sector. There are questions of quality of provision which need to be explored, and 2002 should provide an indication of quality of delivery in the schools sector through those students who wish to articulate to higher level courses.
- ✧ XYZ Institute has introduced a Vocational School Student of the Year Award as part of its annual awards program. This is open to all students who enrol in a VET in Schools program at the institute. This award has provided valuable publicity for the VET in Schools program.

In your view, are schools well-equipped to deliver VET in Schools? If not, why not (where are the problems)?

- ✧ This is a vexed issue.
- ✧ Within New South Wales, secondary schools are members of registered training organisations and thus, from a quality perspective, should be delivering the same quality programs as other registered training organisations.
- ✧ There are concerns about the qualifications and industrial training that secondary school teachers have gained, compared to TAFE teachers.
- ✧ There are equal concerns regarding the level of facilities and resources available in the schools. One might compare the standard of commercial kitchens in a TAFE college with that of secondary schools but obviously there will be instances where schools have good facilities.
- ✧ A model seems to be emerging where secondary schools have the human and physical resources to deliver business, information technology, and tourism and hospitality programs, but rely on TAFE institutes to deliver programs which are more resource-intensive.

How can the relationship between TAFE and school be improved with regard to the delivery of VET in Schools programs?

- ✧ Through the development of partnerships which are focused on the effective and efficient use of resources and clearly defined student outcomes.
- ✧ The current model appears to maintain promotion and teaching opportunities within the secondary school system.

Should there be greater cooperation between TAFE institutes and schools in the delivery of VET courses (both VET in Schools and VET generally), for example, site sharing, sharing of staff, programs etc?

- ✧ This expands on the point above.
- ✧ The following case study presents a model of how probably NOT to deliver VET in Schools:

Jones High School is a small inner city school located within 15 minutes walking distance of XYZ Institute. The school recently submitted an application for a grant of \$400 000 to develop a VET Centre with new facilities being developed in IT [information technology], Business, Tourism and Hospitality, and Retail. At the same time, XYZ Institute has embarked on a \$48 million building construction and refurbishment program that includes

these vocational areas. Suggestions that the same set of facilities be used for both VET in Schools and mainstream TAFE students is not accepted.

What is your view of the current range of qualifications offered to school-aged clients (AQF and senior certificate)? Do these all the needs of young people? What else is needed? Who should deliver it?

- ✧ The current AQF qualifications available to school-age clients appears to be satisfactory.
- ✧ As has been indicated in this paper previously, New South Wales is currently investigating opportunities for the development of a senior college within XYZ Institute. Further information on this can be made available in the future.

Section 3: What role does your TAFE play in relation to school completers?

Does your TAFE send material to schools to promote itself, for example, brochures which advertise TAFE courses and programs?

XYZ Institute plays a strong role in relation to school completers through the following:

- ✧ participation in school leaver study and job forums
- ✧ communication with school vocational counselors
- ✧ provision of numerous printed materials to various schools
- ✧ individual visits to schools by institute staff, where appropriate
- ✧ significant advertising in newspapers and magazines.

Does your TAFE institute offer places in diploma courses to school leavers through a university admissions centre?

No.

Is there an issue about school leavers being offered places in your institute and then not taking them up?

- ✧ Yes.
- ✧ Many Year 12 students hedge their bets and apply for a number of university and institute places. The issue of universities consistently dropping their entry requirements means that students who would normally study at TAFE might now prefer the university option.
- ✧ The major issue here is the difficulty in planning for efficient delivery since it is often into weeks 3 and 4 of first term before class rolls at XYZ Institute become clear.

Do you feel there is a perception amongst teachers in schools that TAFE is a 'second choice' option? Can you provide any evidence or examples?

- ✧ There is still a perception that TAFE is 'second choice' option but this is not as strong as it was, say, five years ago.
- ✧ There are still schools within the XYZ Institute catchment area which provide limited advice on TAFE options.

Appendix 6: Year 11 instrument

40. (OPTIONAL WRITTEN RESPONSE)

Finally, we would like to ask your views about subject choice . . .

Are you happy with the subjects available in your school?

How relevant are they to your future needs?

Have you been able to do the subjects you wanted?

Your comments on these and related issues would be appreciated.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

This ends the questionnaire. Thank you for your help.

13. What is the full title of each VET in Schools subject you are doing or have done? (Please list)

14. How much do you agree or disagree with the following reasons for enrolling in a VET program?

(Please mark ONE box only for each statement)

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
I wanted the opportunity to receive training in the workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I wanted to gain a recognised VET qualification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I wanted to do a course that would help me get a job in the VET subject area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have friends who have done VET and they recommended it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It will improve my chances of getting into a TAFE course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I still keep my options open for going to university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I thought it would give me more career options	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It was something the school encouraged me to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It was something my parents encouraged me to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I saw it as a qualification to help me get a better part-time job whilst I am still studying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. Where are you studying your VET in Schools units? (Mark all boxes that apply)

☐ At School
 ☐ At TAFE
 ☐ At a private provider
 ☐ Wholly on the job

16. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with these statements about VET in your school.

(Please mark ONE box only for each statement)

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
I learn skills that I need for work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is not enough practical content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET fits easily into my overall school timetable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET involves extra costs for me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET helps me to understand the industry related to my area of study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET requires too much travel from school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doing VET has improved my attitude to school work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doing VET helps me with my other subjects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
What I learn in class helps me understand the tasks I will do in a job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The work placement helps me with my self-confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. Are you a school-based part-time apprentice or trainee? ☐ Yes ☐ No

18(a). How well are you coping with your studies in English and Mathematics?

	<i>Very Well</i>	<i>Well</i>	<i>Not too Well</i>	<i>Poorly</i>	<i>N/A</i>
In English I am coping:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
In Mathematics I am coping:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18(b). How confident are you that you will be successful in your studies this year?

(Please mark ONE box only)

☐ I expect to obtain very good results overall
☐ I expect to obtain good results overall
☐ I expect to do well in a few subjects and not in the rest
☐ I expect to obtain poor results overall
☐ I expect to obtain very poor results

31. Are you someone who: *(Please mark ONE box only for each question)*

Yes No

Watches more than three hours of TV a day?

☐☐

Has/uses a computer at home for study?

☐☐

Spends a lot of time playing computer games?

☐☐

Would like to be working instead of going to school?

☐☐

Sings or plays a musical instrument?

☐☐

Receives help in school subjects from a private tutor?

☐☐

Plays a lot of sport at school?

☐☐

32. Have you done any work experience either this year or earlier?

☐ Yes

☐ No (GO TO Q.34)

(Please note: Work experience is a school activity with an employer that is not formally linked to the curriculum, and does not contribute to a certificate or qualification).

33. Which statement best describes what you thought about your most recent work experience?

(Choose only ONE statement)

☐ I learnt a few things, but it was mostly routine.

☐ It was boring. I didn't learn much. Just a job.

☐ It was challenging and interesting most of the time.

The next questions are about **WORK PLACEMENT**. Students who have work placements spend some time in a workplace learning job skills and gaining experience. This is done as part of a formal VET program, and contributes toward a VET qualification. Note that **WORK PLACEMENT** is not the traditional work experience usually done at Year 10.

34. Have you done any work placements?

☐ Yes (IF YES, GO TO Q.35)

☐ No, but will do later this year

☐ No and not expecting to

If you have done any **WORK PLACEMENTS**, please answer the questions that follow.
If you have **NOT**, please move on to Q.39. Thank you.

35. How long was your most recent work placement?

(If split over time for one subject, then please add all the periods up to make a total duration)

☐ Up to 1 week

☐ Over 1 week and up to 2 weeks

☐ Over 2 weeks and up to 4 weeks

☐ Over 4 weeks

36. What year level were you in when you did this placement?

☐ Year 9

☐ Year 10

☐ Year 11

☐ Year 12

23. As a guide to occupational changes over generations, please describe the current status and main occupation of your parents or guardians:

Work Status – Male parent/guardian *(Please mark ONE box only)*

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> self-employed/owner of business | <input type="checkbox"/> pensioner | <input type="checkbox"/> home duties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> unemployed | <input type="checkbox"/> voluntary unpaid work | <input type="checkbox"/> seasonal work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> salary/wage earner | <input type="checkbox"/> retired/deceased/absent | |

Work Status – Female parent/guardian *(Please mark ONE box only)*

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> self-employed/owner of business | <input type="checkbox"/> pensioner | <input type="checkbox"/> home duties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> unemployed | <input type="checkbox"/> voluntary unpaid work | <input type="checkbox"/> seasonal work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> salary/wage earner | <input type="checkbox"/> retired/deceased/absent | |

Occupations – Choose the occupation which best describes what your parent(s) do/did.
(If not currently working, please indicate the main occupations when working)

(Please mark ONE box only for each parent/guardian)

	<i>Male parent/guardian</i>	<i>Female parent/guardian</i>
small business	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
farmer	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
skilled trade	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
technician	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
manual worker (semi-skilled)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
professional job (e.g. doctor, teacher, engineer)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
senior manager	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
manager/supervisor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
office, clerical, administration	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
salesperson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

24. What is the highest educational level your parents completed?

(Please mark ONE box only for each parent/guardian)

Mother

- ☐ Primary school only
- ☐ Some secondary school
- ☐ Completed secondary school
- ☐ Apprenticeship/trade certificate
- ☐ Technical/diploma
- ☐ University degree
- ☐ Post-graduate qualification (Masters/PhD)
- ☐ Don't know

Father

- ☐ Primary school only
- ☐ Some secondary school
- ☐ Completed secondary school
- ☐ Apprenticeship/trade certificate
- ☐ Technical/diploma
- ☐ University degree
- ☐ Post-graduate qualification (Masters/PhD)
- ☐ Don't know

25. A good school should:

(Please mark ONE box only for each statement)

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Help you achieve good academic results	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Prepare you for a job you can start at the end of school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Include sufficient job training in the workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Respond to specific student's needs in times of difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide a range of sporting choices for all interests	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Provide a range of artistic, cultural and recreational choices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix 7: Exit survey instrument

Year 12 Student Destinations Survey: School Culture and VET

ID no: _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

1. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Last year you were in Year 12 at
Could you let us know if you:

- ☐ Satisfactorily completed the year and achieved an ENTER?
- ☐ Satisfactorily completed the year but elected not to apply for an ENTER?
- ☐ Remained at school until end of year but did not obtain Certificate?
- ☐ Left school during the year? (go to Q.3)

3. Thinking about the reasons you left school before the end of Year 12, was this because:

You may choose more than one option

- ☐ You wanted to work / do an apprenticeship
- ☐ You wanted to do a course at TAFE
- ☐ You felt you weren't doing well enough to continue
- ☐ For financial reasons
- ☐ You didn't get on with your teachers
- ☐ School work didn't interest you
- ☐ You felt you didn't fit in

☐ Health reasons

Studying/Training

4. When at school, were you advised to apply for a place at TAFE this year?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Did you apply for a place at TAFE?

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Were you offered a place at TAFE this year?

☐ Yes ☐ Accepted Offer ☐ Rejected Offer

Did you *reject* the offer because

- ☐ You were going to work full-time
- ☐ You were going to study at university
- ☐ You were going to study at a PTC
- ☐ It wasn't really what you wanted to do

7. Are you now studying?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If *now* studying (part-time or full-time), are you:

<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled at University	Studying	<input type="checkbox"/> full time	<input type="checkbox"/> part time
	Name of University		
	Name of Course		

<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled at TAFE	Studying	<input type="checkbox"/> full time	<input type="checkbox"/> part time
	Name of TAFE		
	Name of Course		
	Level		
<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled at Private Training College (PTC)	Studying	<input type="checkbox"/> full time	<input type="checkbox"/> part time
	Name of PTC		
	Name of Course		
<input type="checkbox"/> Enrolled at Adult and Community Education provider	Studying	<input type="checkbox"/> full time	<input type="checkbox"/> part time
	Name of Provider		
	Name of course or unit		
<input type="checkbox"/> Repeating or completing Senior School Certificate (e.g. VCE)	Studying	<input type="checkbox"/> full time	<input type="checkbox"/> part time
	School		

- ☐ NO, I was studying but discontinued (go to Q 10)
- ☐ NO, I have not been in study since leaving school (go to Q 9)
- ☐ NO, I have deferred my place

8. Would you agree that:

Please make a response to each option

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
Your course will help you get a job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your course is personally interesting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
From advice provided by school you got a good idea of what your course would be like	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your course has increased your self-confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your course will widen your options for the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your course has improved your communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You are making good progress in the course so far	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You are satisfied with how the course is taught	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You received good advice and assistance at school in making your course selection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The course content is relevant to the tasks you have to do at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your school helped you in making the transition from secondary to tertiary study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

[GO TO Q 11]

If you are *not* studying now, is this because:

Please make a response to each option

	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
You don't have time (work or family commitments, other interests)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You don't have information on what's available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There would be too much travel involved	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You've tried to get into a course, but weren't offered a place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You don't feel ready for more study at this point in time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You don't see the relevance of doing any more study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You don't meet the entry criteria for a course you might like to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You can't afford the costs of the course you'd like to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Do you agree with the following reasons for why you might have left your course?

	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
The course was not interesting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The course was too difficult	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The course had a poor standard of teaching	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The course was not relevant to your career plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Class times were inconvenient	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complex enrolment procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Course was 'leading nowhere'	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Course had poor reputation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Problems fitting in socially	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changes in family commitments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You wanted to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Accommodation problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Financial problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Workforce status and experience

11. Thinking about work, since leaving school have you:

Please choose the option that best suits you

- ☐ **Had a job for all or most of the time**
- ☐ **F/t** ☐ **P/t**
- ☐ **Had about equal periods of employment and unemployment?**
- ☐ **Been unemployed for most of the time**
- ☐ **Not been looking for work for most or much of the time**

12. Are you currently working?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> full time	What is your job?
	<input type="checkbox"/> part time/casual	
	<input type="checkbox"/> undertaking an Apprenticeship	
	<input type="checkbox"/> undertaking a Traineeship	
<input type="checkbox"/> No, I am unemployed and looking for work [GO TO Q. 14]		
<input type="checkbox"/> No, I am not in the labour force [GO TO Q. 15]		

Thinking about your current job, would you agree: *Please respond to each option*

	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Unsure</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
You need training to do the job well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It's personally interesting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most tasks you can do well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It's mainly routine – not a lot that changes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It's a job you'd like to continue in	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You're getting on well at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most of your workmates have had training for the job	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

GO TO Q.15

If you are currently looking for work, what would you say are the *main* barriers to finding a job? *Please make a response to each option*

	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
There are no jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
No vacancies for the jobs that I can do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Need to travel too far to get some jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Don't have the right training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have not got enough experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employers prefer people with more qualification	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employers want you to have a good report from school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I don't feel confident enough to apply for some jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I have trouble expressing myself when I go for jobs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. Just returning briefly to your experience of school, and thinking back over your time at school, how much do you agree with the following:

Please make a response to each option

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
I have happy memories of school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I got on well with my teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Making extra effort at school was worthwhile	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that I coped well academically at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Before you left school, how would your teachers have rated your ability?

- ☐ In the top third of the class in most subjects
- ☐ About average
- ☐ In the lowest third of most classes

17. Looking back, how useful were careers advice or other services which you might have received at school? ***Please make a response to each option***

	<i>Offered</i>	<i>Usefulness</i>		
		<i>Very</i>	<i>Some Help</i>	<i>Not Useful</i>
Careers education and guidance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Careers counselling (one to one)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work experience	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice about further education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Assistance with job search skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice about the local employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
References	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. Was VET in Schools offered at your school?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

Did you participate? ☐ Yes ☐ No [GO TO Q.21]

What was your field of study? _____

19. You may have had a range of reasons for enrolling in a VET subject while at school. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about why you enrolled in a VET program? Please make a response to each option

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
My school explained the benefits of VET well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I wanted something less academic and more practical	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There was an opportunity to receive training in the workplace	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I thought it would be useful to have a VET qualification too	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I wanted a course that would help me get work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice about the local employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It would help me get into a TAFE course	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends were doing it or had done it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. Do you think doing a VET in Schools subject last year helped your study outcomes?

Yes a lot

Yes, somewhat

No

21. Would you be willing to be recontacted in the future?

☐ Yes

☐ No

This concludes the interview. Thank you very much for your time.

Appendix 8 – Teacher Survey instrument



VET in Schools

Teacher Questionnaire

Name of School:.....

1. How long have you been teaching? (*count years actually teaching*) __ __

2. What is your age?

- 21-25 ☐
- 26-30 ☐
- 31-35 ☐
- 36-40 ☐
- 41-45 ☐
- 46-50 ☐
- 51-55 ☐
- 55 or over ☐

3. Are you?

- ☐ Male ☐ Female

4. Are you of non-English speaking background?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Where were you born ?

- ☐ Australia ☐ Overseas-English speaking country
☐ Overseas – non-English speaking country

6. Are you an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person? ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. What is the postcode of your home address? __ __ __ __

8. (a) What is the highest educational qualification you have completed?

- Primary teaching certificate ☐
Undergraduate diploma ☐
Degree ☐
Postgraduate diploma ☐
Masters degree ☐
Ph.D./D.Ed. ☐
Other (specify)..... ☐

8. (b) Are you currently undertaking postgraduate or higher degree studies?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. What is your position within the school?

- Casual / relief teacher ☐
Classroom teacher (no extra allowance) ☐
Classroom teacher holding promotion position or in receipt of an allowance ☐
Aboriginal Resource teacher/ Special Education Teacher ☐
Deputy/ Assistant Principal ☐
Principal (or person in charge) ☐
Other (please specify)..... ☐

10. How long have you been teaching in your current school? (count years actually teaching) — —

11. At what Year level(s) do you teach/work? Please mark all that apply

- Year 7 ☐
Year 8 ☐
Year 9 ☐
Year 10 ☐
Year 11 ☐
Year 12 ☐
ungraded ☐

12. In what subject area(s) do you teach/work? Please mark all that apply

- The Arts ☐
LOTE ☐
Health and Physical Education ☐
Mathematics ☐
Science ☐
Technology ☐
English ☐
Studies of Society and Environment ☐
Cross-curriculum ☐
VET ☐
Careers Advice ☐
Other (please specify)..... ☐

13. How much do you agree or disagree with the following general comments about your school?

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Basic literacy skills are a continuing cause of concern	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have enrichment programs to challenge high achievers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The curriculum caters for the full range of the students who attend	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
We have stimulating activities to expand students' horizons	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is a good balance of extra-curricular activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is adequate provision for music	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
An effective discipline policy is in operation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student counselling needs are well catered for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Student social skills are, on the whole, well-developed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. How important do you think it is to

	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>
Give students information about employment, apprenticeships and VET options	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Create links with employers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Create links between schools and TAFE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advise students about applying for University	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advise students about applying for TAFE	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. How much do you agree with the following statements about the provision of VET in Schools subjects at your school?

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
The provision of VET has meant other subjects have been removed from the curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The removal of students from class to attend VET work placements is disruptive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand how VET in Schools works	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I understand how VET in Schools is assessed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET involves more work liaising with industry	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET involves more work liaising with TAFE/other providers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET involves more paper work than other subjects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. How important is it to provide good VET in Schools programs for the following student groups in your school?

Students who are:	<i>Very Important</i>	<i>Important</i>	<i>Not Important</i>
Struggling with the mainstream curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intending to leave school early	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interested in technology or business, whatever their ability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly focussed on a particular industry area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Average academically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Above-average academically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. How adequate is your school's VET in Schools program for the following student groups?

Students who are:	<i>High Quality</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Poor</i>
Struggling with the mainstream curriculum	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Intending to leave school early	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interested in technology or business, whatever their ability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strongly focussed on a particular industry area	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Average academically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Above-average academically	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

18. At what stage in secondary schooling should students begin VET in Schools programs? (Mark one box only)

- Only in Years 11/12 ☐
- Year 10 ☐
- Below Year 10 ☐
- Flexible, should depend on student ☐

19. Are your school's VET in Schools programs delivered by:

Please mark all that apply

- ☐ the school ☐ TAFE
- ☐ a private provider

20. Would you consider retraining to become a VET in Schools teacher?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Only if I were paid to do so
- ☐ No
- ☐ Am already teaching VET

21. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements regarding the VET in Schools program?

	<i>Strongly Agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>
Students learn skills they need for work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is not enough practical content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There is not enough theoretical content	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET fits easily into the overall school timetable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET involves extra costs to students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET involves extra costs to the school	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET has helped students understand the industry related to their area of study	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET requires too much travel for students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doing VET has improved student attitudes to school work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Doing VET helps students with their other subjects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The work placement helps students with their self confidence	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET is too hard for some students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. How significant do you see the following potential barriers to the growth of VET in schools in your school? Mark ONE box only for each item

	<i>Very Significant</i>	<i>Significant</i>	<i>Some Significance</i>	<i>Not Significant</i>
Teachers are not adequately trained	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Equipment & other infrastructure are lacking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local businesses are not supportive	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Links with TAFE and other VET providers are limited	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
VET is not highly regarded by students	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timetabling constraints (e.g. for work placements)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parents' aspirations are too focussed on university	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The academic values of teachers work against VET	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Principal's level of commitment to VET	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

23. What is your general attitude to the place of VET in the curriculum?

Mark one box only

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Generally in favour as a positive development | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I have reservations about its value | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Generally unconvinced about its suitability | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Have not seen enough of VET to comment | <input type="checkbox"/> |

***This ends the questionnaire
Thank-you for your assistance***