

Building a high quality and sustainable dual qualified VET workforce

Final report

May 2021



Acknowledgement of Country

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land, sea country and waterways from across Australia. We honour and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

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Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Executive summary | 4 |
| 2. Recommendations | 6 |
| 3. Acknowledgement | 8 |
| 4. Key definitions | 9 |
| 5. Introduction | 10 |
| 6. Underpinning principles..... | 14 |
| 7. Project scope..... | 15 |
| 8. Stakeholder consultation approach..... | 17 |
| 9. Vocational education and training in schools | 18 |
| 10. Regulation of the VET in schools workforce..... | 19 |
| 11. Challenges for the VET in schools workforce | 21 |
| 12. Obtaining dual qualifications..... | 24 |
| 13. Opportunities to support prospective dual qualified VET teachers | 25 |
| 14. Opportunities to support dual qualified VET teachers to maintain their qualifications . | 36 |
| 15. Further opportunities..... | 38 |
| 16. Building the evidence base..... | 42 |
| 17. Policy implications..... | 43 |
| 18. Conclusion..... | 45 |
| 19. Appendix 1: VET in Australia – Current context..... | 46 |
| 20. Appendix 2: Certificate IV in Training and Assessment | 50 |
| 21. References | 52 |

Executive summary

Quality student outcomes are reliant on quality teaching. Equally important is student access to pathways at school that enable them to succeed post-school. This includes high quality vocational education and training (VET) options. As such, there is a need for a high quality and sustainable workforce of VET teachers/trainers and assessors in schools that can meet the diverse needs of secondary students, and maintain the quality and industry relevance of the vocational education and training being delivered.

In 2018, the National Review of Teacher Registration titled *One Teaching Profession: Teacher Registration in Australia* (One Teaching Profession) identified that there are significant workforce challenges related to VET delivered in secondary school environments. Three of the seventeen recommendations of One Teaching Profession relate specifically to VET in schools and aim to address the “issue of VET delivered to secondary school students, exploring possible options to improve access and requirements for VET trainers/assessors delivering VET in a secondary school environment.”¹ In response, the Council of Australian Governments Education Council (Education Council) tasked the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) with progressing the implementation of two of the VET-related recommendations.

This report is the culmination of significant research and consultation with stakeholders including teachers, school leaders, teacher employers, teacher regulatory authorities (TRAs), the skills sector and higher education providers. Building on other reports and reforms in VET, this report proposes a series of recommendations, supported by underpinning principles that aim to improve the availability, sustainability and quality of the VET in schools workforce.

VET in schools offers a critically important pathway into further study and employment for many young people. Stakeholders consulted were unanimous in demanding that VET pathways should have equal prestige and expectations of high quality as more traditionally ‘academic’ pathways. High-quality VET in schools depends on a high-quality workforce. Successful VET in schools teaching requires strong industry knowledge and vocational competence, skill in teaching in a competency-based environment, and the capacity to engage young people in their learning. These are high-level skills, and teachers should be well supported to acquire and maintain them.

While VET is delivered in secondary schools through a range of models, this paper focuses on VET that is delivered to secondary students on the school site, where a school or the system is the registered training organisation (RTO), or via an auspicing arrangement with an external RTO to enable VET to be delivered on the school site. Those delivering VET in schools are operating at the intersection of two regulatory and policy settings – the *2011 Framework for Teacher Registration in Australia* (the Framework) and *Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015* (RTO Standards). These sets of requirements aim to ensure the quality of teaching and vocational education and training across Australia. However, when individuals are required to meet both sets of arrangements, it can be onerous for teachers and the schools supporting them.

¹ Education Council, 2018. ‘One teaching Profession: Teacher Registration in Australia’. Accessed from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/national-review-of-teacher-registration/report/snapshot--one-teaching-profession--teacher-registration-in-australia.pdf?sfvrsn=f71cf13c_2

The ideal VET in schools teacher will have strong content knowledge, based on recent and relevant industry qualifications and experience, pedagogical skills suited to both the content being taught and the secondary-aged cohort to whom it is being delivered, and the capacity to engage and nurture their students. Although this report refers to 'dual qualified' VET teachers, stakeholders pointed out that they are in fact 'triple qualified', being required to possess vocational competence, including industry experience and qualifications as well as VET trainer/assessor and initial teacher education (ITE) qualifications.

A major finding of this report is that a combination of factors including regulatory arrangements and, the existence of alternative delivery arrangements for VET in schools, have made dual qualified VET teachers an 'endangered species' in some jurisdictions. There is little incentive for schools, systems or individuals to pursue dual qualifications when much VET is delivered by people who are not fully registered teachers. At the same time, the low number of dual qualified teachers means that their numbers must be built up over time, while keeping VET in schools programs running. VET teacher quality and supply must be balanced in any future reform process.

There are many excellent examples of how systems, sectors, ITE providers, schools, and individual teachers, trainers/assessors and dual qualified VET teachers are working to address these challenges. This report features current practice examples that illustrate how barriers are being reduced. These examples, paired with stakeholder consultation findings, have informed the nine recommendations proposed in this report. The recommendations aim to create pathways into ITE to build the dual qualified VET teacher workforce, support current VET teachers to maintain their dual qualified status and ensure the quality and sustainability of VET delivered in schools.

The successful implementation of the recommendations in this report will require collaboration between the various bodies with a role to play in ensuring quality VET is delivered in schools. This includes but is not limited to teacher employers, TRAs, schools, ITE providers, industry, and the skills sector. As recognised in the recommendations of *Looking to the future – Report of the review of senior secondary pathways into work, further education and training* (Senior Secondary Pathways Review), the benefits of high-quality VET delivery in schools cannot be overstated however, without true collaboration between the education and skills sectors, the quality of VET delivered to secondary students in Australia may suffer.

Recommendations

The context in which VET is delivered to secondary students varies across Australia. The recommendations below take this into account by profiling a range of arrangements that could improve the quality, supply, development and retention of dual qualified VET teachers. Recommendation one acknowledges that there is considerable work already underway to improve VET in schools, and that efforts to improve the quality of the VET in schools workforce will have the best chance of success when aligned with these reform processes. Recommendations two to nine identify practices that consultation and existing practice suggest can work to improve the quality of VET teaching in schools. These are presented for jurisdictions, systems, sectors, schools, ITE providers and TRAs to consider in their own contexts.

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| Recommendation 1 | The implementation of the recommendations from the <i>Looking to the Future: Report of the Review of senior secondary pathways into work, further education and training</i> and other national and jurisdictional reform processes, place the quality of teaching at the centre of implementation, and be informed by the findings and current practice examples identified in this report |
| Recommendation 2 | ITE providers work with teacher regulatory authorities (TRAs) to create VET-focussed accredited ITE programs with the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (Cert IV TAE) embedded in ITE, to increase workforce numbers of dual qualified VET teachers. |
| Recommendation 3 | ITE providers and TRAs develop expedited pathways that meet ITE accreditation standards for VET and industry professionals into and through ITE for example: <ul data-bbox="526 1276 1356 1489" style="list-style-type: none">• advanced standing and recognition of prior learning (RPL) for VET qualifications and experience• an internship style model of ITE including consideration of an adapted model of pre-service teacher education that focuses on pedagogical skills suited to both the content being taught and the secondary-aged cohort to whom it is being delivered. |
| Recommendation 4 | Systems, sectors, and schools provide supports for industry professionals and VET trainers/assessors to enter and complete ITE for example: <ul data-bbox="526 1624 1380 1948" style="list-style-type: none">• Establish mentoring arrangements for qualified teachers to mentor VET trainers/assessors seeking teaching qualifications.• Create and support communities of practice embedding external supports for VET trainers/assessors seeking teaching qualifications.• Provide varied induction and onboarding that meets the respective context and experience of the industry professionals and VET trainers/assessors.• Establish scholarships to provide financial support to industry professionals and VET trainers/assessors undertaking ITE programs. |

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| Recommendation 5 | <p>The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) and TRAs collaborate to provide greater clarity to dual qualified VET teachers regarding how the <i>Australian Professional Standards for Teachers</i> relate to VET teaching and how appropriate professional learning can meet requirements for ongoing teacher registration.</p> |
| Recommendation 6 | <p>Education systems, sectors and schools provide adequate support to dual qualified VET teachers to maintain industry currency and vocational competency as required by the <i>Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015</i> (RTO Standards).</p> |
| Recommendation 7 | <p>Education systems, sectors and schools identify and implement opportunities for collaboration and upskilling for all staff delivering VET in schools for example, through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multidisciplinary teaching teams, noting that this is an employer decision and would be managed at a school level. • School mentoring programs whereby teachers mentor trainers/assessors in pedagogy and behaviour management and trainers/assessors share industry expertise. • Supported use of approaches such as VET coordinators and mobile VET delivery, to address rural/ remote staffing shortages. |
| Recommendation 8 | <p>Education systems and sectors utilise and support context specific school-industry partnerships to strengthen the quality of VET delivered in schools.</p> |
| Recommendation 9 | <p>TRAs, education systems and sectors utilise data collection opportunities through collaboration with the Australian Teacher Workforce Data initiative (ATWD) to build an evidence base around the number, characteristics and workforce experiences of registered teachers (including provisional registration and alternative authorisation to teach) delivering VET to secondary students to inform decision making.</p> |

Acknowledgement

AITSL would like to acknowledge and thank the many stakeholders who engaged with the project team to produce this report. This varied group of stakeholders included state and territory teacher regulatory authorities, education departments and Catholic and independent sectors in addition to stakeholders from the skills sector and industry representatives. As ITE providers play a significant role in producing dual qualified VET teachers, the Australian Council of Deans of Education's (ACDE) Vocational Education Group, and other teacher education experts were consulted. The report benefits from the voice and views of teachers and school leaders with sincere thanks to the many teachers and school leaders who lent their time to consider this report, its recommendations and by sharing their own stories and journeys regarding VET delivered in schools.

Key definitions

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| Alternative authorisation to teach | There is a provision, in clearly defined circumstances and under specified conditions, for persons who are not eligible for registration to be employed in teaching roles that would otherwise require registration. Alternative authorisation to teach is granted by a state or territory TRA and the details of it will vary with the legislation in each jurisdiction. |
| Cert IV TAE | The Certificate IV in Training and Assessment which is the minimum VET qualification requirement for a VET trainer and assessor. |
| Dual qualified VET teacher | A registered teacher who also meets the requirements set out in the RTO Standards for a VET trainer and assessor. |
| Industry currency | The knowledge, skills and experience required by VET trainers and assessors and those who provide training and assessment under supervision to ensure that their training and assessment is based on current industry practices and meets the needs of industry. |
| Industry qualifications | The vocational qualifications a VET trainer and assessor must hold to deliver VET in that skill area, as set out in the RTO Standards. |
| Initial teacher education | A teacher education course recognised and accredited by a teacher regulatory authority in line with the nationally agreed <i>Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures</i> . Graduates of a nationally accredited teacher education program meet the qualification requirements for provisional teacher registration. |
| RTO | Registered training organisation |
| VET | Vocational education and training |
| Industry professional | An individual who has industry qualifications and experience. |
| VET in schools | Vocational education and training delivered to secondary school students in a school setting, where a school or school system is the RTO or via an auspicing arrangement with an external RTO. |
| VET trainer/assessor | VET trainers are persons who provide training in accordance with Clause 1.13, 1.14 and 1.16. of the <i>Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015</i> (RTO Standards). VET assessors are persons who assess a learner's competence in accordance with Clauses 1.13 to 1.16. of the RTOs Standards. |
| Vocational competence | Vocational competency includes broad industry knowledge and experience, usually combined with a relevant industry qualification. |

Introduction

The *Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration 2019* sets out the vision for a world class education system in Australia “that encourages and supports every student to be the very best they can be, no matter where they live or what kind of learning challenges they may face”. The importance of quality teachers in achieving this vision cannot be overstated, with research indicating that quality teaching has the greatest in-school impact on student outcomes.²

An important aspect of the Australian education system is that students can access VET in their secondary years of schooling. As identified in the Victorian Government’s *Review into vocational and applied learning pathways in senior secondary schooling*, the purpose of VET delivered to secondary students “is to facilitate and prepare students for successful post-school pathways including transitioning to the workforce, going on to further education and training, as well as succeeding in personal and civic life”.³ VET delivered to secondary school students has been the focus of several significant policies and reviews, each noting the role, importance, complexity and ongoing priorities for VET in schools and its workforce. Collectively, reforms to VET in schools have sought to focus on quality of content, credentials, and pathways; post-school pathways; industry collaboration and confidence; and general community trust in the quality of the sector and its outputs.

Throughout numerous significant reviews, reports, and reforms there has been a shared theme of the importance of VET to secondary students in leading to further learning or employment pathway options. In particular, the *Looking to the Future: Report of the Review of Senior Secondary Pathways into Work, Further Education and Training* (Senior Secondary Pathways Review) noted the complexities of Australia’s current system of VET delivery for senior secondary students and stressed the importance and urgency of ensuring high quality provision and outcomes.

Recent reviews focusing on education in remote and complex environments found that “VET in schools is ‘an important part of senior schooling’ because it enables students to undertake a nationally recognised VET qualification while completing their school certificate, which ‘helps them to make effective post school transitions’”.⁴ This notes the importance of VET in schools, particularly in remote and complex environments, which found that “while, overall, influencers tend to encourage more students to go to university than pursue VET pathways, some groups – regional, rural and

² Hattie, J. 2008, *Visible Learning: A Synthesis of over 800 Meta-Analyses Relating to Achievement*. Routledge.

³ Macklin, j. 2020, *Future Skills for Victoria: Driving collaboration and innovation in post-secondary education and training*, Victorian Government.

⁴ Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training report on Education in remote and complex environments - https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Employment_Education_and_Training/RemoteEducation/Report

remote students⁵, students with disability⁶, students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds⁷ and Indigenous students⁸ – are more likely to attend VET than higher education.

Some schools face significant challenges in accessing VET for their students, including lack of suitably qualified staff. Stakeholders reported that these challenges can be exacerbated in rural and remote communities. A range of factors limit access to career pathways, especially VET programs, for students from regional, rural and remote communities, including but not limited to:

- access to Technical and Further Education institutions (TAFEs) and RTOs;
- availability of private training providers;
- availability of qualified trainers and teachers;
- distance from larger regional centres;
- availability of facilities that meet the training package requirements;
- limited use of the flexibilities that are available through the use of technology (e.g., web-conferencing); and
- limited access to relevant and meaningful work experience⁹.

This highlights the importance of VET in schools in rural, regional and remote Australia and therefore the importance of a sustainable high-quality VET in schools workforce in these settings. The Senior Secondary Pathways Review identified inconsistent quality and perception about VET and integration with senior secondary studies as issues.

Well-informed career advice is essential so that young people can choose the pathway that is right for them. Given their influence, it is also important for parents to receive this information, so they can understand and reinforce formal career advice. More students need greater opportunity and more encouragement to combine academic and vocational education and training subjects at school if this best meets their aspirations.

Improved careers advice and guidance to students and parents regarding potential pathways and opportunities post-schooling would lessen the impact of broader societal views of VET. VET has long been suffering with the stigma that is it not for the academic or Australia's best and brightest. This view is slowly changing with many of the stakeholders consulted in this report reinforcing the value of VET for all secondary school students. As the recent *Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education* acknowledged, "there is the enduring problem which has been 'part and parcel' of education in Australia for over a century, namely the status and value differential between a VET

⁵ Cardak, B. et al. 2017, *Regional Student Participation and Migration: Analysis of factors influencing regional student participation and internal migration in Australian higher education*, National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education: Curtin University, February 2017, p. v, <https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Regional-Student-Participation-and-Migration-20170227-Final.pdf> and Regional Education Expert Advisory Group (2019), National Regional, Rural and Remote Tertiary Education Strategy: Final report, Commonwealth Department of Education, p. 12, https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/national_regional_rural_and_remote_tertiary_education_strategy.pdf.

⁶ Koshy, P. 2019, *Equity Student Participation in Australian Higher Education: 2013–2018*, National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education: Curtin University, p. 7, <https://www.ncsehe.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/NCSEHE-Equity-Student-Briefing-Note-2013-18-Accessible-Final-V2.pdf>; and National Centre for Vocational Education Research (2019a), Australian Vocational Education and Training Statistics: Total VET students and courses 2018, p. 8, https://www.ncver.edu.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0031/6925090/Total-VET-students-and-courses-2018.pdf.

⁷ Karmel, T. and Lim, P. 2013, *Socioeconomic Disadvantage and Participation in Tertiary Education: Preliminary thoughts*, National Centre for Vocational Education Research occasional paper, pp. 18–19,

<https://ncver.edu.au/data/assets/file/0024/9393/socioeconomic-disadvantage-2612.pdf>; and Czarniecki, K. (2017), 'Less inequality through universal access? Socioeconomic background of tertiary entrants in Australia after the expansion of university participation', *Higher Education*, vol. 76, p. 517, <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-017-0222-1>.

⁸ Pechenkina, K. and Anderson, I. 2011, *Consultation Paper on Indigenous Australian Higher Education: Trends, initiatives and policy implications*, Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, September 2011, p. 6, https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/pechenkina_and_anderson_2011.pdf.

⁹ Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training report on Education in remote and complex environments https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Employment_Education_and_Training/RemoteEducation/Report

pathway and qualification compared with a university degree. The net effect of this issue is the worth and relevance of VET is diminished and discounted at a time when the exact opposite is required”.¹⁰

“VET has been consistently hampered by some negatively prejudicial thinking. The world has long changed and education policy must embrace the reality of the complexity and dynamism of industry in the context of climate change, resource depletion and the challenge for creativity and collaboration world-wide”

– Stakeholder feedback

This report presents an opportunity to improve the quality and sustainability of the workforce for a specific sub-section of VET in Australia – VET that is delivered in the secondary school environment to secondary school students. While VET is delivered to secondary school students through a range of models, this paper is focussed on VET that is delivered to secondary students on the school site, where a school or the system is the RTO, or via an auspicing arrangement with an external RTO (hereafter referred to as *VET in schools*). Those delivering VET in schools, are operating at the intersection of two regulatory and policy settings – the 2011 Framework and the 2015 RTO Standards. These sets of requirements aim to ensure the quality of teaching and VET across Australia. However, when individuals are required to meet both sets of arrangements, the initial qualification requirements and ongoing compliance requirements can be particularly burdensome for teachers and the schools supporting them.

The delivery of high-quality VET to secondary students requires a range of skills and knowledge at least as complex and extensive as those required for teaching in other areas. The ideal VET in schools teacher will have strong content knowledge, based on recent and relevant industry experience, pedagogical skills suited to both the content being taught and the secondary-aged cohort to whom it is being delivered, and the capacity to engage and nurture their students. These requirements are captured in the *Australian Professional Standards for Teachers* (Teacher Standards), and in the RTO Standards for the VET sector. Although this report refers to ‘dual qualified’ VET teachers, stakeholders pointed out that they are in fact ‘triple qualified’, being required to possess vocational competence, including industry experience and qualifications as well as VET trainer/assessor and ITE qualifications.

Finding an appropriate workforce is a longstanding challenge for VET in schools. To ensure the highest quality VET provision in schools, VET delivered by qualified and registered teachers who also meet the requirements for VET trainers and assessors is ideal. However, consultation for this project suggested that these dual qualified VET teachers are becoming an ‘endangered species’. VET is increasingly delivered by trainers without teaching qualifications, through a variety of arrangements including alternative authorisations to teach, supervision by a registered teacher, and delivery away from school sites.

There is no doubt that high quality VET is delivered to school students across the country through these various arrangements, but quality could be improved by having greater numbers of dual qualified VET teachers. This report focuses on issues facing dual qualified VET teachers, including increasing their numbers and retaining them in the workforce. These proposed recommendations need to be looked at in a context where dual qualifications are desirable but will not be a feasible solution in all schools across Australia.

Greater support for dual qualified VET teachers would improve the quality and consistency of VET delivered in schools and therefore actions to support those who wish to gain and maintain dual qualifications would support greater consistency in quality.

¹⁰ Halsey, J. 2018, Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education – Final Report, Commonwealth of Australia.

Furthermore, VET in schools delivered by dual qualified VET teachers could also support improved information and/or encouragement about the VET post-school pathway which would improve perception about VET and integration with senior secondary studies. Since dual qualified VET teachers will continue to operate at the intersection of two regulatory systems, improvements will require collaboration between the skills and school sectors as well as industry to consider the recommendations from this project.

With reference to other key pieces of VET work, this report proposes recommendations supported by underpinning principles to ensure a high quality and sustainable VET in schools workforce. This report and its recommendations are intended to inform the implementation of recommendation 10 of the Senior Secondary Pathways Review: “In collaboration with the Skills Council, Education Council should co-design with industry a national strategy on VET in schools that promotes the quality of VET”.

Underpinning principles



VET deserves a high standing, equal to that of other school and post-school options.



Quality and supply of the VET in schools workforce are equally important considerations.



Any approach taken to providing a qualified VET workforce for VET in schools should be sustainable.



There should be an ongoing commitment to ensuring that the quality of teachers and the status of the profession is maintained, and qualifications required for teacher registration are not diminished.



VET in schools must, and does, meet the same regulations, standards and quality as all other VET.



VET in schools reforms, including the recommendations in this report, should be consistent and complementary to each other.



Current trainers and assessors bring significant experience, skills and knowledge to their roles and there should be recognition of this.



Any findings and recommendations related to VET in schools should be considered by both the education and skills sector and progressed collaboratively.

These principles emphasise the importance of collaboration and of reforms being complementary. Education Ministers and Skills Ministers are already collaborating on relevant recommendations of the Senior Secondary Pathways Review. Workforce issues should be an important part of this collaborative work.

Recommendation 1

The implementation of the recommendations from the ***Looking to the Future: Report of the Review of senior secondary pathways into work, further education and training*** and other national and jurisdictional reform processes, place the quality of teaching at the centre of implementation, and be informed by the findings and current practice examples identified report.

Project scope

The 2018 One Teaching Profession report made seventeen recommendations that “aim to build the agency and ownership of teachers and leaders in the processes and outcomes of registration, and by doing so improve and reinforce teacher quality, strengthen children’s safety and improve the consistency and efficiency of teacher registration processes across Australia”.¹¹

One Teaching Profession highlighted the delivery of VET in schools as one of three “major areas identified as potentially creating barriers and/or warranting improvement”, as part of a consideration of “a range of factors that contribute to the efficiency of registration and the related issue of workforce mobility.” The initial registration requirements for dual qualified VET teachers are a barrier for entry into the VET in schools workforce, and the ongoing requirements for maintaining both teacher registration and VET qualifications are particularly challenging. Three of the seventeen recommendations of One Teaching Profession relate specifically to VET in schools and aim to address these challenges.

One Teaching Profession recommendations

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Recommendation 15 | Undertake work to implement greater alignment between teacher registration and VET qualifications for teachers who hold or seek dual teaching and VET qualifications. |
| Recommendation 16 | Teacher employers, teacher regulatory authorities and initial teacher education providers collaborate to develop pathway programs to teaching qualifications that recognise the VET qualifications, prior learning and the experience of the VET trainer/assessor and make these available to VET trainers/assessors employed in schools under alternative authorisation to teach arrangements. |
| Recommendation 17 | Include consideration of the workforce challenges and complexities under the current arrangements for VET delivered to senior secondary students in the review into the senior secondary curriculum recommended in <i>Through Growth to Achievement: Report of the Review to Achieve Educational Excellence in Australian Schools</i> . ¹² |

In response to One Teaching Profession, Education Council tasked AITSL with progressing the implementation of recommendations 15 and 16. Recommendation 17 was addressed through the Senior Secondary Pathways Review, commissioned by Education Council in August 2019.

¹¹ Education Council, 2018. 'One teaching Profession: Teacher Registration in Australia'. Accessed from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/national-review-of-teacher-registration/report/snapshot---one-teaching-profession--teacher-registration-in-australia.pdf?sfvrsn=f71cf13c_2

¹² Education Council, 2018. 'One teaching Profession: Teacher Registration in Australia'. Accessed from https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/national-review-of-teacher-registration/report/snapshot---one-teaching-profession--teacher-registration-in-australia.pdf?sfvrsn=f71cf13c_2

This report is the culmination of significant research and consultation that was undertaken to address recommendations 15 and 16 of One Teaching Profession.

The scope of this project includes:

- Clarification and greater alignment of teacher/trainer and assessor qualification and teacher registration requirements
- development of pathways from VET into ITE qualifications for trainers/assessors
- consideration of the workforce challenges and complexities currently shaping this area of schooling and the educator workforce.

This project also intersects with the potential future outputs of the AWTD initiative and with future outcomes in response to the Senior Secondary Pathways Review.¹³ The emphasis within the Senior Secondary Pathways Review on quality of VET in schools is reflected in its recommendation of a national strategy on VET delivered in schools that addresses quality, and its repeated recommendation that if quality cannot be demonstrated in VET in schools then alternative RTO delivery should be utilised.¹⁴

The current context of VET in Australia, including the broad context, regulatory context and relevance for schools, is detailed in **Appendix 1**.

¹⁴ Shergold P, Calma T, Russo S, Walton P, Westacott J, Zoellner D and O'Reilly P 2020 *Looking to the future: Report of the Review of Senior Secondary Pathways into Work, Further Education and Training* (Senior Secondary Pathways Review), Education Services Australia / Education Council, <https://pathwaysreview.edu.au/>, p. 84-85

Stakeholder consultation approach

This report has been shaped by consultation with key stakeholders including teachers, school leaders, teacher employers, TRAs, the skills sector, unions, industry representatives and higher education providers. Stakeholder consultation was undertaken in three phases.

Phase one

Phase one consultation highlighted a range of current and potential responses for greater alignment between teacher registration and VET qualifications for teachers who hold or seek dual teaching and VET qualifications.

It was identified during phase one of consultation that there are two stages at which greater alignment might be implemented: the stage of gaining the qualification and/or registration, and the stage of maintaining the registration. Stakeholders acknowledged that greater alignment must occur within the regulations governing teacher registration and VET trainer/assessor requirements, notably the Framework and the RTO Standards, and by working with the TRAs and governing bodies that oversee and manage these sets of regulations.

Also noted during phase one of consultation was the pathway programs that are operating in a variety of ways for VET trainers/assessors to gain ITE qualifications to meet jurisdictional and local needs. These pathway programs recognise the experience and expertise that VET trainers/assessors bring when they commence an ITE qualification, and this has potential to facilitate clearer and more attractive pathway programs.

Phase one consultations also investigated the preferred form and specifics of such programs and identified contextual and jurisdictional differences within the workplace challenges and complexities of this area.

Phase two

Phase two consultations initially focused on noted areas of interest, to generate further information and direction for the project. Consultation and insights regarding current and potential ideas, processes and practices were also sought. The challenges and opportunities discussed during phase two consultations provided a focal point in drawing out solutions to potentially address how best to build Australia's high quality and sustainable VET in schools workforce. The current practice examples described in this report illustrate a sample of the ways that these identified challenges and complexities are addressed, noting opportunities for continued efforts in collaboration and sharing of what works.

Phase three

Drawing upon consultation findings and examples of current practice, a set of draft recommendations were developed. Phase three consultations for this project involved testing these draft recommendations with a wide range of stakeholders. The final recommendations proposed in this report were co-designed with and crafted by stakeholders. The recommendations put forth next steps that could be taken to build and support Australia's VET in schools dual qualified teacher workforce.

Vocational education and training in schools

Across the country, there is no uniform model for VET delivered to secondary students. As a result of different requirements, demands and contexts, different approaches have been adopted across systems, jurisdictions and schools to address local needs in delivering VET. This has been made clear through consultation undertaken to date, as well in One Teaching Profession. However, it must be noted that VET delivered in schools must meet the same regulations and standards as all other modes of VET delivery. Figure 1 below describes the models of VET delivery to secondary students in Australia.

| Model 1 | Model 2 | Model 3 | Model 4 | Model 5 |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| School/school sector as RTO delivers training and issues qualifications. | School is auspiced/partners with external RTO – school delivers training, qualifications issued by RTO. | School engages RTO to deliver training (within the school or externally). RTO delivers training and issues qualifications. | Students attend external RTO – this could be a TAFE, another school, or a private RTO. | Students undertake school-based apprenticeship – attend RTO (either school or external RTO) and employment external to the school. |

Figure 1 – models of VET delivery in Australia (adapted from One Teaching Profession).

As per the RTO Standards, VET may only be delivered by RTOs and by trainers/assessors who meet set criteria. In order to deliver, assess and issue VET qualifications, a school or school system must also be an RTO. Teachers delivering VET at a school site utilising Models 1, 2 and school site delivery of Model 3 in the figure above (that is an RTO, in a school system/sector that is an RTO, or at a school with an auspicing arrangement with an RTO) are required to meet the specifications of the RTO Standards, for the RTO to meet its requirements and to ensure that the VET delivered leads to agreed outcomes and recognised competencies. Teachers at schools utilising these models must also be registered with the relevant state or territory TRA. Where a school or system does not employ dual qualified VET teachers to deliver VET in schools, qualified trainers/assessors deliver VET in schools, but most hold an alternative authorisation to teach from the relevant state or territory TRA.

A school may also enter a third-party arrangement with an external RTO, by which they may integrate VET classes into the school timetable, deliver VET classes off-site by the RTO, or a combination of the two. Where VET is delivered off-site through an external RTO, there is no requirement for VET trainers/assessors to hold teacher registration, therefore offsite delivery models are out of scope for this project.

Regulation of the VET in schools workforce

Those delivering VET in a secondary school environment are bound by regulations that pertain to teachers and to trainers/assessors. The workforce requirements for the delivery of nationally accredited VET qualifications at schools operate at the intersection of the regulatory and policy settings governing teaching and training and assessing: the 2011 Framework, and the RTO Standards.

These two regulatory frameworks establish standards to maintain quality and the integrity of both teachers and trainers/assessors. This dual regulatory framework imposes guidelines and obligations on schools and providers, teachers and trainers/assessors, and those in the industry who hold expertise. Collectively, they outline requirements and expectations for the VET in schools context and workforce.

Framework for Teacher Registration in Australia (2011)

The Framework, agreed by the Education Council in 2011, articulates requirements of teachers for purposes of professional registration and practice. Teacher registration is the remit of jurisdictions, and across the country teacher registration is undertaken by the various TRAs. These TRAs have the capacity to register individuals to fulfil the duties of a teacher, which they do with reference to the Teacher Standards, which provide a nationally endorsed framework for teaching practice and quality, ongoing professional learning and career stage progression, and to other applicable requirements. Each TRA operates under its own legislation, so arrangements will differ between jurisdictions, within the agreed national framework.

Three elements of the Framework and its implementation are relevant to this work: qualifications, ongoing professional learning, and alternative authority to teach, detailed below.

Qualifications

To be eligible for provisional teacher registration, a prospective teacher must complete a recognised, accredited ITE course. ITE courses are accredited by TRAs in line with the nationally agreed Standards and Procedures.

Ongoing professional learning

To maintain their teacher registration, teachers must undertake at least 100 hours of professional learning, referenced to the Teacher Standards, over each five-year period. This is a national minimum, and some jurisdictions have different requirements for professional learning.

Alternative authorisation to teach

The Framework makes provision for an 'alternative authorisation to teach'.¹⁵ The Framework allows, "in clearly defined circumstances and under specified conditions, for persons who are not eligible for registration to be employed in roles that would otherwise require registration."¹⁶ The two categories of this alternative authorisation to teach are given as:

- "to address workforce shortages: These individuals are not eligible for registration as a teacher, but are offered employment in a school due to a specific teacher shortage"; and,
- "pathways to registration: This provides a pathway to registration for individuals who are working towards an accredited initial teacher education qualification, within a specified period of time."¹⁷

This alternative authorisation to teach presents an avenue for schools to deliver VET in schools, within regulations and requirements, where identified workforce shortages exist or in cases of demonstrated progression towards an ITE qualification. Jurisdictions have different legislative frameworks that create different arrangements for alternative authorisation to teach.

Such a variety of arrangements enabling trainers/assessors to deliver VET in schools without holding teacher registration (full or provisional) suggests that this is a complex area often demanding careful consideration of jurisdictional nuances, student and community responsiveness, and legislative requirements. While this range of responses provides flexibility and options to address local needs, the variety of arrangements and the overlap of regulatory requirements can make it difficult to get a full picture of the VET in schools workforce and the challenges it faces.

RTO Standards and requirements for VET trainers/assessors

The RTO Standards are intended to ensure that VET delivery reflects current industry practice, incorporating the latest techniques, processes, product knowledge, and other content. The RTO Standards is a list of eight Standards and associated Clauses, covering a range of requirements and obligations, and governing a wide range of aspects of training delivery. These include the qualification requirements for anyone performing training and/or assessment within VET, with or without supervision. The onus is on the RTO to ensure ongoing professional learning and industry currency of those performing training/assessing.

As VET in schools must be delivered in accordance with overarching VET guidelines and standards, the RTO Standards apply to VET in schools content, delivery, student assessment, auditing of credentials, and so on.

¹⁵ For consistency, this paper uses 'alternative authorisation to teach', although the eight jurisdictions use variations of terminology: 'authorisation to employ an unregistered person as a teacher' (Northern Territory), 'conditional accreditation' (New South Wales), 'limited authority to teach' (Tasmania), 'limited registration' (Western Australia), 'permission to teach' (Queensland and Victoria), 'permit to teach' (Australian Capital Territory), and 'special authority' (South Australia). See especially 'Alternative authorisation to teach', pp. 29-31, National Review of Teacher Registration.

^{16, 17} Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership 2011, Framework for Teacher Registration in Australia, AITSL, Melbourne

The RTO Standards specify that anyone delivering VET, including to secondary or senior secondary students in schools, must satisfy the following requirements:

- vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed
- current industry skills directly relevant to the training and assessment being provided
- current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning that informs their training and assessment.¹⁸

The specific qualification requirements for trainers and assessors as specified in the RTO standards and in guidance provided by the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)¹⁹ are:

- TAE40116 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (Cert IV TAE) or its successor or
- TAE40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment plus the following units:
 - TAELLN411 (or its successor) or TAELLN401A, and
 - AEASS502 (or its successor) or TAEASS502A or TAEASS502B or
 - a diploma or higher level qualification in adult education.

The Cert IV TAE is further detailed in **Appendix 2**, with a list of the core and elective units that constitute the qualification.

¹⁸ The *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* (RTO Standards), current and superseded, are available at the Australian Government's Federal Register of legislation webpage: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2014L01377>

¹⁹ ASQA provides guidance to trainers/assessors and RTOs on trainer/assessor requirements set out in the RTO Standards on their website: <https://www.asqa.gov.au/standards/training-assessment/clauses-1.13-to-1.16>

Challenges for the VET in schools workforce

In delivering VET in schools, teachers/trainers and assessors are operating at the intersection of VET and teacher registration frameworks. This means that those delivering, supervising and assessing VET in schools must satisfy both sets of requirements – including meeting specific requirements of qualifications, professional learning, and vocational competence and content. When considered collectively, the requirements on teachers/trainers and assessors seeking to gain and maintain qualifications, credentials and industry currency are burdensome.

Figure 2 below presents a summary of the challenges identified in One Teaching Profession and through stakeholder consultation as experienced by the sector in a broad sense, and more specifically by teachers and VET trainers/assessors seeking to become dual qualified VET teachers.

| Sector | Teachers | VET trainers/assessors |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of appropriately qualified people • VET trainers/assessors need permission to teach at school sites • Alternative authorisation to teach may be time-limited or restricted to a particular school • May need a teacher in class with the VET trainer/assessor • VET trainer/assessor continuity is not assured: schools may not be able to meet the diverse needs and interests of senior secondary students | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to complete the Cert IV TAE as a minimum qualification and hold relevant vocational competencies and industry skills • Significant commitment to maintain continuing professional learning for teacher registration as well as professional learning and industry currency to satisfy RTO Standards • Professional learning to maintain VET qualification focuses on competency-based approaches to training and assessing • Depth of industry experience required and opportunities for teachers to maintain industry currency can be challenging | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant commitment to undertake ITE whilst maintaining VET professional learning and industry currency • Training and experience focused on competency-based training and assessment of adults not necessarily considered equivalent to the focus of ITE programs • Do not always have pedagogical teaching knowledge, criticised by some as potentially eroding entry standards to the profession • Benefits of VET as a field of education with distinct teaching approaches is not always recognised • Minimum VET program is the Cert IV TAE which is a level 4 AQF qualification. An ITE qualification is a level 7 AQF qualification |

Figure 2 – Challenges to becoming a dual qualified VET teacher

In some jurisdictions, due to contextual circumstances, the utilisation of alternative authorisation to teach to ensure VET can be delivered in schools is more widespread. This can reduce the demand from schools for dual qualified VET teachers and therefore the incentive for individuals to gain these qualifications. Given the highly skilled nature of VET in schools delivery, it is timely to consider how the supply and retention of dual qualified VET teachers can be enhanced.

Consultations also acknowledged the critical role of vocational expertise in the delivery or assessment of VET and noted that more could be done to assist those with vocational expertise to gain and maintain teacher registration as well as assisting those with teaching expertise to gain and maintain the necessary VET qualifications and experience. This could include registered teachers who have VET qualifications and/or relevant industry experience, but not a VET trainer/assessor qualification.

A significant challenge associated with providing a broad range of industry-focused VET opportunities for senior secondary students is the question of how best to attract and retain highly skilled and suitable people from a similarly broad range of professions and trades into an educator role, and more specifically into a role in schools. Further to this initial challenge is then how best to attract such highly skilled and suitable trainers/assessors into an ITE qualification.

Some schools encourage their VET in schools trainers/assessors employed with alternative authorisation to teach to undertake an ITE program and obtain teacher registration. This has had some success in increasing the number and availability of teachers/trainers and assessors, but the approach of trainers/assessors undertaking an ITE qualification whilst remaining in the trainer/assessor workforce, and continuing to retain their trainer/assessor status, is not without challenges.

“I personally know many expert tradespeople wanting to 'teach' students to pass on their knowledge (and who better to do so than people who have worked in industry) but are deterred due to ITE requirements, so will never become teachers. And I know others who have studied externally for an extended period of time to become accredited as a professional teacher only to then face maintaining a dual accreditation, and leave the profession.”

– Stakeholder feedback

Embarking on an ITE program requires a significant commitment by trainers/assessors who undertake continuing professional learning in their VET field and maintain industry currency in their field often by working in their profession or trade while also being employed in a school. In addition, there is the requirement to complete ITE coursework and required days of 'professional experience' (teaching placements) in a school, that sometimes cannot be completed in the school in which the VET in schools trainer/assessor is employed.

Consultations also noted the decline in VET-specialised ITE courses which is considered to arise from a lack of demand, rather than ITE providers being unwilling to offer these courses. Barriers to enrolling in these courses include the expense of time and commitment, requirements of professional experience that might include finding a suitable school when options can be limited, and ongoing registration demands associated with the VET teaching specialisation.

Consultation feedback from employers also noted the significant cost and resource implications of supporting dual qualified VET teachers to meet and maintain their dual qualification and registration requirements while teaching.

Obtaining dual qualifications

To become a dual qualified VET teacher, a teacher must meet complete an accredited ITE program, and the minimum qualification of the Cert IV TAE. In addition to the TAE, a dual qualified VET teacher must also have vocational competencies at least to the level delivered, and industry skills relevant to the training being delivered (further information on the RTO Standards is available at **Appendix 1**).

An ITE qualification is an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) Level 7 or higher qualification focused on teaching and learning, while the Cert IV TAE is an AQF Level 4 qualification focused on competency-based training and assessment.

It was revealed consistently through consultation that few VET trainers/assessors already working in schools are committed to obtaining an ITE qualification and achieving teacher registration. It is acknowledged that undertaking an ITE qualification would be a significant time and financial commitment whilst also maintaining VET qualifications and working in a school. For current registered teachers, undertaking the Cert IV TAE and the gaining and/or maintaining the industry currency and vocational competency requirements associated with it also presents a significant challenge. For schools, time release and support for those seeking to become dual qualified can also be burdensome.

Aligning the Cert IV TAE and ITE qualifications

This project considered how the Cert IV TAE and ITE qualifications could be aligned. However, stakeholder feedback noted that it would be difficult to achieve complete alignment between VET adult education qualifications and ITE qualifications due to the substantial difference in AQF levels of the respective qualifications.

These differences make it difficult to map qualifications and prior experience in teaching and VET for credit transfer, RPL and advanced standing. However, there are many examples of ITE programs that either embed the Cert IV TAE or have it as a prerequisite. The focus of this project has therefore been on ways to achieve greater alignment without directly mapping the content in ITE programs and Cert IV TAE qualifications.

Consultation confirmed that there are already examples of credit transfer, RPL and advanced standing being awarded, and that scaling these up would be more productive than a national mapping exercise.

In consultation, it was also pointed out that many VET trainers/assessors (although not the majority) have qualifications other than the Cert IV TAE, such as the Diploma in TAE or degrees in adult education. The difficulty of aligning these qualifications to ITE qualifications, or offering credit transfer, RPL or advanced standing, should be less than for the Cert IV TAE. These trainers/assessors may be good candidates to undertake ITE.

Opportunities to support prospective dual qualified VET teachers

Stakeholder consultation revealed many ideas and opportunities that could lead to an increase in the number of dual qualified VET teachers delivering VET in schools. These opportunities recognise the experience, skills and qualifications that current VET trainers/assessors would bring to a teaching qualification, and the pedagogical knowledge and teaching experience current teachers would bring to VET teaching.

Pathway options from VET training to teaching and vice versa have the potential to bridge the divide that exists between the schooling and skills sectors and to provide opportunities to build highly skilled teams in schools with a range of backgrounds and areas of expertise, to meet the diverse needs and interests of secondary and senior secondary students.

The initiatives proposed and illustrated with current practice examples support pathways into ITE and between the two qualifications. These initiatives' entry and exit points may attract more skilled professionals and tradespeople into schools to teach VET. Identifying and developing pathways that provide incentives for highly skilled people to enter teaching to address ongoing workforce challenges calls for creative and innovative thinking, as demonstrated in the examples of current practice and opportunities explored in this paper.

Any exploration of new pathways from VET into ITE would need to have a focus on quality and ensuring the ITE component is designed to confidently prepare teachers for the delivery of quality teaching and learning. The requirements for ITE accreditation under the nationally agreed *Accreditation of initial teacher education programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures* (Standards and Procedures) would continue to be met, to assure quality.

VET-specialised ITE programs and expedited pathways to dual qualifications

ITE programs have been developed and delivered which focus on VET, however these are declining in popularity, forcing ITE providers to withdraw them from their offerings. Stakeholders consulted suggested that there are various reasons for the decline in VET ITE popularity and better data is needed to support the understanding of the reasons behind this decline. This decline has long term implications such as a reduced supply of the dual qualified VET in schools workforce.

However, there is an opportunity for VET-specialised ITE programs to recognise the prior experience, skills and qualifications that prospective students bring. These potential opportunities include embedding a VET qualification into an ITE program, and awarding of advanced standing for previous experience and qualifications gained.

Embedded Cert IV TAE

The Cert IV TAE embedded in an ITE program enables its graduates to earn both teacher and the trainer/assessor qualifications. This still requires graduates to meet other requirements in order to register as a teacher/trainer and assessor (including, but certainly not limited to, industry skills and currency).

Consultation revealed that ITE providers are considering and trialling ways to embed the Cert IV TAE into accredited ITE programs. An example of this model is where VET 'Special Interest Area' subjects are offered to eligible students in the areas of 'Competency Based Training and Assessment' and 'Vocational and Workplace Literacies'. Of these two subjects, the former includes a compulsory 25-hour VET professional experience placement, in response to industry placement requirements. Upon successful completion, students may apply for recognition for the Cert IV TAE (TAE40116) and/or the Address Foundation Skills in Vocational Practice Skill Set (TAEAA00009).

Credit transfer, recognition of prior learning and advanced standing

Consultation feedback also suggested that along with the training and assessment qualifications, VET trainers/assessors have years of industry knowledge that should be given greater recognition and argued the need for increased provision of RPL.

Crediting the ITE student with advanced standing based on their prior studies and experience has been raised as a means of facilitating trainers and assessors undertaking ITE. The two key approaches to providing opportunities for advanced standing in ITE referred to in consultation are:

- recognising industry qualifications and experience in an ITE course
- enabling ITE students to complete industry qualifications as part of, or concurrently with, an ITE course – an option that is dependent on the pre-service teachers (PST) holding, or being in the process of obtaining, industry experience.

Advanced standing for VET in ITE has been adopted in a number of ways, including:

- university faculties of education in dual sector universities entering into internal arrangements with VET-aligned faculties that deliver the industry qualifications in their universities.
- ITE providers entering into arrangements with external RTOs to enable PSTs to complete industry qualifications.
- embedding industry qualifications into the ITE course, in cases where the ITE provider is also an RTO.

The importance of recognising previous qualifications and experience was identified in the recent AQF Review. Recommendation two of this review stated that "AQF should be revised to ensure that it can more effectively fulfil its core role in defining qualification types, reflect emerging skills needs, facilitate credit recognition – including of shorter form credentials such as micro-credentials – and support learner pathways within and between the education and training sectors".²⁰

Stakeholders noted that, while examples exist of ITE programs embedding and building on the Cert IV TAE, many VET trainers/assessors have qualifications above AQF level IV, and this should make credit transfer and RPL easier. Opportunity also exists in making credit transfer and RPL easier when considering potential ITE candidates who already hold tertiary qualifications, and in particular, higher education qualifications in VET.

²⁰ Australian government, *Review of the Australian Qualifications Framework Final Report 2019*.

The example below of the Bachelor of Education (Applied Learning) at the University of Tasmania which is a nationally accredited ITE program that qualifies experienced VET teachers and trade professionals to teach the Technologies dimension of the Australian Curriculum and VET in schools and enables them to have fulltime school careers and advancement opportunities alongside their traditional curriculum colleagues.

Example of current practice: Bachelor of Education (Applied Learning)

University of Tasmania

The University of Tasmania (UTAS) offers a Bachelor of Education in Applied Learning (BEd[AL]). This nationally accredited ITE program recognises prior vocational qualifications, vocational experience and Certificate IV in Teaching and Assessment (TAE) by providing advanced standing. Graduates exit this qualification meeting qualification eligibility requirements for provisional teacher registration.

Key facts

- Four year degree (32 units) delivered online
- Advanced standing is available for vocational qualifications, vocational experience and the Certificate IV in Teaching and Assessment (up to 12 units/1.5 years)
- In 2020, the BEd(AL) had 23 commencing students and 38 continuing students
- Over 50% of students are in Tasmania, with the remainder mainly from Queensland and Victoria. One student is from Western Australia
- BEd(AL) students currently employed as VET trainers and assessors in schools are permitted to complete professional experience placements in their schools of employment.

The BEd(AL) aims to graduate autonomous professional teachers who are able to apply educational theory and research to enhance student outcomes through continual reflective improvement of their teaching practice informed by vocational and national teaching standards.

Building the dual VET trainer/assessor and teacher workforce

In anticipation of an increase in delivery of VET in schools, and a shortage of suitably qualified teachers, UTAS developed the BEd(AL) for those seeking to teach the Technologies learning area of the Australian Curriculum as well as those teaching VET in a school context.

The BEd(AL) aims to open a pathway for both experienced trainers and industry professionals to teach in both school and vocational education contexts. Through providing advanced standing for students' vocational qualifications and experience – minimum of Cert III and at least one year industry experience - UTAS recognises the students' previous achievements, professional values, understanding and insights. This is important as these students have already undertaken significant work, study and professional experience including gaining the TAE and maintaining their professional competencies to provide VET training/assessment. This advanced standing reduces the number of units and length of time for students to complete the qualification and lessens the impact of undertaking the qualification additional to the students' other professional and personal commitments.

BEd(AL) Students

Enrolments comprise of a diversity of students including current VET practitioners seeking to expand their career prospects into school teaching, tradespeople or other professionals

with no teaching experience seeking a career change, and Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) teachers upgrading their qualifications.

More recently, enrolments have also included those delivering VET in schools who are aiming to secure and enhance their career prospects as registered teachers, particularly as education reforms that relate to expanded VET opportunities in schools are implemented in Tasmania.

Support for students

Applied learning

UTAS recognises that students enrolling in the BEd(AL) come from a variety of backgrounds with a range of experience as well as professional and personal commitments. As such, the program is delivered flexibly and is designed to address individuals' needs and perspectives. The BEd(AL) is based on the principles of authentic learning, informed by professional teaching standards and contemporary theoretical perspectives on education. The course is designed to build in depth knowledge of the Teacher Standards and enables graduates to engage in effective professional reflective practices and a commit to their own lifelong learning to improve their own students' outcomes.

Professional experience placements for current VET in schools trainers

Completing Professional Experience (PE) placements can be a significant challenge, both for ITE students and for the principals of their schools of employment. Generally, pre-service teachers are required to undertake professional experience placements in a range of schools to gain broad experience and skills as well as to be involved with teaching different content areas and approaches. If the same approach to PE was applied to students in the BEd(AL), this would require those concurrently working at schools as VET trainers and assessors to take leave from their current roles and employment for periods of time, therefore creating potential VET staffing issues for their current schools.

To address this, UTAS has implemented a PE model whereby BEd(AL) students are able to undertake their placements in their school of employment. UTAS further supports both the school and the student to ensure the placement is still rigorous and a quality learning experience that advances their current teaching practice.

What graduates and principals think

In 2019, UTAS surveyed BEd(AL) graduates and their principals on their confidence in graduates' performance against the Teacher Standards. All Principals surveyed agreed strongly that BEd(AL) graduates were valuable additions to their school community. They also agreed 100% that BEd(AL) graduates were pedagogically competent, well prepared for the classroom, communicated well with students, and demonstrated graduate level competence in planning for and delivering differentiated teaching, and for assessing student learning.

School and system support to build the dual qualified workforce

Consultation revealed many ways schools are filling workforce shortages by supporting industry professionals to become trainers/assessors to deliver VET in their schools. In addition, both schools and systems provide support to trainers to encourage them to undertake ITE qualifications and

become dual qualified, as well as maintain their vocational competence, industry currency and VET knowledge.

School support – the industry first approach

Some schools and systems have adopted an industry first focus for trainers and assessors, regardless of whether they hold the Cert IV TAE qualification. The 'Industry First to Cert IV TAE' approach prioritises industry experience and industry qualifications, before then determining whether an individual demonstrates the other characteristics deemed necessary to work with senior secondary students in a school environment. The school employs and supports individuals to work as a part of a multidisciplinary team while they undertake the Cert IV TAE – and ultimately an ITE course if they choose this path. School support takes many forms, including having a teacher in the classroom, mentoring, a buddy system, shadowing, and assistance with reporting and other specific tasks. Responsibilities increase as specific aspects of the Cert IV TAE are completed and the individual's teaching capabilities develop.

This approach is underpinned by the assumption that individuals employed in the school in this way are an integral part of the school community and should be included in school activities with differentiation. Whilst there may be broader adoption of this approach, initial consultations have identified examples where this is occurring in schools with integrated training centres. Actual arrangements are likely to vary, but the RTO Standards permit a person with vocational qualifications and industry experience but who does not hold the Cert IV TAE to deliver training in schools (although, importantly, not to assess), under supervision of a qualified VET trainer/assessor, including a teacher with dual qualifications. Particular credentials or 'delivery' skill sets are nonetheless still required, as prescribed in the RTO Standards (see **Appendix 1**). Schools adopting this approach determine the support and supervision needed to maintain quality, achieve outcomes and competencies for students, and ensure compliance with the RTO Standards.

Example of current practice: Industry experience first

Guilford Young College, Tasmania

Guilford Young College is a Catholic year 11 and 12 secondary school within the Archdiocese of Hobart which offers the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE) curriculum including comprehensive VET options for students. Guilford Young College is a registered training organisation (RTO) and students can study TCE including VET through the consortium of schools Southern Tasmanian Catholic Colleges Trade Training Centre. The centre has been recognised as 'the nation's leading school pathway to VET'.

Guilford Young College works in partnership with the Catholic secondary colleges in Southern Tasmania to provide a range of VET programs. Students can also access VET qualifications in areas not offered by Guilford Young College's Trade Training Centre through external RTOs. In 2017, Guilford Young College was recognised as the Australian Training Award's School Pathways to VET Award winner.

Industry first approach to staffing at Guilford Young College

Guilford Young College prioritises industry experience and qualifications when recruiting to fill VET positions. This ensures that VET trainers and assessors bring practical experience to the content they are teaching, ensuring a quality VET program. In addition, trainers with industry experience speak the language of industry, which assists in building relationships with students. Students want to learn from experienced professionals, hear of practical examples of their training in practice, and know they are gaining useful and current skills for when they enter the workforce.

Guilford Young College ensures that the industry professionals they recruit into VET training roles have the appropriate disposition to be teaching secondary students. Guilford Young College looks for prospective trainers' ability to build and maintain relationships with students and effective communication skills to ensure the right fit for the VET classroom.

Supporting staff to obtain the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

With an industry first approach, many industry professionals come to Guilford Young College without the Certification IV in Training and Assessment. Guilford Young College supports its training staff to gain this qualification by providing time and assistance when required. Industry professionals without the TAE work as part of a multidisciplinary team made up of qualified trainers, assessors, and teachers as they undertake the TAE. Guilford Young College offers various types of support including mentoring, observation, access to a qualified teacher, and assistance with reporting and compliance requirements. Those new to the role are encouraged to take on additional responsibilities as they complete aspects of the TAE and develop their teaching capabilities.

In addition, Guilford Young College has a strong working relationship with the RTO delivering the TAE. This has enabled the RTO to tailor the TAE to be applicable to the Guilford Young College workplace, ensuring those undertaking it can practically apply it to the VET in schools context they are working in.

Supporting staff to maintain VET trainer and assessors qualifications

Teachers and trainers at Guilford Young College come to their roles with a variety of different industry backgrounds, interests and experience and this is acknowledged by Guilford Young College and addressed in the way they structure their support for VET trainers and assessors maintaining their qualifications. Flexibility in the school timetable provides the time needed for trainers and assessors to work in the industry and maintain their knowledge and skills.

Supporting staff to gain teaching qualifications

Trainers and assessors without teaching qualifications are encouraged and supported to complete a nationally accredited teaching qualification and gain teacher registration. However, Guilford Young College acknowledges there are significant barriers to undertaking a teaching qualification and for many VET trainers and assessors at Guilford Young College, becoming dual qualified isn't of interest or a feasible option.

The majority of VET trainers and assessors teaching at Guilford Young College are initially issued with a 'Limited Authority to Teach' by the Teacher Registration Board of Tasmania and once they have completed their Certificate IV in Training and Assessment and an industry qualification, they can apply for Specialist Vocational Education and Training Registration.

School support – pathways for education assistants

Initial consultations highlighted that consideration is already being given to how best to support education assistants with prior industry experience and vocational qualifications (other than in Education) to undertake the Cert IV TAE. Whilst the approach adopted is likely to vary depending on the needs of students, these ideas have the potential to provide pathways for Education Assistants from, or with particular expertise in, specific cultures and language – such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This could be based on the 'Industry First to Cert IV TAE' initiative, and potentially supports transition into ITE with Advanced Standing.

Other opportunities for industry professionals and VET trainers/assessors to enter and complete ITE

Stakeholder consultation throughout this project aimed to uncover not only current practice but possible or potential ideas that could be implemented to increase the dual qualified VET workforce. Many stakeholders recognised that undertaking an ITE program for a VET trainer/assessor or industry professional is a significant commitment, and in response identified ways further support could be provided. These include the:

- establishment of mentoring arrangements for qualified teachers to mentor VET trainers/assessors seeking teaching qualifications
- creation of and support for communities of practice embedding external supports for VET trainers/assessors seeking teaching qualifications
- provision of varied induction and onboarding that meets the respective context and experience of the industry professional and VET trainers/assessors
- establishment of scholarships to provide financial support to industry professionals and VET trainers/assessors undertaking ITE programs.

Providing opportunities for professional development for prospective dual qualified VET teachers, or those who have recently completed their ITE program and gain provisional teacher registration, including communities of practice, mentoring, and induction programs that are tailored to the VET teaching context could build the numbers of dual qualified VET teachers and support them to stay in the teaching profession.

Stakeholder consultation noted the differences between the 'average' PST, and an experienced VET trainer/assessor who has decided to undertake an ITE program to become a dual qualified VET teacher. PSTs in the latter category will have significant industry experience in their vocation or trade, possess the Cert IV TAE and/or other adult education qualification, have knowledge of VET, and potentially significant experience delivering VET to secondary students (either in a school or an external RTO or TAFE). Stakeholder consultation also noted the characteristics or personal qualities of VET trainers/assessors who do pursue an ITE qualification. These characteristics included a passion for sharing their knowledge and skills to improve outcomes for their students, lifelong learners with an ability to build strong relationships with students.

“I look for enthusiasm, we won’t employ people who have been going along the trade way for a long time, and are stuck in their ways, just looking for an easy change. I look for ones that are interested in teenage students and want to make a difference.”

– Stakeholder feedback

The design and implementation of effective mentoring practices and communities of practice are valuable to all teachers and are well-established in many schools across Australia. Stakeholder consultation identified the opportunity for current VET trainers/assessors to be a part of those practices. A mentor-mentee partnership between a qualified teacher and a VET trainer/assessor could provide the trainer with the opportunity to learn from their mentor on how their VET practice could be improved with the insight of an expert teacher. Communities of practice involving all teaching staff including dual qualified VET teachers, VET trainers/assessors and qualified teachers could benefit all involved.

The impact of effective induction practices is well known. The *Graduate to Proficient: Australian guidelines for teacher induction into the profession* (the Induction Guidelines) state that “induction can strengthen the skills and knowledge of early career teachers, expand their teaching repertoire, improve job satisfaction and commitment and reduce teacher attrition in the early years. It supports early career teachers to manage their own wellbeing and career development”.²¹ However, the Induction Guidelines also note that induction must be context sensitive. Induction programs for those delivering VET in schools must be tailored to the senior secondary and VET context as well as the individual school context. Induction programs should also consider the experience that a dual qualified VET teacher brings as an ‘early career teacher’, especially those with several years of experience as a VET trainer/assessor working with secondary school students, and focus on their specific needs and areas of development.

Example of current practice: From trade to teaching

Swan Christian College & Swan Trade Training Centre, Western Australia

Swan Christian College is a K-12 independent school located in the Swan Valley, 20 minutes from Perth. The college incorporates Swan Trade Training Centre where students complete a fixed, two-year course over years 11 and 12 allowing students to graduate with their WACE, the Certificate III in Business and a Certificate II in their chosen trade (including work experience). Courses are developed with industry input to ensure training offered is current and relevant.

²¹ Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership 2016, *Graduate to Proficient: Australian guidelines for teacher induction into the profession*, AITSL, Melbourne.

Students attend Swan Trade Training Centre full time and continue to participate as active members of the Swan Christian College community. They participate in all House-based pastoral activities and have access to learning and wellbeing support services.

The staff at Swan Trade Training Centre are committed to providing VET pathways for students that prepare them for work, apprenticeships, and further training.

Teachers and Trade Trainers at Swan Trade Training Centre

Teachers and trainers at Swan Trade Training Centre come to their roles with a variety of different backgrounds and the support provided to training centre staff depends on their individual circumstances and needs. Some trainers bring significant experience in the trades areas that Swan Trade Training Centre offers VET courses in, others come without the trade background but have specific personal skills and/or teaching experience. Swan Trade Training Centre supports its trainers to gain the appropriate qualifications they need to succeed in their role with the training centre.

Swan Trade Training Centre's qualified VET trainers and assessors without teaching qualifications are encouraged and supported to complete an ITE program. The profile below describes one teacher's journey from trades, to training and into an initial teacher education program.

Teacher Profile: Matthew King and his pathway to initial teacher education

Matthew King is the Head of Swan Trade Training Centre. An electrician by trade, Matthew came to Swan Trade Training Centre in 2012 as a trainer. Matthew has always had a passion for working with young people, and prior to Swan Trade Training Centre took on youth leadership roles at his church and other youth programs.

Swan Trade Training Centre supported Matthew to gain the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment within the first few months of his employment as a trainer. Since gaining the TAE, Matthew became the VET Coordinator for Swan Trade Training Centre.

Part of Matthew's role as the VET Coordinator requires him to work with the RTO providing the Cert IV TAE to STTC staff and support the creation of pathways from the previous version of the TAE to the new TAE. The RTO supports Swan Trade Training Centre trainers to undertake and upgrade their Cert IV TAE contextualised to the STTC training environment.

In 2018, Matthew enrolled in the University of Tasmania's (UTAS) Bachelor of Education (Applied Learning) (BEd AL). This program recognises Matthew's skills, knowledge and experience with advanced standing for his electrical qualifications and experience and the completed TAE.

Swan Trade Training Centre and Swan Christian College support Matthew to complete his ITE qualification by providing release time. Matthew undertook his first professional experience placement with Swan's sister school, which allowed Matthew to keep his employment during the placement. Since then, UTAS has put the necessary provisions in place to allow students like Matthew to complete their professional experience placements in the schools they currently teach in. Swan Christian College provides Matthew with opportunities to apply his pedagogical knowledge within his current role and more broadly within the College, to further strengthen his teacher training.

Despite the barriers to obtaining an ITE qualification, with the support of Swan Trade Training Centre and Swan Christian College, and the flexibility of the University of Tasmania's BEd (AL), Matthew is on track to becoming a dual qualified VET teacher.

School and system support – pathways for current qualified teachers to become dual qualified VET teachers

Many schools and systems support current qualified teachers to become dual qualified VET teachers, so they can deliver VET in their secondary schools. This arrangement is particularly prevalent in schools with a student cohort with more challenging and diverse needs. It is also the model in place across all three school sectors in NSW, supported by the NSW Department of Education.

Example of current practice: system approach to building the dual qualified VET teacher workforce

NSW Department of Education

The NSW Department of Education (the Department) oversees government-funded VET in NSW with the express aim of supporting economic, regional and community development across the state. It leads strategic policy, planning, funding and regulation for VET.

The majority of VET delivered to secondary school students is delivered within school settings in NSW. This requires a significant commitment on behalf of the government and the Catholic and independent sectors to ensure there is an appropriately qualified VET teacher workforce to deliver VET in schools.

The Department supports approximately 400 teachers each year to become dual qualified VET teachers via the VET teacher training program. The VET teacher training program is open to all teachers who are interested in becoming a dual qualified VET teacher and have the support of their principal. The program supports teachers to gain the CERT IV TAE and achieve vocational competency in their chosen industry.

The program covers all costs of training, including teacher relief costs. When training packages, including the Training and Assessment package, are updated and upgrades are required, the Department supports current dual qualified VET teachers to undertake further training to maintain their qualifications and their dual qualified status.

The centrally coordinated and funded program allows schools to succession plan effectively, knowing the support is there is have teachers trained as VET teachers to fill upcoming vacancies and ensure high quality VET delivery to students will not be affected by a lack of suitably qualified teacher.

As illustrated by the examples of current practice, the opportunities identified to support and build the dual qualified VET teacher workforce are already in practice across Australia. These opportunities identified through stakeholder consultation and proposed as recommendations could be expanded and scaled up to ensure a sustainable dual qualified VET teacher workforce.

Recommendation 2

Initial teacher education providers work with teacher regulatory authorities to create VET focused accredited ITE programs with the Cert IV TAE embedded in ITE, to increase workforce numbers of dual qualified VET teachers.

Recommendation 3

Initial teacher education providers and teacher regulatory authorities develop expedited pathways that meet ITE accreditation standards for VET and industry professionals into and through ITE for example:

- advanced standing and recognition of prior learning (RPL) for VET qualifications and experience
- an internship style model of ITE including consideration of an adapted pre-service teacher model that focuses on the pedagogical skills suited to both the content being taught and the secondary-aged cohort to whom it is being delivered.

Recommendation 4

Systems, sectors, and schools provide supports for industry professionals and VET trainers/assessors to enter and complete ITE for example:

- Establish mentoring arrangements for qualified teachers to mentor VET trainers/assessors seeking teaching qualifications.
 - Create and support communities of practice embedding external supports for VET trainers/assessors seeking teaching qualifications.
 - Provide varied induction and onboarding that meets the respective context and experience of the industry professionals and VET trainers/assessors.
 - Establish scholarships to provide financial support to industry professionals and VET trainers/assessors undertaking ITE programs.
-

Opportunities to support dual qualified VET teachers to maintain their qualifications

Once teachers become dual qualified by achieving teacher registration and meeting the RTO Standards to deliver VET, they are required to maintain both of those qualifications. Many stakeholders stressed the significant burden on dual qualified VET teachers to continually meet both their industry currency and VET professional development obligations as required by the RTO Standards, as well as professional learning hours to maintain their teacher registration.

The RTO Standards require VET trainers and assessors to undertake ongoing professional development in VET and maintain industry currency in the area they are teaching. This is required to ensure that trainers/assessors' knowledge and skills reflect current industry practice, so that in turn senior secondary students are better able to develop the knowledge and skills needed in professions and trades. In the case of the dual qualified VET teacher, these obligations can be challenging, particularly in industries or fields that are constantly changing. The maintenance of industry currency requires time away from school, which has a financial cost to either the school or the individual teacher, and potentially significant impact on students.

Schools that employ dual qualified VET teachers to deliver VET, or trainers/assessor under alternative authorisation to teach, may find it challenging to provide the ongoing time release or other support necessary for teachers to undertake professional development in VET and maintain industry currency. Where a profession or trade is constantly changing, questions are raised such as how much time is needed for a teacher or trainer/assessor to maintain competency with the latest technologies, techniques, systems, processes, product knowledge, or other aspects of that industry. Consultation has indicated that school support for dual qualified VET teachers to maintain their dual status and meet all requirements is essential. Furthermore, consultation identified the need for systems and sectors to recognise this challenge for schools and provide appropriate support.

Example of current practice: Supporting trainers to maintain industry currency

Taminmin College

Taminmin College is a secondary school located in Humpty Doo in the Northern Territory. It has approximately 1100 students and provides many different specialist programs and pathways for its students.

Given the regionality of Taminmin College and its limited access to dual qualified VET teachers, VET is delivered by trainers and assessors at Taminmin College in collaboration with registered teachers some of whom are dual qualified. Taminmin College invests significantly in ensuring that its VET trainers are meeting the requirements of the RTO Standards but also that they have the appropriate pedagogical knowledge to teach, the ability to support the social and emotional wellbeing of secondary school students and other skills such as behaviour management.

Taminmin College trainers have twelve weeks away from the school per year where they are expected to work in their industry to maintain vocational competence. Teaching weeks are also structured to allow trainers time to maintain industry currency with most trainers training three days a week with the remaining two days for preparation and their own development. Trainers also take on projects across the school, allowing them to stay current with their trade/industry. In addition, Taminmin College has a compliance officer responsible for the compliance and administration responsibility of the RTO. This frees up trainer time to allow them to focus on students, training, and their own development.

In addition to the requirements set out in the RTO Standards, dual qualified VET teachers must also maintain their teacher registration by completing at least 100 hours of professional learning (aligned to the Teacher Standards) over a five-year period. This is the requirement set out in the Framework operationalised and managed by the TRA in each jurisdiction. At present, within the range and regulations set in the Framework, TRAs set their own specific professional learning requirements. Some TRAs provide greater flexibility regarding the types of professional learning that are accepted as relevant against the Teacher Standards, whereas others are more specific as to which activities are accepted as appropriate professional learning. If TRAs determine that professional learning that relates to the specialisation and school context of teachers, potential exists for the dual qualified workforce to include VET-related professional learning in their professional learning activities for the purpose of maintaining their teacher registration. Consultation feedback indicated that aligning professional learning requirements is less problematic than aligning vocational qualifications and experience with AQF levels. However, in trying to resolve these challenges, maintaining teacher quality should remain a paramount concern.

Across most TRAs, VET industry experience and professional learning undertaken to maintain industry currency could be aligned to the Teacher Standards, particularly Standard Two 'Know the content and how to teach it' and therefore meet the professional learning requirement of teacher registration renewal. However, further guidance could be provided by TRAs, schools and other organisations providing support to teachers, to promote this and provide information on how the Teacher Standards are applicable to those teaching VET in schools, particularly in relation to industry context and engagement, and the competency-based training and assessing of VET.

Many schools support their dual qualified VET teachers with time release for maintenance of industry currency and organise professional learning that meets the vocational competence and VET knowledge requirements of the RTO Standards. The current practice example below describes how one school supports its dual qualified VET teachers to meet their professional learning obligations.

Recommendation 5

AITSL and TRAs collaborate to provide greater clarity to dual qualified teachers regarding how the APST relate to VET teaching and how appropriate professional learning can meet requirements for ongoing teacher registration.

Recommendation 6

Systems, sectors, and schools provide adequate support to VET teachers to maintain industry currency as required by the RTO Standards.

Further opportunities

Stakeholder consultation uncovered several other opportunities and ideas to address the challenges facing federal and state/territory governments, schools, system/sectors and individuals related to the dual qualified VET in schools' workforce. Consultation feedback also noted that additional support for VET trainers/assessors undertaking ITE programs could alleviate some of the barriers and challenges PSTs face while they complete their qualifications.

Communities of practice and mentorship opportunities

Communities of practice have the potential to accelerate, intensify, enrich, and enhance VET in schools. VET communities of practice foster trust, communication and sharing, while also concretely enhancing the work of the VET professional. Furthermore, if an individual benefits from a community of practice, the benefits tend to flow through to the organisation.²²

Mentoring enhances the skills, confidence and motivation of teaching professionals as well as raises the quality of teaching and training. Knowledge, skills, and attitudes are imparted through a close relationship between mentor and mentee. Mentoring assists organisations to create an environment that nurtures personal and professional development, supports, and retains talented practitioners, increases work satisfaction for both mentors and mentees, develops more commitment and loyalty and becomes a stabilising factor in times of change.^{23 24}

Multidisciplinary teams

The creation/establishment of multidisciplinary teams is a way to facilitate development of teaching skills and knowledge that presents a middle ground between full teacher qualifications and current VET trainer/assessor requirements. Blended delivery models where teachers, industry experts and VET trainers/assessors co-deliver training has the potential to provide significant benefits to students by enabling access to contextually rich and professionally delivered training. Consultation feedback noted that training and teaching are different, and it is agreed that combining the two would create a richer environment in which VET students could achieve. This approach facilitates access to a broader scope of expertise, promotes greater knowledge and skills transfers between teachers and trainer/assessors, and would also assist to improve the perception of VET in schools.

The use of multidisciplinary teams could positively impact the delivery of VET to students in specialist schools. One stakeholder noted, "as specialist schools are not funded to have dedicated VET staff it is vital the special education staff are involved with every stage of student planning and participation. A special education teacher might assist the VET teacher with adjustments to instruction and assessment".

²² AITSL, *The Essential Guide to Professional Learning: Collaboration*, https://www.aitsl.edu.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/the-essential-guide-to-professional-learning---collaboration2dc5ac91b1e86477b58ff00006709da.pdf?sfvrsn=86a2ec3c_2.

²³ Lejonberg, E and Tiplic, D, 2016. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, accessed from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13611267.2016.1252110>

²⁴ Hobson, Andrew J.; Ashby, Patricia; Malderez, Angi; Tomlinson, Peter D, 2009. *Mentoring Beginning Teachers: What We Know and What We Don't*, Teaching and Teacher Education: An International Journal of Research and Studies, v25 n1 p207-216 Jan 2009.

Clearly identifying roles and responsibilities within the program would reduce the need for the dual qualified teacher/trainer and assessor, enabling each party to manage different elements of the program. Industry experts may be more inclined to engage in VET delivery, and therefore drive quality, if the requirement to have the Cert IV TAE or a teaching qualification is removed, and they are able to maintain their focus on skill development. It must be considered that blended delivery models are more complex in nature, usually more difficult to procure and therefore have additional costs attached. Schools who do not have teachers who are trainers and assessors could manage this collaboration through a dedicated position such as a VET coordinator.

Example of current practice: Multidisciplinary teams

Western Australian Colleges of Agriculture

The Western Australian Colleges of Agriculture (the Colleges) offer real world education and training programs and residential facilities for young people in Years 10, 11 and 12. There are five Colleges, each with their own fully operational commercial farm. VET forms a significant part of each College's program in industry areas including agriculture, construction, automotive, engineering, and other trades areas.

Public schools in Western Australia are funded on a per student basis and this allows the College flexibility to employ its workforce under different awards. This ensures the College can get the best possible mix of skill and expertise to deliver VET to its students. Whilst not without its challenges, this model encourages the use of multidisciplinary teams. This model encourages collaboration between the diverse range of staff involved in delivering VET, who may be qualified teachers, VET trainers, technical officers, or administrative staff. This flexible model ensures that VET delivered best meets student needs and leads to the best possible student outcomes, by facilitating opportunities for staff to share knowledge and skills and learn from each other.

Building school - industry partnerships

One of the important goals of schooling is to provide a foundation that prepares young people for the world of work. In 2019, the *Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration* committed all Australian governments to building partnerships that support learners' progress through the education system. Industry has an essential role to play in supporting schools to achieve this.

Throughout consultations, stakeholders showed widespread support for school – industry partnerships and it was recognised that this type of collaboration improved education and employment outcomes. There were examples shared of where industry and schools are working together to build capacity of teachers through workshops in schools and work experience. Queensland's *Gateway to Industry Schools* program (GISP) is an example of bringing industry into schools, teachers and industry working together, and use of industry workplaces for context, site visits and work experience.

It was noted that school – industry partnerships must be context specific and are most effective when they utilise capacity while meeting a need. For example, one stakeholder described what they saw as positive 'revolving door' approach, where VET professionals are periodically employed to meet an identified skill need, typically for training and assessment in technical areas which have difficulty attracting dual qualified staff.

Example of current practice: Gateway to Industry Schools program

Queensland Department of Employment, Small Business and Training

The Gateway to Industry Schools (GISP) program builds partnerships between schools and industry to enable young people to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attributes to participate effectively in the Queensland economy. It provides opportunities for industry and the education sector to work together to deliver outcomes for students, local communities, and businesses.

Students participating in the program are exposed to a range of learning experiences to assist them in their career choices and pathways to employment.

GISP program funding is awarded to industry organisations which are responsible for designing and leading their Gateway project with schools. Currently, there are ten industries involved: advanced manufacturing, aerospace, agribusiness, building and construction community services, food, wine and tourism, health, information and communication technology, minerals and energy, and screen and media.

The number of participating schools varies with each project, with 80 schools participating in the largest industry project.

Whilst providing opportunities for students to get involved and participate in industry, the program also supports VET teachers/trainers and assessors teaching in participating schools by providing an opportunity to get hands on experience and collaborate with industry alongside their students.

An example of this is the Queensland Minerals and Energy Academy (QMEA) project. QMEA runs various programs for students in year 7 through to year 12. For years 11 and 12, QMEA hosts camps in the school holidays and provide students with the opportunity to engage with industry professionals while undertaking a real-life project. One camp is hosted at a mine at Mount Isa, where students get a taste of what a career in the mining industry would be like. The mine's engineers and other professionals work with the students to complete a project. Teachers are welcome to join their students at the camp, and for teachers, all expenses are covered by the QMEA project. Alongside their students, teachers can broaden their industry knowledge, collaborate with engineers and other specialists, and participate in the projects. Teachers value the contextual exposure to bring back to their classroom environment.

In addition to the camps, QMEA also provides teachers and students with access to a range of specially developed and contextualised curriculum and teaching resources.

Systems as RTOs rather than individual schools

There are examples of education systems operating as an RTO. The RTO Standards require RTOs to deliver quality training and assessment to ensure that their services remain relevant to the needs of employers and that graduates are job-ready. By the system being the RTO rather than individual schools, economies of scale can be achieved which extend study options for students that do not diminish the quality of VET in schools being delivered. Furthermore, consultations revealed that this approach resulted in a reduction in the administrative burden and greater consistency achieved in terms of meeting the standards required to maintain RTO status across schools within a system.

Example of current practice: System as the RTO

Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta

The Catholic Education Diocese of Parramatta (CEDP) is the RTO for the 23 secondary schools delivering VET in its system. There are many benefits to the system as the RTO including improving the quality of VET being delivered and greater support for the workforce delivering it. For CEDP, its role as the RTO allows it to:

- Provide systemic-support structures including 'Leaders of Learning – VET' positions that each work closely with a cluster of schools to build capacity in VET. Leaders of Learning are experienced VET teachers who provide strategic leadership to principals and VET teachers.
- Ensure flexibility and agility with the VET workforce – CEDP has oversight of all VET delivery ensuring that it can solve workforce issues. This can involve moving staff around schools, clustering schools, temporary staffing swaps and identifying talent to address future staffing shortages.
- Facilitate schools working together to improve quality of VET delivery.
- Facilitate cluster classes to ensure sustainable VET delivery across the system.
- Support the maintenance of industry currency, vocational competence and VET practice including provision of time release for VET teachers.

The CEDP as the RTO for its schools allows it to take the burden of RTO compliance off individual schools.

Addressing rural and remote staffing shortages

Flexible but effective VET delivery methods which do not compromise on quality while also meeting student and community need in rural, regional, and remote contexts was a recurring theme throughout consultations. Suggestions provided to address the challenge of staff shortages were focused on school based, context appropriate models of support and included the employment of VET coordinators that support a school or, multiple schools as well as another option termed 'mobile VET delivery'.

The employment of VET coordinators is not a new concept. VET coordinators enhance the educational and vocational pathways of students by performing an important curriculum and pedagogical role including establishing and overseeing the delivery of VET programs. In addition, the VET coordinator facilitates collaboration with parents, business and industry, post-secondary institutions, and community organisations to support students' transition to post-secondary education and employment.

The concept of mobile VET delivery is also not new, and consultation revealed this has been used successfully in some jurisdictions as a means of addressing staff shortages and also the contextual challenges faced in regional, rural and remote communities of distance, smaller student populations, diverse needs of community and access to services. In essence, mobile VET delivery utilises an economies of scale approach. In this model, delivery of VET programs may be led by a system, sector or alternatively a network of schools who work collaboratively to ensure optimum use of resources with staff delivering VET programs across multiple schools.

The *Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education* identified two examples of quality mobile VET delivery: Western Australia's Colleges of Agriculture (whose model is described in the example of current practice on p. 38), and the Big Red Truck Mobile Hospitality Trade Training Centre based in central western Queensland serving five schools. The Big Red Truck provides mobile trade training to senior students in hospitality at the Certificate II level.²⁵

Building the evidence base

Stakeholder consultation revealed the need for a nationally consistent data to inform decision making regarding the VET workforce in schools. Jurisdictions, systems, TRAs and VET regulators may collect and hold various types of data on their VET workforce. Organisations such as the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) also collect various data on VET in Australia. There is an opportunity to collect more nuanced data and information on the dual qualified teachers and trainers/assessors delivering VET in secondary school settings. The ATWD unites and connects ITE data and teacher workforce data from around Australia. It provides nationally consistent data on subjects like number of teachers, graduate outcomes, teacher employment conditions and teacher attrition.

Drawing upon various sources, collaboration with the ATWD could build a comprehensive picture of the VET teaching workforce in secondary schools. A key objective of the ATWD is to help inform national policy that provides better support for the profession, and ensures that teachers are well supported, and schools are well resourced to deliver quality learning for every student. Having this information specifically on those teaching VET in schools could ensure future policy decisions and implementation of support initiatives are built from a solid evidence base.

Recommendation 7

Education systems, sectors and schools identify and implement opportunities for collaboration and upskilling for all staff delivering VET in schools for example, through:

- Multidisciplinary teaching teams, noting that this is an employer decision and would be managed at a school level.
- School mentoring programs whereby teachers mentor trainers/assessors in pedagogy and behaviour management and trainers/assessors share industry expertise.
- Supported use of approaches such as VET coordinators and mobile VET delivery, to address rural/ remote staffing shortages.

Recommendation 8

Education systems and sectors utilise and support context specific school-industry partnerships to strengthen the quality of VET delivered in schools.

Recommendation 9

Utilise data collection opportunities through collaboration with the ATWD to build an evidence base around the number, characteristics, and workforce experiences of registered teachers (including provisional registration and alternative authorisation to teach) delivering VET to secondary students to inform decision making.

²⁵ Halsey, J. 2018, *Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education – Final Report*, Commonwealth of Australia.

Policy implications

The examples of current practice in this report show that much can be done within current policy settings. However, it is also important to review current frameworks and policies periodically, and improving the quality of the VET in Schools workforce should be a major consideration when this is done. Furthermore, events such as the regular five-yearly reviews of training packages, including the training and assessment training package, underscore the importance of collaboration with the skills sector as well as industry.

There is considerable reform underway in VET and in schools, especially in the senior secondary years where most VET is delivered. The consultation findings, examples of current practice and recommendations of this project should be used to inform consideration and implementation of the outcomes of other reviews, including:

- The Senior Secondary Pathways Review, which emphasises the importance of VET in schools, and the importance quality in VET in schools delivery. The review recommended that “Vocational education and training (VET) should only be provided at school where it can be done in a high-quality way as demonstrated through the explicit endorsement of local employers or industry bodies, and if schools are unable to meet these requirements, they should support their students to undertake VET at an external registered training organisation.”
- The Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training report *Education in remote and complex environments*, which found that “VET in schools is ‘an important part of senior schooling’ because it enables students to undertake a nationally recognised VET qualification while completing their school certificate, which ‘helps them to make effective post school transitions”²⁶.

Also of note is the recently released *Better, Smarter Regulation* report, released by Catholic Schools NSW (CSNSW). The report assesses the incidence and burden of regulation with respect to school principals and teachers and to identify opportunities to lighten this burden, within the

²⁶ Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training report *Education in remote and complex environments* - https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/House/Employment_Education_and_Training/RemoteEducation/Report

NSW context. Several of the recommendations have informed this project and, if implemented, could assist in addressing the goals of this work at a national level. These recommendations are:

- **Recommendation 7:** DESE and ASQA seek early consideration and implementation of the recommendations of the 'Rapid Review of the Australian Skills Quality Authority's Regulatory Practices and Processes'.

In particular, the following recommendations from the 'rapid review' could have a positive impact on the regulatory burden:

- a. **Recommendation 2:** Developing new standards, aimed at decreasing prescriptive detail and increasing the focus on quality training delivery and outcomes.
 - b. **Recommendation 4:** Adjust ASQA's approach to performance monitoring in line with revised standards and a focus on provider self-assurance.
 - c. **Recommendation 14:** Adopt a range of monitoring activities that can be selected based on risk and the purpose for monitoring, to better align regulatory effort to risk.
- **Recommendation 8:** NESA and ASQA review professional development for accredited VET teachers to identify and compare professional development requirements against non-VET teachers.²⁷

These reviews and reports, while not focussed directly on VET in schools, have informed this project, and should in their implementation consider the recommendations of this report. VET in schools is a critical model of VET delivery and the sustainability of the VET in schools workforce should be considered in the implementation of reforms and any future reviews.

²⁷ "Catholic Schools NSW, *A pathway to better, smarter regulation for Catholic schools in NSW*, Sydney, p. 22.

Conclusion

The importance of quality VET pathways in secondary schools for secondary students cannot be overstated. Each jurisdiction in Australia recognises the importance of providing opportunities for students in VET. Numerous reviews, reports and reforms in the space of VET prove the ongoing commitment to improving the quality of VET provision, to meet the needs of both students and industry.

VET delivered in secondary school environments faces unique challenges including those relevant to ensuring a sustainable and high-quality workforce outlined in this report. Operating at the intersections of two sets of regulatory requirements, both with the aim of ensuring quality training and assessment, and teaching, dual qualified VET teachers and those aspiring to be dual qualified, face significant challenges. To support these teachers and ensure a high quality and sustainable VET workforce for schools, everyone has a role to play.

Stakeholder consultation revealed the many ways individual schools, education systems, ITE providers, and others are already working to improve the quality of VET delivered in schools by supporting its workforce. As highlighted in this report and with an appreciation of individual school contexts, this current practice can be elevated and scaled up.

The nine recommendations made in this report are broad and target many different aspects of the challenges identified. There is no one solution, however with the implementation of the proposed recommendations, and the scaling up of current practice, there is significant potential to build and support the dual qualified VET teacher workforce to ensure quality VET provision across Australia's schools.

Appendix 1: VET in Australia – Current context

Regulatory context

Australia’s VET trainers/assessors are held to quality standards of skills, knowledge, professionalism, and accountability, with industry and skill currency and connections to ensure best outcomes for their learners. This is the case for VET delivered in schools as much as for VET delivered in other contexts; all VET is held to the same sets of standards.

Ensuring a high quality workforce of VET trainers/assessors underpins the work of bodies such as the ASQA, which is responsible for regulating and maintaining high standards for VET in Australia,²⁸ with the stated role being to “register training providers and accredit VET courses to ensure nationally approved standards are met.”²⁹ It should be noted that in addition to ASQA, some providers in their jurisdictions are regulated by other regulatory bodies, for example, the Training Accreditation Council Western Australia (TAC) and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA).

The *VET Quality Framework* references and articulates legislative requirements, with which RTOs must comply. This Framework incorporates the components of the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* (RTO Standards),³⁰ the AQF, and the *Fit and Proper Person Requirements 2011*; altogether, the aim of the VET Quality Framework is “to achieve greater national consistency in registering and monitoring RTOs [and] the enforcement of standards in the VET sector”.³¹ ASQA is also bound to the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Regulations 2011*.³² Standards exist for Training Packages, VET accredited courses, and VET Regulators.³³

VET delivered in schools in Australia is regulated and reviewed at jurisdictional and federal levels, with collaboration between governments and industry representatives and leaders. Competency standards and assessment requirements (training packages) that are designed must be reviewed before being approved, and the trainers/assessors who deliver training packages must hold a minimum qualification, possess industry expertise, and undertake ongoing professional learning. The RTO Standards sets out these requirements with which RTOs and trainers/assessors must comply. Reference is made through the RTO Standards to the quality and integrity of the VET delivered to learners, the way in which it is delivered and assessed, and the performance of trainers/assessors.

²⁸ Australian Government Australian Skills Quality Authority website: <https://www.asqa.gov.au/>

²⁹ Australian Government Australian Skills Quality Authority homepage: www.asqa.gov.au

³⁰ The *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* (RTO Standards), current and superseded, are available at the Australian Government’s Federal Register of legislation webpage: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2014L01377>

³¹ Australian Government Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) ‘VET Quality Framework’, ASQA <https://www.asqa.gov.au/about/asqa/key-legislation/vet-quality-framework>

³² Australian Government Federal Register of Legislation, *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Regulations 2011* [Series F2011L01104], <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2011L01104/>

³³ See p. 6, RTO Standards.

Strengthening Skills: Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System (the Joyce Review) (2019)³⁴ was a significant review of VET in Australia, building on the previous year's *Review of the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011* (the Braithwaite Review) (2018).³⁵ The Joyce Review advocated for the VET sector and its important educational and economic contribution to the nation, but drew attention to VET in schools "as needing attention to ensure VET continued to deliver for Australians",³⁶ with evidence of declining employer confidence in the VET sector alongside similarly declining numbers of VET students. These findings have consequences for skills supply and demand.

Qualifications, registration, and standards for teachers in Australia

The Framework, agreed by Education Council in 2011, articulates requirements of teachers for purposes of professional registration and practice. Teacher registration is the remit of jurisdictions, and across the country the management of teacher registration is undertaken by the various TRAs. These TRAs have capacity to register individuals to fulfil the duties of a teacher, which they do with reference to the Teacher Standards, which provide a nationally endorsed framework for teaching practice and quality, ongoing professional learning and career stage progression, and to other applicable requirements.

The Framework sets out common elements that provide consistency in teacher registration requirements across Australia. Within this Framework, the legislation governing TRAs in each jurisdiction specifies the requirements for the gaining and maintaining of teacher registration, such as minimum hours of professional learning, ITE and other qualifications, and good conduct. The Teacher Standards are integral to the professional requirements for teachers, as is the enforcement and management of these Standards through the Framework and TRAs.

Three elements of the Framework and its implementation are relevant to this work: qualifications, ongoing professional learning, and alternative authority to teach.

The qualification requirement for teacher registration is the completion of a recognised, accredited ITE course, which hold their own prerequisites and regulations such as to permit preparation for teaching specialisations. Some overseas qualifications also satisfy these requirements, the equivalence and suitability of which TRAs evaluate. As already noted, an accredited Australian ITE qualification is a Level 7 qualification per the AQF, or higher.

³⁴ Australian Government Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet 2019, *Strengthening Skills: Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System* (the Joyce Review), available at <https://pmc.gov.au/resource-centre/domestic-policy/vet-review/strengthening-skills-expert-review-australias-vocational-education-and-training-system>

³⁵ Braithwaite V 2018, *All Eyes on Quality: Review of the National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011 Report* (the Braithwaite Review), Australian Government, Canberra, accessed at <https://www.employment.gov.au/review-national-vocational-education-and-training-regulator-act-2011>

³⁶ The Joyce Review, p. 1.

The professional learning requirement for teacher registration renewal and maintenance is clearly defined in the Framework with the specification that “professional learning is demonstrated on the basis of at least 100 hours of professional development activities referenced to the Teacher Standards, undertaken in the previous five years.”³⁷ The number and type of professional learning activities, and other requirements such as completion timeframes, recency, and mode of recording evidence and impact, are specified by the relevant TRA. Professional learning is a requirement for continued registration (renewal or maintenance), with some jurisdictional variations or “discretion of the teacher regulatory authority” permitted for requirements such as the type of activities that might be considered to meet requirements or the specific calculation of the time period.³⁸

Further to specifications of initial and fixed registration periods and other requirements for registration, the Framework makes provision for an ‘alternative authorisation to teach’.³⁹ The Framework allows, “in clearly defined circumstances and under specified conditions, for persons who are not eligible for registration to be employed in roles that would otherwise require registration.”⁴⁰ The two categories of this alternative authorisation to teach are given as:

- “to address workforce shortages: These individuals are not eligible for registration as a teacher, but are offered employment in a school due to a specific teacher shortage”; and,
- “pathways to registration: This provides a pathway to registration for individuals who are working towards an accredited initial teacher education qualification, within a specified period of time.”⁴¹

This alternative authorisation to teach presents an avenue for schools to deliver VET in schools, within regulations and requirements, where identified workforce shortages exist or in cases of demonstrated progression towards an ITE qualification.

Qualifications, registration, and standards for VET trainers and assessors in Australia

The RTO Standards are intended to ensure that VET delivery reflects current industry practice, incorporating the latest techniques, processes, product knowledge, and other content. The RTO Standards is a list of eight Standards and associated Clauses, covering a range of requirements and obligations, and governing a wide range of aspects of the work and staffing. These include the qualifications and registration requirements for anyone performing training and/or assessment within VET, with or without supervision. The onus is on the RTO to ensure ongoing professional learning and industry currency of those performing training/assessing.

As VET in schools must be delivered in accordance with overarching VET guidelines and standards, the RTO Standards apply to VET in schools content, delivery, student assessment, auditing of credentials, and so on.

³⁷ See ‘Fixed period of registration’, p. 5, and ‘Appendix 2 – Renewal of registration’, p. 12. The Framework.

³⁸ See ‘Fixed period of registration’, p. 5. The Framework.

³⁹ For consistency, this paper uses ‘alternative authorisation to teach’, although the eight jurisdictions use variations of terminology: ‘authorisation to employ an unregistered person as a teacher’ (Northern Territory), ‘conditional accreditation’ (New South Wales), ‘limited authority to teach’ (Tasmania), ‘limited registration’ (Western Australia), ‘permission to teach’ (Queensland and Victoria), ‘permit to teach’ (Australian Capital Territory), and ‘special authority’ (South Australia). See especially ‘Alternative authorisation to teach’, pp. 29-31, National Review of Teacher Registration.

⁴⁰ See ‘Alternative authorisation to teach’, p. 6. The Framework.

⁴¹ See ‘Alternative authorisation to teach’, p. 6. The Framework.

The RTO Standards specify that anyone delivering VET, including to secondary or senior secondary students through VET in schools, must satisfy the following requirements:

- TAE40116 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (Cert IV TAE) or its successor or
- TAE40110 Certificate IV in Training and Assessment plus the following units:
 - TAELLN411 (or its successor) or TAELLN401A, and
 - AEASS502 (or its successor) or TAEASS502A or TAEASS502B or
- a diploma or higher level qualification in adult education.
- vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed.
- current industry skills directly relevant to the training and assessment being provided.
- current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning that informs their training and assessment; and
- professional learning in the fields of the knowledge and practice of vocational training, learning and assessment including competency-based training and assessment.⁴²

The Cert IV TAE is further detailed in **Appendix 2**, with a list of the core and elective units that constitute the qualification.

Trainers/assessors delivering VET in school environments are operating at the intersection of VET and teacher frameworks. This means that those delivering, supervising, and assessing VET in schools must satisfy both sets of requirements – including meeting specific requirements of qualifications, professional learning, and currency of practice and content. Scope exists within these sets of requirements for short-term alternatives.

⁴² See Standard 1 Clauses 1.13-1.16, and Schedule 1, RTO Standards.

Appendix 2: Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

The *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* (RTO Standards) prescribes the training and assessment credentials (qualifications, skill sets and units of competency) required to deliver and/or assess VET qualifications.⁴³ The full qualification to deliver and assess VET qualifications is the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment (the Cert IV TAE).

Where a person with vocational qualifications and industry experience does not hold the Cert IV TAE, they are permitted to deliver but not assess units of competency, under the supervision of a qualified VET trainer and assessor. To do this they must possess one of the skill sets prescribed in the RTO Standards. A skill set is a single unit of competency or a combination of units of competency from a training package which link to a licensing or regulatory requirement, or a defined industry need. The skill sets required to deliver VET under supervision are broadly described as *Enterprise Trainer – Presenting Skill Set*; *Enterprise Trainer – Mentoring Skill Set*; and *Enterprise Trainer and Assessor Skill Set*. Where a person with vocational qualifications and industry experience does not hold the Cert IV TAE the RTO Standards permits that person to assess VET units so long as they have completed an accredited *Assessor Skill Set*. The RTO Standards also identify a number of Diploma-level qualifications in adult education, which are the higher level credentials required for someone delivering the Cert IV TAE.

Figure 3 below lists the core and elective units in the Cert IV TAE40116: Certificate IV in Training and Assessment.

⁴³ The *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015* (RTO Standards), current and superseded, are available at the Australian Government's Federal Register of legislation webpage: <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2014L01377>

Figure 3: Certificate IV in Training and Assessment: Core and Elective units

Cert IV TAE40116: Certificate IV in Training and Assessment

Volume of learning: Typically, 6 months to 2 years

9 x core units

Cert IV TAEASS401

Plan assessment activities and processes

Cert IV TAEASS402

Assess competence

Cert IV TAEASS403

Participate in assessment validation

Cert IV TAEASS502

Design and develop assessment tools

Cert IV TAEDEL401

Plan, organise and deliver group-based learning

Cert IV TAEDEL402

Plan, organise and facilitate learning in the workplace

Cert IV TAEDES401

Design and develop learning programs

Cert IV TAEDES402

Use training packages and accredited courses to meet client needs

Cert IV TAELLN411

Address adult language, literacy, and numeracy skills

1 x elective units

Cert IV TAEASS301

Contribute to assessment

Cert IV TAEDEL301

Provide work skill instruction

Cert IV TAEDEL403

Coordinate and facilitate distance-based learning

Cert IV TAEDEL404

Mentor in the workplace

Cert IV TAEDEL501

Facilitate e-learning

Cert IV TAELLN412

Access resources and support to address foundation skills in vocational practice

Cert IV TAELLN413

Integrate foundation skills into vocational training delivery

Cert IV TAETAS401

Maintain training and assessment information

Cert IV TAEXDB401

Plan and implement individual support plans for learners with disability

BSBAUD402

Participate in a quality audit

BSBCMM401

Make a presentation

BSBLED401

Develop teams and individuals

BSBMKG413

Promote products and services

BSBREL402

Build client relationships and business networks

BSBRES401

Analyse and present research information

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The logo for AITSL, featuring the lowercase letters 'aitsl' in a sans-serif font. The letters are colored with a gradient from light green to dark teal.

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A decorative graphic at the bottom of the page consisting of two overlapping triangles. One is a dark teal triangle pointing upwards from the bottom left, and the other is a light green triangle pointing downwards from the top right. They meet at a diagonal line that divides the bottom section of the page.

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AITSL is funded by the Australian Government