

# **The Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning in Australia**

## **Country Background Report prepared for the OECD activity on Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning**

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# Introduction

## Purpose of the report

This document provides an Australian Country Background Report (CBR) to support the OECD Education Committee activity entitled *Recognition of Non-formal and Informal Learning*. It specifically addresses issues relating to the way in which non-formal and informal learning is recognised in order to:

- create pathways to accredited training;
- accumulate credit in the formal education sector; and
- accelerate employment advancement.

Information presented in the document includes contextual factors, institutional and technical arrangements, stakeholder behaviour, case studies on benefits and barriers, and conclusions and challenges.

The specific purposes of the report are to:

1. synthesise Australian research and analyse current policies and practices relating to the recognition of non-formal and informal learning;
2. examine the impact of contextual factors on recognition systems;
3. identify and describe existing institutional and technical arrangements for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in Australia;
4. collect evidence of the benefits, barriers, strengths and weaknesses with the current systems and data relating to recognition; and
5. identify innovative and successful policy initiatives and practices.

## Overview

The recognition of non-formal and informal learning, commonly referred to as recognition of prior learning (RPL), is a major policy initiative of all Australian governments, and is seen to be an important element in developing and sustaining the knowledge and skill base necessary for Australia's social and economic future. Due to the federated system of government, Australia pursues a more decentralised and less prescriptive system of RPL with the Australian Qualifications Framework the central reference—providing the national qualifications standards upon which RPL is reliably based.

RPL continues to develop as an integral and valued component of learning pathways in education and training in this country, and in many instances acts as a powerful catalyst for student access to formal learning pathways.

The major advantages attributable to RPL in Australia include:

- ensuring that knowledge and skills already successfully achieved do not need to be repeated;
- encouraging individuals to continue to upgrade their skills and knowledge through structured education and training towards formal qualifications and improved employment outcomes; and
- providing individuals with the feeling of worth and self-confidence—an understanding that their knowledge, skills and experiences acquired in various settings are valued and can be used to access formal learning pathways.

In this sense, recognition of non-formal and informal learning in Australia is of particular benefit to people without formal qualifications.

A range of initiatives are being trialled by Australian, State and Territory governments, education and training institutions and industry for improving access, decreasing complexity and increasing support for people throughout the RPL process. Feedback suggests that many of these initiatives—described in the body of this report—are proving very successful, from both the system and student perspectives.

There is also strong evidence that in the Australian context at least, there are significant advantages of RPL that lie in the use by students, teachers, trainers, lecturers and employers of the information, including identification of skills strengths and gaps, gained through the process itself, not just in the advanced standing it may provide. Nevertheless, there is still considerable variability in Australia regarding the way in which RPL assessments are conducted within and across institutions, jurisdictions, and sectors.

Some of the current challenges in Australia are the need for more effective recording and data storage and retrieval systems, greater acknowledgement of the costs associated with RPL, and for more rigorous and focused research to guide policy development and cost-effective implementation.

## Key definitions

For the purposes of this report, the following definitions of formal learning, non-formal learning, informal learning and RPL apply. The definitions are compatible with the definitions adopted in the OECD activity, the *Role of National Qualifications System in Promoting Lifelong Learning*.

*Formal learning* refers to learning that takes place through a structured programme of instruction which is generally recognised by the attainment of a formal qualification or award (e.g. a Certificate, Diploma or Degree).

*Non-formal learning* refers to learning that takes place through a programme of instruction but does not usually lead to the attainment of a formal qualification or award (e.g. in-house professional development programmes conducted in the workplace).

*Informal learning* refers to learning that results from daily work-related, social, family, hobby or leisure activities (e.g. the acquisition of interpersonal skills developed through the experience of working as a sales representative).

*Recognition of prior learning (RPL)* is an assessment process that assesses the *individual's* non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification. In this sense, RPL does not refer to the awarding of advanced standing or credit in a course based on prior formal learning, and for the purposes of this document, it does not refer to informal 'credit' attributed by employers when evaluating current or prospective employees on the basis of experience or achievement for purposes of accessing employment or promotion.

## Structure of the report

The report consists of six sections or 'components'. Component 1 focuses on contextual factors, including demographic factors, internationalisation, technological developments, social changes, economic developments, and issues regarding skills levels and shortages. Component 2 describes institutional arrangements, including political and legal frameworks, the role of government and resourcing. Component 3 addresses technical arrangements, including those relating to qualifications, credit arrangements and approaches to assessment. Component 4 focuses on stakeholders and stakeholder behaviour, while Component 5 provides a set of nine case studies designed to provide insights into the range of RPL processes operating in Australia and the attendant issues. Component 6 draws the report together by identifying key issues, challenges and themes that emerge from the data.

Four appendices are also included, addressing the integration of highly skilled workers, a transferable skills portfolio, various qualifications opened up by the introduction of new information and communications technology, and learning regions. A list of acronyms applicable to the Australian context is also provided.

Information for the report was collected through:

1. a review of the available literature, including published reports, research studies, institutional handbooks, and web sites;
2. interrogation of relevant databases;
3. telephone and face-to-face interviews conducted with a range of stakeholder institutions (training providers, universities, community organisations and professional bodies), and relevant State and Australian government agencies; and
4. a series of case studies conducted 'on-site' and semi-structured interviews with administrators, teachers, students and prospective students.

A steering committee was also constituted for the purpose of providing expert and representative feedback to the project team throughout the preparation of the Report. The Steering Committee included representatives from the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training; Queensland Department of Education, Training and the Arts; the Australian Qualifications Framework Advisory Board; the University of Technology, Sydney; the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia; the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry; and Adult Learning Australia.

## Limitations influencing the preparation of the report

Difficulties encountered in the preparation of this report included:

1. While the application of RPL is intentionally designed to be flexible and is devolved to local assessing agencies, this makes it difficult to present a national picture of current practice. Moreover, there is no consistent or comprehensive process in Australia for appropriately collecting, storing and analysing data relating to the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in a way that allows rigorous analyses to be conducted and reported accurately at a national level. This means that the available statistics may underestimate the magnitude and extent of recognition of non-formal and informal learning.

The quantitative data used in this report is provided from a number of sources including:

- the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research (NCVER) which captures only government-funded vocational education and training (VET);
- the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) which produces the annual national collection: *Students: Selected Higher Education Statistics* which mainly captures government-funded higher education;
- the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) which produces the Survey of Education and Training (SET), a household-based survey of 17,000 households (some 24,400 persons aged 15 years or older), conducted every four years since 1989 using the methodology of personal interview. The most recent survey was conducted in May-August 2005.

In summary, the data is limited and is not nationally comprehensive. There is also a lack of national consistency in the definitions on which the recognition of non-formal and informal learning data is collected which precludes national and international comparability of data.

2. There have been few quantitative analyses and longitudinal studies of the influence of RPL on the life paths of Australians of various ages, gender, employment, and cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. This has made it difficult to draw meaningful inferences about the impact of RPL.

## Component 1 – Contextual factors

Under the Australian Constitution, State and Territory governments have primary responsibility for schools and vocational education and training (VET), whereas in the higher education sector, universities and other higher education institutions are approved and established by State or Territory legislation but reliant on Australian Government funding<sup>1</sup>.

Collaboration between the Australian, State and Territory governments on Australia's education and training system formally occurs through two Ministerial Councils: the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) and the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE). The Council of Australian Governments (COAG), which comprises the Prime Minister, State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) also considers educational matters.

In post-compulsory education and training, the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) provides the structure for the recognition and endorsement of fifteen national qualifications. The framework was established by MCEETYA to support continuous learning across all three sectors — schools, VET and higher education — through cross-sectoral articulation of programmes, credit transfer and RPL.

A summary of the AQF is presented in the figure below.

**Figure 1: AQF Qualification by Sector of Accreditation**

*AQF Qualification by Sector of Accreditation*

<i>Schools Sector Accreditation</i>	<i>Vocational Education and Training Sector Accreditation</i>	<i>Higher Education Sector Accreditation</i>
<u>Senior Secondary Certificate of Education</u>	<u>Vocational Graduate Diploma</u>	<u>Doctoral Degree</u>
	<u>Vocational Graduate Certificate</u>	<u>Masters Degree</u>
	<u>Advanced Diploma</u>	<u>Graduate Diploma</u>
	<u>Diploma</u>	<u>Graduate Certificate</u>
	<u>Certificate IV</u>	<u>Bachelor Degree</u>
	<u>Certificate III</u>	<u>Associate Degree, Advanced Diploma</u>
	<u>Certificate II</u>	<u>Diploma</u>
	<u>Certificate I</u>	

Source: <http://www.aqf.edu.au/aqfqual.htm>

<sup>1</sup> The Australian Government contributes around 13.7 per cent (2006-07) of total public funding to government schools, around 46.5 per cent (2006-07) to private schools, approximately 44 per cent (2004) to vocational education and training, and around 97 per cent (2005) to public higher education.

The AQF is the mechanism through which Australia assures quality within and across sectors. Specifically it aims to:

- provide nationally consistent recognition of outcomes achieved in post-compulsory education;
- help with developing flexible pathways which assist people to move more easily between education and training sectors and between those sectors and the labour market by providing the basis for RPL including credit transfer and work and life experience;
- integrate and streamline the requirements of participating providers, employers and employees, individuals and interested organisations;
- offer flexibility to suit the diversity of purposes of education and training;
- encourage individuals to progress through the levels of education and training by improving access to qualifications, clearly defining avenues for achievement, and generally contributing to lifelong learning;
- encourage the provision of more and higher quality vocational education and training through qualifications that normally meet workplace requirements and vocational needs, thus contributing to national economic performance; and
- promote national and international recognition of qualifications offered in Australia.

Education and training in the VET sector is based on collaboration between government and Australian business and industry. The National Industry Skills Committee (NISC) comprising members drawn from a range of industries and enterprises provides strategic advice to MCVTE about industry training needs. Industry Skills Councils (ISC) at the national level are responsible for the development and review of national industry Training Packages which describe competency standards, assessment guidelines, and qualifications that are available for the sector. A system of industry advisory bodies also exists at the State and Territory level to provide information to government on training needs. VET is delivered in the public TAFE system and by private and community education providers.

Higher education in Australia comprises 37 public universities, two private universities, one branch of an overseas university, four self-accrediting institutions and over 150 other non self-accrediting higher education providers. Typically these latter higher education institutions are accredited by their State and Territory Governments as being eligible to deliver higher education qualifications.

The quality assurance frameworks and policies underpinning the AQF are developed and endorsed by the relevant Ministerial Councils for each of the education and training sectors. The Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) conducts audits in the higher education sector. In December 2005, the National Quality Council (NQC) was established. It has specific decision-making powers in relation to the endorsement of Training Packages and other aspects of quality assurance under the National Skills Framework (NSF).

Formal and non-formal learning is provided in the higher education, VET and adult and community education sectors around the country, as well as in the workplace and community, for example through volunteering activities.

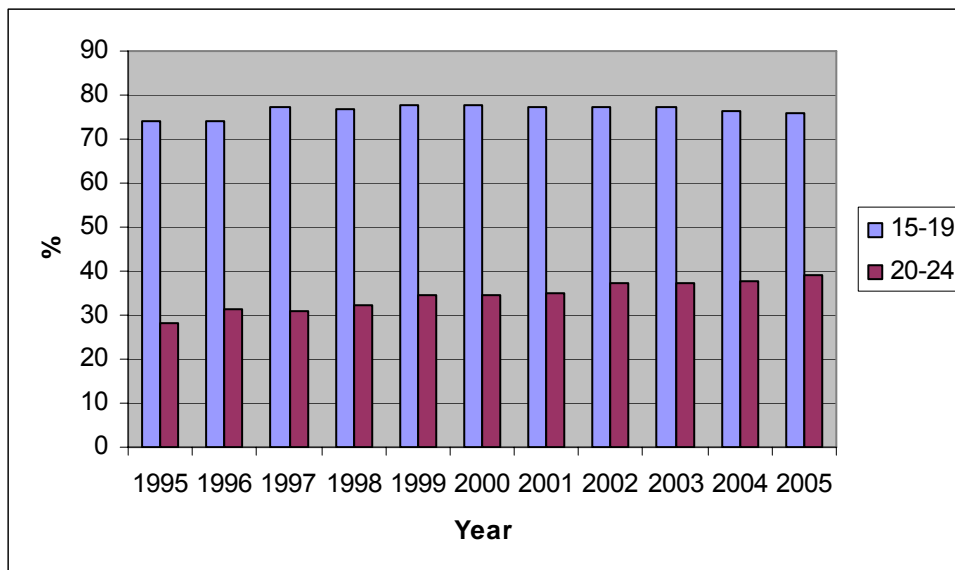
## Component 1.1: Demographic factors

### 1.1 a) How have the profiles (age, ethnicity, sex, socio-economic backgrounds) of learners changed/diversified for overall post-secondary education institutions (higher education, further education and vocational education and training, professional training, etc)? Is there any evidence of admission and graduation rates?

Over the last ten years there has been an increase in post-school education and training participation, including apprenticeships and traineeships. According to the Australian Treasury this increase in participation has been driven by demands for a more skilled labour force and the increased desire for education (Commonwealth of Australia, 2003).

Females were more likely to participate in higher education than males, while males were more likely to participate in VET than females. For each of the years from 1995 to 2005 about 54 per cent of the higher education population was female, while for the same years between 46 per cent and 48 per cent of the total VET population was female. Across the same period the training participation is highest for young people and young adults (see figure 2).

**Figure 2: The training participation rate of teenagers and young people**

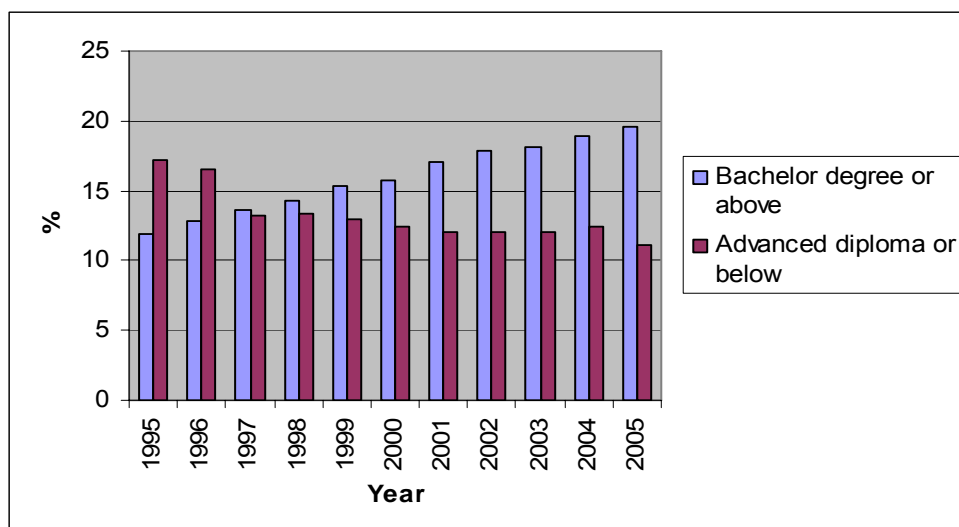


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2006, Australian Social Trends, cat. 4102.0

In 2005 the findings of the ABS 'Survey of Education and Training Experience' (ABS 2006) indicated that 22 per cent of Australians in the 15 to 69 year age group undertook a course of study. Of these 14 per cent were undertaking a single course which did not lead to a qualification (including preparatory courses, recreational and personal courses). Over two-thirds of those in such courses were female, and nine in ten were over the age of 25 years.

In addition, about 50 per cent of the population over the age of 15 years had completed a vocational or higher education qualification. Between 1995 and 2005 the proportion of Australians with a Bachelor degree or higher qualification increased by 10 percentage points (from 13 per cent to 23 per cent), and those with an Advanced Diploma or Diploma or below increased by 5 per cent (from 33 per cent to 38 per cent).

**Figure 3: Trends in higher post-school qualification of 15-64 year olds**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Survey of Education and Training Experience, Cat. No. 6278.0

In 2005 37 per cent of 15 to 69 year-olds had completed at least one work-related training course in the year preceding the survey. Just over half were male. While 55 per cent of full-time workers completed at least one of these training courses, fewer part-time workers (41 per cent), and unemployed persons (29 per cent) completed at least one work-related training course.

The most common work-related training programmes were in management and professional fields. Occupational health and safety, and technical and para-professional programmes were also commonly reported (30 per cent, 21 per cent and 14 per cent respectively). The ABS reports that participants in 90 per cent of these programmes found these courses to have been of benefit, with almost a tenth of these courses reported as providing some benefits in terms of obtaining a pay rise or promotion.

### ***Higher education***

Student numbers in higher education increased to 957,176 in 2005. This included 717,681 domestic students, and 239,495 overseas students.

#### *Gender profile*

Over the last decade females have been more likely to participate in higher education than males. For each of the years between 1996 to 2005, about 54 per cent of the higher education population was female.

#### *Age profile and participation rate*

The age profile of domestic higher education students has remained relatively stable over the last decade. The most notable change has been for 20-24 year olds whose participation rate increased by 3 per cent.

**Table 1: Participation rate of domestic students in higher education by age, 1996, 2005**

Age group	1996			2005		
	Population	Higher education students	Participation rate	Population	Higher education students	Participation rate
15-19	1 27 9119	165 070	12.90	1 388 471	182 758	13.16
20-24	1 429 521	178 299	12.47	1 431 363	241 091	16.84
25-29	1 378 763	71 470	5.18	1 361 259	89 469	6.57
30-39	2 884 843	97 170	3.37	2 980 378	111 704	3.75
40-49	2 585 090	54 989	2.13	2 995 696	65 358	2.18
50-59	1 774 479	11 931	0.67	2 580 278	23237.0	0.90
60 and over	7 244 412	1 977	0.03	8 556 352	4 064	0.05

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics 2005, 1996, Cat. No 3201.0 – Estimated resident population by age and sex; DEST 2005, Selected higher education statistics, table 20; DEST 1996 Selected higher education statistics, unpublished data

### Commencements

In 2005 there was a 6.1 per cent increase in the number of undergraduate commencements following several years of decline..

**Table 2: Number of domestic students at Australian Higher Education Providers**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
All domestic students	684 975	711563	719 555	716 438	717 681
Undergraduate students	520 221	531 527	529 403	525 518	528 980
Postgraduate students	147 035	160 165	170 438	173 161	173 273
Commencing students	258 522	267 103	260 759	254 957	261 934
Commencing undergraduate students	177 694	175 666	166 499	165 688	175 711
Commencing post-graduate students	65 218	74 013	77 367	74 298	73 126
	Percentage change on previous year				
All domestic students		3.88	1.12	-0.43	0.17
Undergraduate students		2.17	-.04	-0.73	0.66
Postgraduate students		8.93	6.41	1.60	.06
Commencing students		3.32	-2.38	-2.23	2.74
Commencing undergraduate students		-1.14	-5.22	-0.49	6.05
Commencing post-graduate students		13.49	4.53	-3.97	-1.58

Source: DEST 1005, Selected higher education statistics, Summary Analyses

[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/publications\\_resources/profiles/students\\_2005\\_selected\\_higher\\_education\\_statistics.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/profiles/students_2005_selected_higher_education_statistics.htm)

### Commencements in professional training: nursing, initial teacher training and medical practice

There has been a gradual increase in the numbers of commencements in medical practitioner training for each of the years 2001 to 2005. Increases have also been experienced across all years except 2003 for commencements in nursing courses and initial teacher training (see table 3).

**Table 3: Domestic commencements in professional training: nursing, initial teacher training and medical practice**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Nursing	7 790	8 214	7 947	8 354	9 675
Initial teacher training	20 923	21 510	20 898	21 823	23 389
Medical practitioner	1296	1 438	1 451	1 747	1 907

Source: DEST 1005, Selected higher education statistics, Summary Analyses

[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/publications\\_resources/profiles/students\\_2005\\_selected\\_higher\\_education\\_statistics.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/profiles/students_2005_selected_higher_education_statistics.htm)

### Equity group profile

Over the last decade commencements in higher education by domestic students from different equity groups have remained relatively stable with slight increases being experienced by students reporting a disability (see table 4).

**Table 4: Equity group profile of domestic students commencing a higher education programme 1995, 2004.**

	1995		2004	
	No. of students	Proportion of total domestic students	No. of students	Proportion of total domestic students
NESB	13 354	5.9	10 713	4.2
Disability*	4 647	2.0	7 966	3.1
Indigenous	3623		3 865	1.5
Rural	41 773	18.4	44 952	17.6
Isolated	4 906	2.2	3 804	1.5
Low socio-economic status	34 207	15.1	37 367	14.7
Total no. of commencing domestic students	226 967		254 957	

\* Disability figures are only available from 1996 onwards. In 1996, 4647 commencing domestic students had a self-reported disability, representing 2 per cent of total domestic students.

1995 data includes domestic students with a permanent home residence outside Australia, whereas these students have been excluded from the 2004 data

Source: DEST Higher education selected statistics, Students 2004 and unpublished data

In 2005, Indigenous students accounted for 1.2 per cent of domestic higher education students – a decline from the Indigenous proportions of 1.26 per cent in 2002 to 2004 and 1.27 per cent in 2001<sup>2</sup>. This means that Indigenous people continue to be under-represented in terms of their

<sup>2</sup> The total number of Indigenous students in higher education increased from 8661 in 2001 to 8871 in 2002 and 8988 in 2003, and then declined to 8895 in 2004 and 8370 in 2005 – an overall decline of -3.4% between 2001 and 2005. The number of commencing Indigenous students in higher education declined from 4130 to 3771 between 2001 and 2005 (-8.7%).

share of the Australian higher education aged population, which was 2.73 per cent in 2001 and 2.93 per cent in 2005.

Although there have been significant increases in the actual number of Indigenous students enrolled at Bachelor and higher degree levels<sup>3</sup>, Indigenous students continue to be under-represented relative to non-Indigenous students at these levels<sup>4</sup>.

Indigenous student progress rates (the proportion of units passed compared with enrolled units) have increased relative to the non-Indigenous rates between 2001 and 2004, but remain lower than for non-Indigenous students. Between 2001 and 2004, the number of award course completions by Indigenous students increased from 1052 to 1195 (13.6 per cent).

### Overseas students

The total number of overseas students in an onshore or offshore Australian higher education programme rose by 4.8 per cent in 2005, including a 6.7 per cent increase in the level of overseas postgraduate students. Commencements of undergraduate and postgraduate students remained relatively stable between 2004 and 2005.

**Table 5: Total number of overseas higher education students (onshore and offshore) 2001 - 2005**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Postgraduate	54 928	66 447	76 877	84 608	90 231
Undergraduate	95 317	109 116	122 226	132 417	136 546
Other higher education	6 963	9 495	11 294	11 514	12 718
All overseas students	157 208	185 058	210 397	228 539	239 495
<b>Percentage change on previous year</b>					
Postgraduate		20.97	15.7	10.06	6.65
Undergraduate		14.48	12.01	8.34	3.12
Other higher education		36.36	18.95	1.95	10.46
Total overseas students		17.72	13.69	8.62	4.79

Source: DEST 1005, Selected higher education statistics, Summary Analyses

[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher\\_education/publications\\_resources/profiles/students\\_2005\\_selected\\_higher\\_education\\_statistics.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/profiles/students_2005_selected_higher_education_statistics.htm)

Between 2001 and 2005, the number of overseas students who undertook Australian higher education study offshore increased from 45,179 to 63,906 (around 29 per cent). In 2005, approximately 45 per cent of overseas students enrolled with Western Australian and South Australian higher education providers offshore, and just over 30 per cent of those enrolled with Victorian higher education providers undertook their study offshore. Less than 25 per cent of overseas students were enrolled in offshore programmes with higher education providers in New South Wales and the ACT. There were 218 overseas students enrolled with Northern Territory higher education providers but none of these students studied offshore. Queensland had the third highest cohort of overseas students; however it also had a very small proportion (just over 7 per cent) of its overseas students studying offshore.

<sup>3</sup> Between 2001 and 2005, Indigenous Bachelor and above students numbers rose from 5840 to 6679 (14.4%). Non-Indigenous student numbers rose by 6.4%.

<sup>4</sup> In 2005, 79.8% of Indigenous students were enrolled in courses at Bachelor and above level, compared with 96.7% of non-Indigenous students.

In 2005, China, Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong were the top four source countries with a substantial proportion of their students studying at Australian institutions offshore (at 20 per cent, 45 per cent, 61 per cent and 49 per cent respectively). Together these countries accounted for 52 per cent of overseas student enrolments, and 78 per cent of all offshore overseas student numbers.

### *Completions*

Completions for overseas and domestic students have increased steadily between 1996 and 2004. Completions for both males and females over the period have remained relatively stable (see table 6).

**Table 6: Higher Education award course completions, 1996 and 2004**

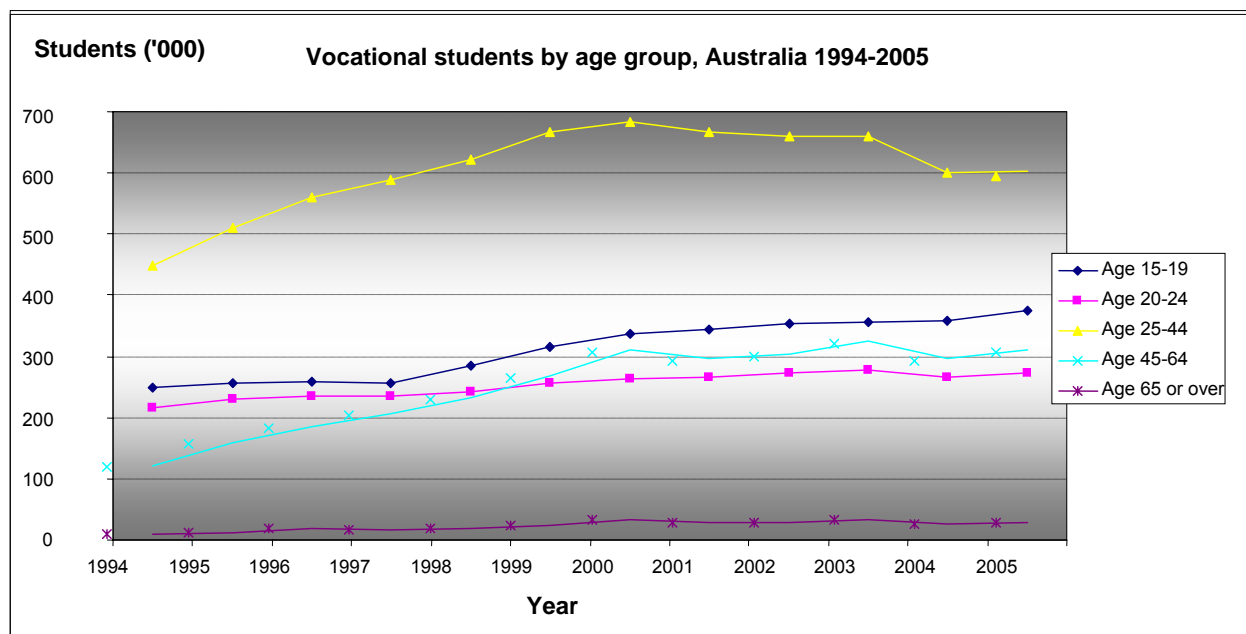
	1996		2004	
	<i>No. of award course completions</i>	<i>Proportion of award course completions</i>	<i>No. of award course completions</i>	<i>Proportion of award course completions</i>
Males	63 125	43.5	95 558	44.4
Females	82 103	56.5	119 557	55.6
Total	145 228	100.0	215 115	100.0

Source: DEST Selected higher education student statistics 2005 appendix 2.2.

### ***Vocational Education and Training (VET)***

In 2005 there were 1,641,300 students in the publicly-funded VET sector. The average age was 32 years—31 years for males and 33 years for females. However, close to 60 per cent of the students were below the age of 34 years. Close to 40 per cent were between 15 and 24 years. Over the last decade VET participation for all groups has increased (see figure 4). Most dramatic has been the increase in the 25 to 44 year age group, and the 45 to 64 year age group. There has also been a small increase in those aged 65 years and over (see figure 4). Almost 90 per cent of students were studying part-time with close to 50 per cent enrolled in AQF Certificate III qualifications (trade level qualification).

Figure 4: VET students by age group, Australia 1994-2005



Source: NCVET, National VET provider collection 2005, Note: Does not include students 14 years or under, and 'not known' students. Only includes a small number of VET-in schools (and only if the students attend TAFE)

The introduction of the AQF in 1995 created a suite of six (now eight) interconnecting AQF VET qualifications aligned against progressive levels of workplace performance agreed across industries. This was a response to a policy drive for structured training and formal recognition of skills and knowledge for many workers in occupations such as retail, clerical and hospitality. These people had previously not had formal training or career pathways based on qualifications that could give access to higher levels of employment in the industry.

The aim of the reform was to upgrade skills and knowledge, to increase productivity in a more demanding and competitive work environment, and to give access via RPL to a qualification which recognised the skills and knowledge *already* achieved through informal and non-formal learning in the workplace.

However, limited research in this area tends to indicate that the RPL pathway has not been taken up by young people aged 15-24 years in the way anticipated by the policy. It seems to be more common for young people to qualify for Certificates I and II through a formal training programme prior to, or at an early stage in employment, including increasingly as part of the final years of schooling (Stanwick, 2005).

Given the availability of entry-level Certificates I and II, the participation rate in publicly-funded VET is greatest for 15 to 19 year olds, followed in turn by 20-24 year olds and 25-44 year-olds (27 per cent, 19.1 per cent and 10.2 per cent respectively). This pattern has stayed relatively stable since 2000. In 2005 there were 6.3 per cent of 45 to 64 year olds who participated in publicly-funded VET (the rate was around 7 per cent between 2000 and 2003). Between 2000 and 2005 the participation rate for those aged 65 years and over was around 1 per cent.

In 2005 Indigenous students, students with a disability and non-English speaking background students represented 4.2 per cent, 9.1 per cent and 17 per cent of the student population respectively. Mixed field programmes followed in turn by management and commerce, and

engineering and related technologies were the three most common courses undertaken by Indigenous students and those with a disability. Management and commerce, followed in turn by mixed field programmes and electronics and related technologies were the most common courses for non-English speakers. There were 12.1 per cent of Indigenous students compared to 18.5 per cent of students with a disability, and 28.4 per cent of non-English speakers who participated in Certificate IV and Diploma or Advanced Diploma programmes. Over 40 per cent of Indigenous students were in AQF Certificate I and II programmes compared to 31.6 per cent of students with a disability, and 23.9 per cent of non-English speakers.<sup>5</sup>

In 2000 there were 15,200 overseas students undertaking a publicly-funded VET programme onshore. By 2002 this had increased to 17,400 and had remained around 17,000 for the following two years. In 2005 there were 17,200 overseas students in publicly-funded VET (DEST, 2006a).

In 2003 there were 38 VET providers delivering mostly award courses (mainly in English) to a total of 18,302 students in 24 different countries (NCVER, 2006). The great majority (over three-quarters) of these courses were also delivered in Australia. About a third of these courses were Diploma courses. Although there was a very slight decline in the number of providers and countries engaged in offshore provision in 2004, the number of students participating in these programmes increased to 23,286. There was also an increase in the number of award programmes being offered, and a decrease in the number of non-award courses being offered. Over three-quarters of the courses being offered offshore were also offered onshore. In 2003 well over half of the students participating in these programmes were from China.. A greater proportion of male students participate in offshore programmes. In 2003 and 2004 males accounted for 45 per cent of enrolments, females accounted for 29 per cent of enrolments in 2003, and 40 per cent of enrolments in 2004.

### ***Adult and community education (ACE)***

Adult and community education in Australia is extremely diverse but can generally be characterised as learning offered in community settings by not-for-profit organisations. ACE providers have been operating throughout Australia for over 100 years contributing to each individual's personal, social and work-related learning as well as to a community's capacity to work together in the areas of workforce skills, economic development, and health and welfare. This broad range of outcomes is achieved because a defining feature of ACE is its focus on the learner (Bowman, 2003, p. 5).

Across Australia around 1200 not-for-profit community-based organisations are currently providing adult learning programmes to over one million students in any one year. Of these 770 are registered training organisations (RTOs), which in 2005 provided formal VET training to 256,101 students or 15.6 per cent of all VET students. In 2005 almost two-thirds (65.4 per cent) of ACE students were aged 30 years and over, with adults aged between 30 and 49 years representing the greatest proportion of students in ACE programmes over the last five years (Choy, Haukka and Keyes, 2006). In 2001 there were 48 per cent of ACE students in vocational ACE programmes.

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<sup>5</sup> Just over a fifth undertook a mixed field programme, 16 per cent undertook a programme in management and commerce and 11.1 per cent were in engineering and related technologies field. In addition, 54.4 per cent were undertaking a Training Package based qualification. 28.4 per cent were in nationally accredited courses and 17.1 per cent were undertaking other courses, or non-accredited single subjects. Just over a quarter of students with a disability participated in mixed field programmes, followed by 15.8 per cent in management and commerce programmes, and 11.2 per cent in engineering and related technologies. 46.3 per cent were involved in national Training Package qualifications, 29 per cent in nationally accredited courses, and 24.6 per cent in other courses and single non-accredited subjects. 21.9 per cent of non-English speakers had been involved in management and commerce, 21.5 per cent in mixed field programmes and 16.8 per cent participated in society and culture programmes. 43.7 per cent had participated in nationally accredited training package qualifications, 34.7 per cent on accredited courses, and 21.6 per cent in other courses or single non-accredited subjects.

This increased to 53.6 per cent in 2003, and remained about the same in 2005. In 2001 and 2003 14.2 per cent of total VET students were in vocational ACE programmes. In 2005 this had declined slightly to 12.2 per cent.

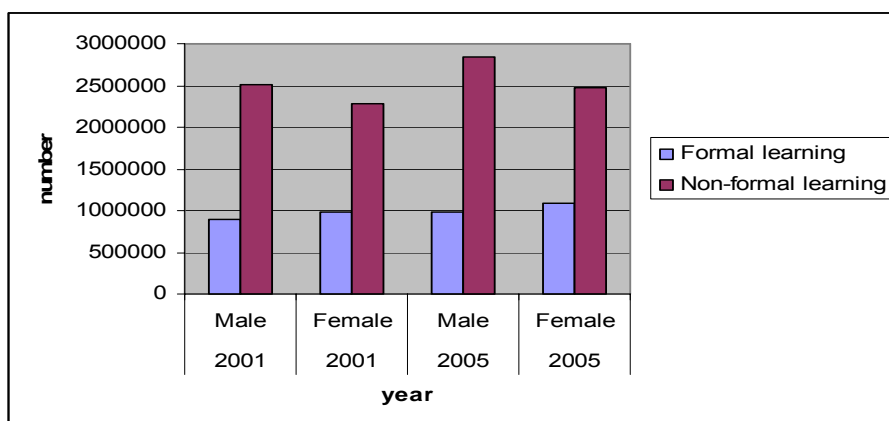
Non-vocational ACE programmes are more popular with women who make up about two-thirds of the ACE student population. Of those students undertaking vocational ACE programmes, 64.3 per cent were aged 30 years and over, compared to 47.5 per cent in all vocational courses in Australia. Although students from capital cities make up the largest proportion of ACE participants, among the remaining groups it is students from other areas (rural, other metropolitan, remote) who take up more vocational ACE than non-vocational ACE. This has remained the case in 2001, 2002, 2003, and 2005.

The ABS (2005) also reports that of all persons aged 15 to 69 years studying during 2005, 14 per cent were undertaking a course not leading to a qualification, including bridging courses, recreational and personal enrichment courses, as their only course of study. These students were more likely to be female (68 per cent) and in the older age groups (91 per cent aged 25 years and over).

### **Participation in non-formal learning programmes**

It is recognised that there are also many non-institutional contexts for learning in Australia, for example in the workplace, in community participation, in museums and libraries and at home. This can be either non-formal or unaccredited (eg recreational courses) or informal. The ABS 'Education and Training Experience' Survey of 2005 showed that in the 12 months before the survey, 5.3 million persons aged 15 to 69 years (of whom 54 per cent were male) completed one or more work-related training courses. Participation in non-formal learning programmes has increased for males and females from 2001-2005 (see figure 5). However, females were more likely than males to undertake training in formal learning programmes.

**Figure 5: Participation of males and females in non-school formal and non-formal learning programmes 2001-2005**



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2005, Survey of Education and Training, Cat No. 1272.0

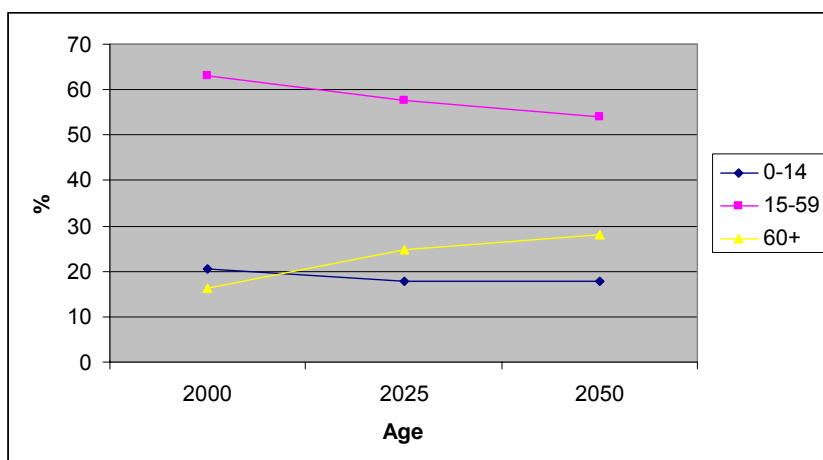
### **1.1 b) What are the demographic changes (ageing population and migration) on participation in different sectors of education and training?**

Similar to many of its OECD comparator countries, Australia's population will be rapidly ageing over the next forty years. The proportion of the population aged over 65 years is projected to double from 13 per cent in 2003-04 to 24.5 per cent in 2044-45. The extent of ageing is expected to accelerate from now until 2012. This has been brought about by increases in life expectancy

and to a lesser extent reduced fertility rates, with the post-war baby boomers delaying ageing in Australia and also making its onset more pronounced (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005). The life expectancy of Australian women currently stands at around 83.8 years, and 77.8 years for males. By 2050-51 it is projected to increase to 88 years and 84.9 years respectively. This means that there has been an increase in life expectancy of almost 25 years for women and 23 years for men since 1901.

In 2004 about 20 per cent of the Australian population was under 15 years. It is projected to decline slightly by 2025 and remain at this level by 2051. The proportion of working age Australians (that is those over the age of 15 years) is projected to significantly decline by 2050. The proportion of Australians in the 60 years and over age group is projected to increase from about 16 per cent in 2000 to 28.2 per cent in 2050 (see figure 6).

**Figure 6: Population projections for Australians 2000, 2025 and 2050**

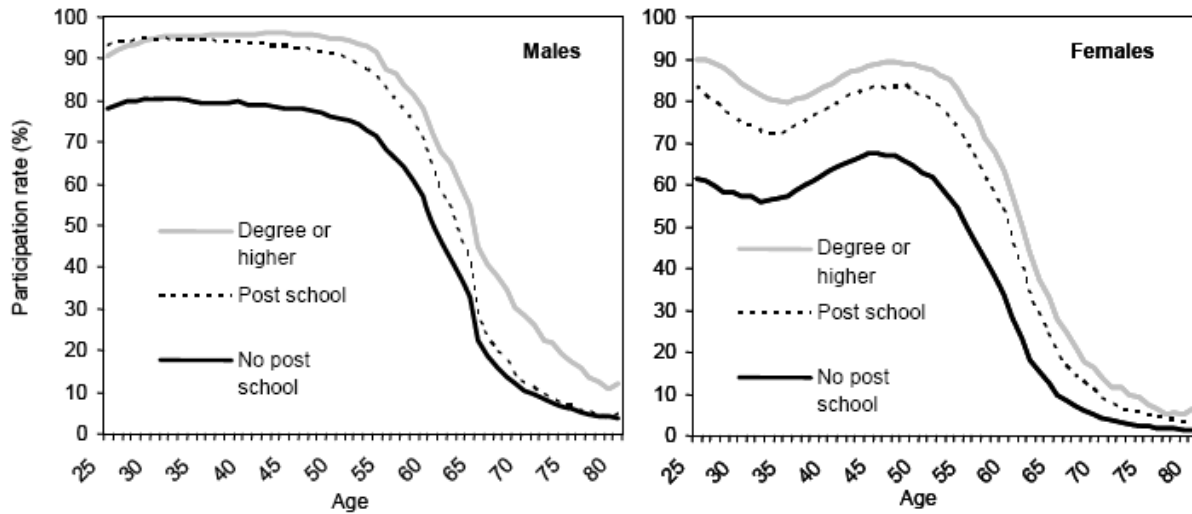


Source: Asia Development Bank 'Key indicators 2002: Population and Human Resource Trends and Challenges, [http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key\\_Indicators/2002/](http://www.adb.org/Documents/Books/Key_Indicators/2002/)

In the short term the proportion of mature age Australians (that is 45 years and over) is also projected to increase substantially. By 2010 it is projected to account for 49 per cent of the population (from 43 per cent in 1998). In 2000 the proportion of teenagers and young adults (15 years to 24 years) accounted for just over an eighth of all Australians, and although it is projected to dip slightly by 2030 it is expected to remain steady.

This changing demographic profile raises important questions about the continued supply of labour and skills. As the proportion of older people in the population increases there is the issue of whether or not they have access to skills and knowledge to help them maintain their competitive position in the labour market. In Australia labour force participation declines with increasing age with participation declining significantly for those over 55 years. The ageing effect is only partly offset by a continuing trend for higher female participation in the labour force across the ages. This raises the question about the preparedness and capacity of older people to continue to participate in the workforce, and the extent to which employers will appreciate the experience of older workers. As is common to most OECD countries, labour force participation rates are higher for Australians with higher levels of educational attainment and younger people are on average much better educated than older people (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006a). Figure 7 shows that in 2001, the average labour force participation rate of an Australian male (female) with a degree or higher was 14.2 (21) percentage points higher than for a person who had 10 years or less schooling.

Figure 7: Labour force participation by age and highest educational attainment, 2001



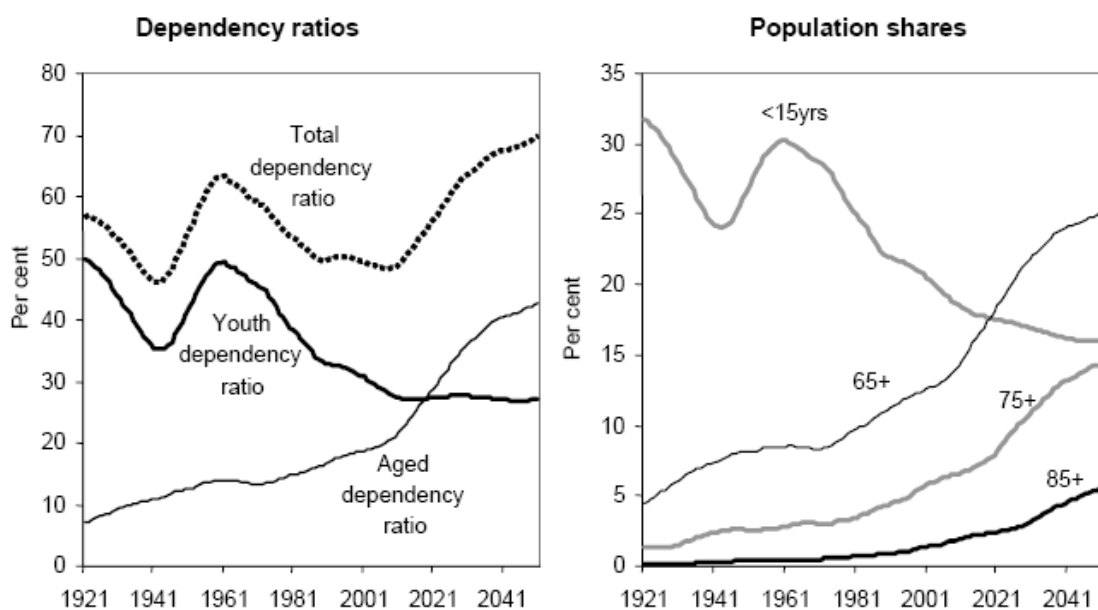
Source: ABS 2001 Population Census data

It is projected that educational attainment levels will continue to increase. The analysis of projected educational attainment rates suggests that by 2050, older people in the workforce will have higher average rates of educational attainment than younger workers as the current more highly educated younger cohort gets older and replaces those with lower attainment levels and as people continue to acquire education as they age (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005).

A better picture of the impact of an ageing population structure on education and training is gained by considering the dependency ratio. This is done by taking the number of younger Australians (between the ages of 0 - 14 years), and older Australians (that is, aged 65 years and older) as a percentage of those of working age (that is, 15-64 years). Figure 8 shows actual and projected dependency ratios for the period 1921 – 2051 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005). While those who would have traditionally retired at the age of 65 years, will comprise the greatest proportion of the population, the focus of the government will be more on ensuring adequate social rather than educational services.

Currently what has driven employers and governments to implement skills recognition strategies for older and experienced workers is the need to address skill shortages. To this end State and Territory governments have implemented programmes to accelerate the completion of apprenticeships in the traditional trades. In that context the recognition of non-formal and informal learning has been especially pertinent.

**Figure 8: Dependency ratio (proportion) for Australia and population shares 1921-2051**



Source: Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics (Australian Demographic Bulletins, 1921-1970); ABS (Australian Historical Population Statistics, Cat. No. 3105.0.65.001 table 19, 1971-2003), and Productivity Commission projections 2005 onwards. All data at end June

Net migration has had a significant impact on Australia’s level of population. Currently net migration is estimated to contribute 50 per cent of Australia’s annual rate of population growth of 1.2 per cent. Due to Australia’s immigration policy, migrants to Australia have generally been younger on average than resident Australians. In 2004-05 the proportion of immigrants in the 15 to 44 year age group was 66 per cent of skilled entrants, 64 per cent of family entrants, and 52 per cent of humanitarian entrants. This compares with 44 per cent of the Australian born population in 2001 (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006a).

However, the large and increasing net migrant intake over the past 50 years has only moderated population ageing as changes in immigration policy to address population ageing has been found to affect population numbers more than the age structure (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005). Immigration policy has focused on skilled migration (see 1.1c) which will assist in reducing the pressures on public expenditure of ageing. However, in view of population ageing being experienced in other OECD countries there may be increased international competition for skilled workers.

**1.1 c) Is there any evidence of national policy on migration (e.g. the low-skilled or high skilled) with respect to demographic change?**

The major objectives of current national migration policy are to address ‘economic development and labour market needs, as well as social, humanitarian, and international obligations’ (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006a, p. 213).

Nevertheless, migration flows have changed the demography of Australian society. Australia favours migrants between the ages of 18 and 45 years with applicants for the General Skilled Migration (GSM) scheme required to be under the age of 45 years. For many years migrants to Australia have been typically younger than the average resident population and, as previously noted, they have tended to slow down population ageing (Commonwealth of Australia, 2005). However, young adults who came to Australia after World War II and in the 1950s and 1960s are themselves now in their 70s and 80s.

The push for increasing places for skilled and experienced workers is mostly driven by the fact that Australia has been experiencing low levels of unemployment (COAG, 2006) and substantial skill shortages in industries which have had sustained levels of demand. In part this has masked the effects of an ageing population structure. Nevertheless, as post-World War II babies reach retirement, a gap will be left in the skills profile. That gap may need to be filled increasingly by people with skills acquired overseas.

In order to encourage skilled migrants to regional areas experiencing skills shortages, the government has also opened up State and Territory specific migration schemes, including schemes for regional migration. In addition, DIMA<sup>6</sup> has implemented arrangements for awarding more points if intending migrants choose designated regions as a destination point. International students who have been studying in a designated region will also receive extra points. In 2004-2005 a total of 18,700 visas were granted under these schemes. Business migrants are also encouraged to go to the regions. The granting of both short-term and long-term visas signals a change in emphasis from permanent to temporary migrations especially for business and skilled migrants. However, many of these temporary visa holders go on to become permanent migrants.

**1.1 d) Describe any change of higher education institutional admission policies starting to practise recognition of non-formal and informal learning due to the demographic change**

Australian higher education institutions have had a policy of admitting students to courses regardless of age. Mature age entrance examinations have generally catered for those who have left school without formal qualifications but want to access higher education. Although policy makers are aware of the need to address population ageing, the main drivers to opening up the admission policies of higher education and VET institutions, are philosophical and economic as much as they are demographic. In Australia, universities are self-accrediting institutions, and are responsible for determining their own admission policies and procedures.

## **Component 1.2: Internationalisation**

Australia has always competed in global markets. Historically it has exported its considerable natural resources (such as agricultural products and minerals) and its communication technologies and related expertise, and imported manufactured goods, industrial technologies, professional, and trade skills and workers. Australian students and professionals have gone overseas either for further studies (with the Australian Government considering initiatives to increase the current rate) or for work, and young people have travelled abroad and to Australia for working holidays. Australia has also had a relatively long history of providing education to students from the Asia-Pacific region.

Over the last decade or so, improved living standards in many countries across the world have led to a widening of global demand for goods and services, and increased competition between advanced economies (including Australia) to meet this need. This has led to international mobility for Australian professionals and skilled workers, and increased export opportunities for the export of Australian education, health and financial services. Increasingly, Australian governments at both state and at the national level are demonstrating their belief that Australia's future must be one built on global participation and networks. Australian international education represents the fourth largest sector in Australian overseas trade.

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<sup>6</sup> The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) is now called the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

**1.2 a) Describe any national policy or current practices of recognition of non-formal and informal learning as part of integration strategies of migrant population (highly skilled, low skilled and refugees).**

Australian migration policy since World War II has evolved from one principally directed at large-scale migration to stimulate post-war economic reconstruction (that is, importing workers for Australian manufacturing industries) to the present where it is mainly focussed on skilled migration (especially in regional Australia) but also has a combination of social and humanitarian objectives. To this end the current national policy aims to assist both skilled, unskilled and refugee migrants to integrate 'readily and rapidly' into the Australian workforce and the Australian society (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006b). Its major objectives are to ensure migrants who have overseas qualifications and skills can have these appropriately assessed, recognised and upgraded, and that those with low skills are able to access employment and access training (including English language training) to improve their opportunities in the labour market.

Bearing this in mind, the key to successful integration of all migrants—regardless of level of skill, occupational background or refugee status—hinges on a mix of inter-related social, educational, and economic factors. Appropriate formal assessment and recognition of their skills and experience and the translation of this recognition into suitable jobs or training pathways are keys to the integration process. Access to settlement services which help migrants with job search activities, accommodation, health, and other issues are also crucial to the integration of migrants. Immediate access to work rights and social security benefits play a key role in the integration of skilled refugees. The operation of formal and informal community networks including ethnic organisations and volunteer support groups may also play a significant role in integration of migrants. Also important is community understanding and acceptance of their particular cultural characteristics.

***A highly structured recognition process***

The recognition of formal learning through a comprehensive system of pre-migration and post-migration assessments (by specific assessing authorities) are the principal mechanisms for helping migrants integrate into the Australian labour market and society. In general pre-migration assessments only enable intending migrants to use evidence of formal learning in their trade and profession to acquire the required number of points to attain a visa. However, there are some exceptions where RPL processes apply in pre-migration assessments of professional qualifications, such as in community welfare work and ICT. Once in Australia, post-migration assessments enable migrants to attain certificates and licences required for regulated trades (for example, the Australian Recognised Trade Certificate, or Certificates of Competency awarded by different States and Territories) and registrations and licences for regulated professions. The attainment of such licences and registrations permit them to practice in their preferred occupations. This is the case also for highly skilled humanitarian and refugee migrants.

In addition, individuals (including migrants of whatever skill level or visa group) who would like to enrol in a VET programme must be offered RPL. This can be used to acquire full VET qualifications or exemptions from parts of courses.

The importance of RPL to the integration process hinges on the extent to which it enables migrants to get a job. However, in the long run, it is employers who will decide the extent to which they will use the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in their recruitment and hiring practices. These decisions will have a major impact on the success of any strategies for integration. The operation of employer-sponsored migration schemes and labour agreements enable employers to take the initiative in recruiting and hiring migrants. Having employers involved in these ways has been found to be a key factor in providing better labour market outcomes for migrants

(Commonwealth of Australia, 2006b). Better labour market outcomes contribute to successful integration.

A comprehensive description of a highly structured approach to skilled migration and assessment of qualifications, skills and experience is provided in Appendix A.

### ***Practical strategies and practices for integration of highly skilled migrants***

The recognition of non-formal and informal learning on its own does not guarantee integration of highly skilled migrants. In many cases employers want to have evidence of local work experience. Different professional associations and State and Territory governments have implemented a variety of strategies to help highly skilled migrants find employment and so help their integration into Australian life. CPA Australia (the professional body for chartered accountants) has established transition to work programmes to help skilled migrants learn how to go about promoting their skills in interviews with employers or recruitment agencies. The programme will also provide communication skills training. The Victorian Government also funds work experience programmes for skilled migrants to help them obtain the local experience that is often preferred by employers. The Queensland Department of Education, Training and the Arts provides work placement programmes for unemployed migrant tradespersons and professionals. In Western Australia the Government's Employment Directions Network funds the insurance required for migrants to be able to undertake work experience. It also provides them with some funds to cover the cost of transport to work. In New South Wales, the Skillmax Programme aims to help skilled migrants with job search skills and understand the culture of Australian workplaces.

Mutual recognition processes that exist in registered occupations between States and Territories (under the Mutual Recognition Act of 1992) to recognise the registration and licensing requirements of another State and Territory are also used to help highly skilled workers integrate into Australian economic life. There are also similar mutual recognition arrangements in place for those intending to practice their occupation in New Zealand and vice versa under the Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Arrangement (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997).

Free assistance with skills recognition is also available. Occupational Qualification Units or their equivalents have been established in States and Territories to provide free assistance to migrants on skills recognition. In the main they assess the comparability of overseas qualifications to Australian qualifications and issue migrants with a statement to say that their qualifications are equivalent to a certain level of Australian qualification. Although they generally only assess formal qualifications they may also provide migrants with information on a range of skills recognition issues, and information on where and how to access English language training, bridging training and orientation programmes. They may also provide employment-related information, advocate and help migrants to present information to assessors and assessing authorities. In the main, information and advice is provided on an individualised basis. As such they perform an important referral service.

The Skill Matching Database provided by the Australian Government Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs<sup>7</sup> helps match skilled people, who have applied to migrate, with skilled vacancies and skill shortages in Australia. It contains the educational, employment and work details of skilled migrants and those who are interested in living and working in regional Australia. It is used by employers for employer-sponsored migration categories and by State and Territory governments. In cases where successful matches are made this helps to pave the way for employment which is a key to integration.

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<sup>7</sup> The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) is now called the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

## Support for skills recognition in South Australia

In South Australia, the Skills Recognition Support Services (SRSS) provides a co-ordinated approach to the integration of skilled migrants and their spouses. It comprises the Overseas Qualifications Service (OQS), Migrant Employment Consultancy Service (MECS) and Settlement Orientation Service (SOS) in one location and acts as a one-stop shop for skilled migrants wanting to either get employment or enter further training. Migrants may attend general information sessions held regularly throughout the week and one-on-one consultations with officers from the different services. The OQS provides eligible migrants with formal statements to indicate that their qualifications are equivalent to a certain level of Australian qualification, and referral to appropriate professional, registration and licensing bodies, assessing authorities and employment-related programmes. For those whose qualifications are not easy to map to Australian qualifications the OQS refers them to Australian Education International-National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR) which provides official information and advice on the comparability of overseas qualifications with Australian qualifications<sup>8</sup>. The Migrant Employment Consultancy Services offers skilled migrants and their spouses (in defined general and regional skilled migrant visa categories) with advice and job search support<sup>9</sup>. SOS provides migrants with a range of useful local information. This includes information on health services, housing, transport, individual and family support, way of life in Australia (and especially South Australia), rights and obligations under the law<sup>10</sup>, education systems, money matters, and community organisations.

Source: Information and material provided by Manager, Skills Recognition Support Services Unit, Department Further Education Employment Science and Technology, South Australia.

## **Strategies for helping migrants with low skills and refugees**

Although individuals hoping to enter Australia as primary applicants in the skilled migration scheme must have a pre-migration assessment of their qualifications, skills and experience, there is no requirement for their family members or those on family or humanitarian or refugee visas to have a pre-migration skills assessment. However, once these visa groups arrive in Australia and want to work in regulated professions or trades they will also have to undergo assessment of their qualifications and skills. This may provide difficulties for humanitarian entrants who may not have been able to bring with them documentation of their qualifications, skills and work experience.

One of the keys to integration of humanitarian and refugee groups with migrants with low skills is also the ability to access employment. However, their initial integration rests on their ability to access enough income for survival. In Australia those who are granted permanent protection visas onshore, or refugee and humanitarian visas offshore have the same rights as permanent residents. That is, they have rights to work and can become an Australian citizen within two years of arrival. Those on temporary protection visas also have rights to work. Bridging visas are allocated to individuals who are applying for protection visas. These bridging visas may also provide individuals with rights to work. Humanitarian entrants do not have to wait the mandatory two-year waiting period to access most social security benefits, and are able to access services of the Job Network<sup>11</sup> which helps job seekers look for work. Nevertheless, the employment outcomes of recent humanitarian entrants from African countries (generally from Sudan, Liberia and Sierra Leone) are lower than for other groups.

Migrant Resource Centres established in all States and Territories to provide assistance (particularly to humanitarian and refugee visa groups) also provide work experience programmes.

<sup>8</sup> see <http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/QualificationsRecognition/default.htm>

<sup>9</sup> Including résumé and CV writing, accessing professional, para-professional trades and business areas, relevant employment and networking contacts, job search, current labour market information and training advice

<sup>10</sup> Including getting a driver's licence, police matters, legal rights in South Australia, and Local, State and Commonwealth governments

<sup>11</sup> Job Network, an Australian Government initiative, is a national network of private and community organisations dedicated to finding jobs for unemployed people, particularly the long term unemployed.

**1.2 b) Describe any national policies or higher education institutional approaches that are currently being taken to promote comparability/compatibility, visibility and portability of learning outcomes through non-formal and informal learning to promote cross-border mobility.**

**VET sector**

The question of portability and comparability of learning outcomes and competencies acquired through formal, non-formal and informal learning to promote cross-border mobility has been a major focus in the VET sector, and addressed in relation to mobility across jurisdictions within Australia by the training reforms which commenced in the mid 1980s. Qualifications and statements of attainment awarded in the VET sector do not identify how, when or where a competency has been acquired. This means that RPL assessments are not differentiated in any way from assessments resulting from formal training.

Although each provider may adopt separate systems for recording the progress and achievement of students, providers delivering publicly-funded VET programmes are required to record outcomes of any courses that have been acquired through RPL (according to the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard [AVETMISS]<sup>12</sup>). At this stage it is only successful outcomes that are being recorded. From 2007 onwards, providers will also have to record whether an application for RPL has been granted or not granted. This means that providers will have to keep records of those who actually apply for RPL.

The issue of cross-border mobility within Australia is also addressed in Standard 5 of the Australian Quality Training Framework<sup>13</sup> *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)*<sup>14</sup>, Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) states that the RTO policies and procedures must include a requirement that the RTO recognises the AQF qualifications and Statements of Attainment issued by any other RTOs. Standard 5 also requires information about this mutual recognition to be provided to clients and staff.

**Higher education sector**

The issue of cross border mobility affects the higher education sector in so much as their professional and academic qualifications are able to be transported to other jurisdictions within Australia and overseas. To date there is no indication on higher education testamurs of how the learning outcomes leading to the issuing of the qualification have been assessed. Nevertheless there are some institutions that require department heads to document records of exemptions and credits attained through non-formal and informal studies to the records of each individual student. These are then used to compile transcripts for students.

The University of New South Wales (UNSW) has an innovative strategy to address this issue. From 2007 it will provide students with a record of a student's achievement outside of formal academic study. In 2007 it will provide students with a transcript supplement which recognises and records a student's other attainments, achievements or contributions over the duration of their enrolment. This would include volunteering and community services contributions, as well as other achievements which contribute to the 'UNSW student experience'.

<sup>12</sup> The Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard (AVETMISS) offers a nationally consistent standard for the collection and analysis of vocational education and training information throughout Australia. See [www.ncver.edu.au/avetmiss](http://www.ncver.edu.au/avetmiss)

<sup>13</sup> The AQTF provides a common foundation for the national recognition, consistency, quality and integrity of the VTE system

<sup>14</sup> RTOs are training providers who have been registered by State and Territory registering bodies to deliver programmes leading to nationally recognised qualifications.

All attainments will be evaluated to ensure an appropriate standard of participation has been met. UNSW believes that the supplementary transcript would be useful for employers in assuring the quality of skills developed by UNSW graduates as all programmes would be accredited by the University. It would also be beneficial for students in not having to justify activities on their curriculum vitae, as these would come with the seal and associated legitimacy of the university. The initiative would constitute an incentive for service providers to improve/maintain the quality of volunteering and community programmes offered at UNSW as a quality audit would be a requirement for inclusion on the transcript.

#### University of New South Wales: Transcript supplement

*Examples of attainments, achievements or contributions for inclusion in the supplement include:*

- Peer Mentoring
- Contact Volunteers
- Student tutors/leaders involved with supporting students with poor academic performance
- Student leaders supporting transition to UNSW and/or Residential College life
- UNSW Co-op Programme Scholars
- Sporting achievements such as the award of a University blue
- Significant participation in the University choir / orchestra / theatre/exhibitions etc
- Student Ambassadors
- Completion of ELISE (Enabling Library & Information Skills for Everyone)
- Faculty-specific attainments, e.g. Dean's List, prizes and awards
- UNSW Source Volunteering programmes
- Orientation-Week Coordinator or team Member,
- Shack Tutoring Volunteer
- Mosaic Fusion Forums Coordinator or Volunteer
- Learning the Lingo Coordinator or Leader
- Outback Assist Coordinator or Volunteer

Source: Information provided by Senior Administrator, University of New South Wales

Flinders University has also developed a mechanism for recording student learning in extra-curricular activities (Hay, 2001). Students are encouraged to keep a Transferable Skills Portfolio which also details the learning they have acquired in extracurricular activities. The aim of the transferable skills portfolio is to provide students with an organised way for reflecting on, and documenting their skills and experience. This can then be used to help them prepare résumés and job applications, and participate in job interviews for paid or unpaid work (see Appendix B).

#### ***Initiatives to promote international mobility***

As a signatory to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, Australia has an obligation to promote the widespread use of the Diploma Supplement by Australian tertiary institutions. In 2002 and 2005 DEST conducted pilot projects involving six Australian universities to determine the implications for Australian institutions in issuing Diploma Supplements. In 2006, the Australian Government Minister for Education, Science and Training released a discussion paper, *The Bologna Process and Australia: Next Steps*<sup>15</sup>, which included information on the Diploma Supplement. Responses to the paper from the higher education sector supported development of an Australian Diploma Supplement.

A National Seminar on the Bologna Process was held at the Australian National University on 7 September 2006, where the Minister announced Australian Government funding of up to AUD 400,000 (EUR 240,785) would be provided to a consortium of universities to develop a single agreed template for an Australian Diploma Supplement. The ultimate aim for an Australian Diploma Supplement will be to assist students and employers, both at home and abroad, in

<sup>15</sup> [http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/GovernmentActivities/BolognaProcess/BolognaPaper\\_pdf.pdf](http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/GovernmentActivities/BolognaProcess/BolognaPaper_pdf.pdf)

enabling Australian qualifications to be better recognised overseas and increase mobility. The project to develop the Diploma Supplement is due to be completed by November 2007.

In April 2006, Australia hosted the Asia-Pacific Education Ministers' Meeting in Brisbane<sup>16</sup>. The objective of the meeting was to agree on the type of actions in education and training that were required to:

'strengthen good relations in the region; and underpin its social and economic development, through the international mobility of students and research collaboration'.

Ministers agreed to collaborate on four broad initiatives to foster and enable student and academic mobility and exchange, and to address barriers to these activities. These were:

1. quality assurance frameworks for the region linked to international standards including online delivery of courses;
2. recognition of educational and professional qualifications;
3. common competency-based standards for teachers, particularly in science and mathematics; and
4. development of common recognition of technical skills across the region in order to better meet the overall skills needs of the economic base of the region.

A Senior Officials' Working Group (SOWG), (currently chaired by Australia and supported by the Brisbane Communiqué<sup>17</sup> Taskforce based in DEST) was established to further these initiatives. In preparing a work programme for furthering these goals, Ministers agreed that the SOWG was also to keep in mind future possibilities for compatibility with initiatives such as the European Bologna and Copenhagen processes. The SOWG will report back to Ministers in 12 months on achievements to date.

The first of the SOWG meetings was held on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of November 2006 in Bangkok Thailand.

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<sup>16</sup> The Asia Pacific Region includes 53 countries: Afghanistan, Australia, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Maldives, Pakistan, Palau, Thailand, Timor Leste, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Cook Islands, Fiji, Hong Kong, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kiribati, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Lebanon, Laos, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Nauru, Nepal New Caledonia New Zealand, Niue, Oman, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Syria, Tonga, Turkey, Tuvalu, United Arab Emirates, Vanuatu, Vietnam, Yemen

<sup>17</sup> <http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/GovernmentActivities/BrisbaneCommuniqué/default.htm>

## **Component 1.3: New ICT**

### **1.3 a) Provide any evidence of modularisation of learning and the new recording system opened up by new information and communication technologies to be fully used to promote credit transfer.**

Compartmentalising learning into units of competency (and modules) has been the major approach adopted in the Australian VET system which has implemented a competency-based assessment system. Here students must demonstrate ability to perform a competency in a realistic environment (that is, in the workplace or in a simulated setting). Knight (2006) believes that this requirement, combined with the extensive range of units of competence contained in national Training Packages, makes it difficult to develop standardised assessment tasks. However, some States and Territories have developed online support programmes to help students to complete RPL application processes.

In the VET system Standard 4 of the Australian Quality Training Framework Standards for RTOs requires providers to have in place mechanisms to enable the retention, archiving and retrieval of student results. For nationally accredited VET training student management systems must be compliant with AVETMISS requirements. For all other types of training providers will have their own specific systems in place. Universities and other higher education institutions will determine the systems they will use for recording student information.

The New South Wales public VET system has in place a state-wide recording and tracking system (the Student and Course Information System) which is accessible from any of the 170 campuses of TAFE NSW and includes information on student results. RPL is identified by a unique result code. The course information system contains information on the course, the unit, the date of the course, and all the units of competency. It is an enormous computerised system to facilitate recognition and credit transfer, including RPL. New South Wales is the largest state in Australia and has the largest enrolments. Victoria also plans to establish a state-wide system for tracking similar outcomes.

### ***Plans for a national Learner Identity Management Framework***

There is no single system for maintaining and sharing information on learner identity, participation, and outcomes in Australia. Generally, providers maintain their own specific student management and information systems. However, there are plans to develop nationally consistent learner identity and management arrangements in Australia. To this end all Australian governments funded the Australian Information and Communications Technology in Education Committee (AICTEC)<sup>18</sup> to undertake a project to explore the feasibility of such a framework and to develop options for a cross-sectoral 'Learner Identity Management Framework' (LIMF) (MCEETYA, 2006). The principal aim of the framework was to 'provide a trusted environment for the identification of learners, and the management and exchange of learner information across providers, sectors and jurisdictions' (AICTEC, p 8).

In terms of RPL a nationally consistent system will assist providers to establish the authenticity of evidence of prior learning, and help learners to more easily access records of their prior learning. Although there are definite administrative and social benefits that can be derived from the introduction of the LIMF, there are also significant challenges associated with public policy and privacy. The LIMF is also concerned with having in place mechanisms to address such issues.

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<sup>18</sup>AICTEC is a cross-sectoral advisory committee to the Ministerial Council of Education, Employment and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) on effective educational use of information and communications technology.

## The Learner Identity Management Framework – Charter of Principles

### 1. Integrity and security

Collectors and custodians of learner data will develop and make publicly available policies that demonstrate their commitment to maintaining the integrity and security of learner information.

### 2. Identity resolution

Custodians of learner data will put in place policies and procedure for verifying the identity of individual learners and for ensuring any data they transfer to or receive from other custodians relates to the learner in question and to no other person.

### 3. Data management

Custodians of learner data will develop their data collections with a view to achieving terminology, definitions and meanings that are consistent with those used by other custodians.

### 4. Data Exchange

Custodians of learner data will work towards achieving a common technical framework and language for transferring information across learner data repositories.

### 5. Policies and procedures

Custodians of learner data will establish and maintain robust policies and procedures for protecting the privacy of individual learners and for recording relevant consents.

Source: AICTEC < <http://www.aictec.edu.au/>>

Most jurisdictions have endorsed the Charter of Principles through MCEETYA and MCVTE. Peak education and training organisations will be separately advised of the Charter.

### **1.3 b) Provide a list of new qualifications that have been opened up by new information and communication technologies. Provide evidence, if any, that the certificates by the major industries carry more or equivalent currency in the labour market than academic qualifications.**

There are a great variety of formal qualifications available in secondary, VET, and higher education sectors which equip Australians to work in information and communications technology (ICT) occupations, or to use the new ICTs in other environments. There are also a variety of qualifications that have been opened up by the new ICTs themselves. In addition, there are specific industry qualifications also known as vendor qualifications which deal with ways for safeguarding, enabling and enhancing the new ICT environments in which many enterprises using ICTs operate.

For example, the Australian Computer Society has endorsed the International Computer Driving Licence (ICDL) which is being used in 140 countries. The ICDL is designed for a person to 'drive' a computer with the same ease as they might drive a car. The ICDL is not a training course 'but rather a competency standard that is acknowledged through testing'. The aim of the ICDL is to raise the general level of competency in IT, improve productivity at work, reduce user support costs, enable employers to invest more efficiently in IT, and ensure that best practice and quality issues are understood and implemented.

It must also be acknowledged that older qualifications will also have components which aim to prepare people to use the new ICTs in their particular fields. In addition, each of the specialisations will be updated to take into account advances in ICT. All industry sectors will have included new ways of working which have been enabled by the new ICTs, especially in building design, medicine and dentistry, radiography, construction and engineering. For example, traditional Bachelor of Applied Science degrees may include specialisations like: application programming, computational mathematics, embedded systems, games, graphics, and digital media, information systems and IT Management, multimedia design, network programming, security, system administration, web systems. In addition, there are dual degrees that enable students to undertake traditional

disciplines in combination with new ICT knowledge domains. For example, Flinders University in South Australia has a double degree qualification: the *Bachelor of Information Technology/Bachelor of Laws and Legal Practice*, to prepare professionals to work in an environment where there is an overlap between IT and law. The Information Technology degree includes subjects in artificial intelligence, operating systems, data mining and knowledge discovery, internet computing, interactive computer graphics. IT students can also take units associated with globalisation and commerce, screen media in a global world.

There are also Certificate, Diploma and Advanced Diploma qualifications in Information Technology (with specialisations in specific fields) that have been developed for the ICT industry. Special fields are: e-business, e-learning development, e-security, network security, project management, multimedia, network management, programming, e-consumer, spatial information services, database design and development, multimedia integration, systems analysis and design, internetworking, websites, website administration, client support, programming, testing, and telesales. There are also qualifications in electro-technology and data communications, public safety (communications operations), ambulance communications, and information and library services.

In addition specialist qualifications and accreditations including those available through Microsoft, Project Management Institute, IT infrastructure Library (ITIL), and CISCO that are available to Australian individuals and enterprises to help them develop, maintain and implement effective ICT strategies throughout all industry sectors. These are detailed in Appendix C.

### ***Employer evaluation of industry accreditation***

Research into the question of how much employers value industry accreditation is limited. However, there is high demand for some of the qualifications. Although in some cases vendor qualifications can be used to satisfy requirements of AQF qualifications, there are many programmes that stand outside the framework. Overall employers value qualifications which are relevant to them and the skills needs of their organisation. Blythe and Bowman (2005) found that employers valued qualifications as a tool for screening applicants; in meeting compliance requirements, such as for jobs in the trades and professions requiring registration and licensing; and in providing career development for existing workers in promoting a learning culture and to increase morale. Research has found that big businesses or enterprises in traditional industry areas (such as manufacturing) tend to value qualifications more than employers in small business and enterprises in new, emerging industries (such as IT). The use of qualifications also tends to apply more to professional, managerial and clerical employees. Employers' views and practices are found to differ, in that while they may indicate that qualifications are not important, evidence shows that employers are more likely to take on employees with qualifications, and also to pay them higher wages. Higher qualified workers spend less time in unemployment and find it easier to find a job. Fifty-two per cent of university graduates have found a job within four months of graduation (DEST, 2006b).

Nevertheless, a study of the extent to which ICT qualifications and other factors influenced the hiring decisions of employers in Australia (Diversiti, 2006) provides some indication of how employers value formal qualifications gained in the various educational sectors over those obtained through vendor training. Seventy-seven per cent of employers rated a Bachelor degree as having a high or very high influence on their hiring decisions with the two most preferred ICT degrees (by 75 per cent of respondents) being the Bachelor of Information Technology or a combined Information Technology and Business degree. A Bachelor of Computer Science was the third most preferred qualification. VET qualifications were not as highly regarded. Just over half of employers rated certification or vendor product accreditation as having a major influence on their hiring decisions. These were especially valued if they were relevant to a candidate's skill base. Microsoft, project management or ITIL certification and accreditation were most well known and were felt to provide advantages for candidates. Sixty per cent of small business employers rated

vendor qualifications as having a high influence on their hiring decisions. Nevertheless, employers generally tended to use qualifications as an initial screening device and then considered the personal traits and attributes of candidates for final selection. Employers also considered previous experience, technical expertise, and knowledge of the job to be done.

**1.3 c) Describe current national policies or practices of e-portfolio as a tool to record learning outcomes or 'learning assets'? What have been achieved and what have been challenges.**

In addition to the LIMF mentioned in 1.3 a, the Australian Flexible Learning Framework<sup>19</sup> is a national government strategy that deals with e-learning skills, professional development opportunities, resources and support networks 'to meet today's increasingly technology driven learning environment', and as such will also deal with e-portfolios.

E-portfolios are being used to some extent in various higher education, VET, and adult and community education institutions and in industry to record and store information on individuals' achievements. The aim of these e-portfolios is to help students, unemployed people, volunteers, and workers record their experience and achievements using digital technologies (including photographs, video footage, music, sound and text). These can then be used to provide evidence of experience and achievement to prospective employers, or to educational institutions for admission and assessment purposes.

Examples include:

- *myfuture.edu.au* – a joint Australian, State and Territory government sponsored online career exploration service which helps people explore their skills and interests, identify their career ideas, develop a career plan, and research options for further study or training. *myfuture* has a particular emphasis on 16 to 24 year old students.
- *E-portfolio for employability skills*<sup>20</sup> – DEST is funding a trial website for an e-portfolio or skills portfolio database and tool that will allow people to easily record their academic, vocational and employability skills to support job applications, career planning, and entry into further education and training. It will also assist school graduates to document their academic and vocational training and employability skills gained through community activities, and assist mature-age people to document their skills against the eight employability skills<sup>21</sup>.
- *Electronic Skills Passports* used for recording achievement of students and apprentices in the printing industry.
- *Résumé Builder* used to develop résumés by Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) for all job seekers.
- *Skillsbase* used for students in Victoria.
- *Skills Mentor* used for students entering the Information Technology industry.
- *Skills Passport* used for students and job seekers within the sport and recreation industry, and young people working for Volunteering NSW.
- *Vocational Profile* for clients of individual Job Network Provider clients.
- *Transferable Skills Portfolio* for students from Flinders University (refer 1.2b).
- *Your Skills Portfolio* for students at Victoria University (this includes a résumé maker, and focuses on the core graduate skills).

<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au>

<sup>20</sup> [http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/training\\_skills/policy\\_issues/es/](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/training_skills/policy_issues/es/)

<sup>21</sup> See <http://www.educationau.edu.au>

- *E-portfolio* for students at the TAFE Virtual Campus<sup>22</sup>.

The main challenges for the development and implementation of 'e-portfolios' in Australia is getting a system in place to meet a wide range of stakeholder needs and expectations. Other major challenges are to make sure that interoperability and standards are maintained in an increasingly interconnected ICT environment. This means that systems must be able to talk to each other, and to enable users to enter and attach data to the e-portfolio easily and effectively. It also means that enough storage space must be made available to satisfy the needs of all Australians wanting to make use of such schemes. There are also issues about the privacy and security of information.

## **Component 1.4: Economic developments and skills shortage/mismatch**

### **1.4 a) Describe any legal framework, policy, programmes, research that address the issue of recognition of skills, experience and knowledge within the framework of human capital with respect to the economic developments or labour force issues. Are there any specific policies at the regional level concerning such as 'Regional Development' and 'Learning Regions'?**

The *Workforce Tomorrow* report, released in November 2005 by the Australian Government Minister for Employment and Workplace Relations, showed that Australia faces a potential shortfall of 195,000 workers in five years' time as a result of population ageing. The projections were conducted by the Centre of Policy Studies at Monash University and show that while the effects of population ageing will vary substantially across industries, occupations and regions over the next five years, most firms are likely to be adversely affected and will have to tailor their responses to their differing circumstances.

In response to the changing nature of the workforce and to specific skills shortages, in early 2006 COAG launched a National Reform Agenda which included a focus on human capital. An agreed priority of the initiative is to 'increase the proportion of adults who have the skills and qualifications needed to enjoy active and productive working lives'.

Further to this, in October 2006 the Prime Minister announced the Australian Government would spend AUD 837 million (EUR 504, million) over five years to respond to demands from employers for a higher level of skills, a broader range of skills and more frequent updating of skills. As part of this *Skills for the Future* package, from January 2007, eligible people aged 25 years and over will receive a voucher for up to AUD 3,000 (EUR 1,806) to complete Year 12 or enrol in a vocational Certificate II course. Those able to apply include:

- unskilled workers wishing to acquire qualifications;
- income support recipients;
- unemployed job seekers in receipt of income support and participating in the Job Network who are undertaking active job search; and
- people not in the labour force, either voluntarily or because of carer responsibilities, who intend to seek work after achieving their qualification.

Those RTOs approved to administer the scheme will be required to assist people make the right choices about the most appropriate training courses and to offer a recognition of prior learning assessment to all students.

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<sup>22</sup> The TAFE VC (Virtual Campus) site provides students with a manual which describes the e-portfolio system that TAFE VC students can use. The e-portfolio is described as a free, open source Content Management System, which aims to allow 'easy creation, publishing and retrieval of content to meet business needs' (TAFE VC, 2006, p3). The manual then provides students with step-by-step guidelines about how users can create, publish and retrieve information from their e-portfolios.

As part of its response to the COAG request for advice on future reforms in the VET sector, the Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE) recognises that Australia faces a substantial structural mismatch between the skills of the workforce and the needs of the economy. Research commissioned by MCVTE indicates there may be a shortfall of up to 240,000 qualified workers in Australia by 2016 without investment to increase the capacity of, and reform to, the training system to increase participation in vocational education and training.<sup>23</sup>

This presents a two-fold challenge confronting the nation's training system over the coming decade: the need to deliver significantly more high-level qualifications to meet the skill needs of the Australian economy; and increasing education and training opportunities for adults with no formal qualifications to improve their employment prospects. At the same time the training system will also need to maintain the system's core delivery (including the areas of trades training in skill need areas) especially to replace workers with these qualifications retiring from occupations.

To meet these challenges will require transformational change to the current system: to create a thriving training market where providers are ready and able to adapt to the changing needs of Australian industry, where learners and employers are able to make informed choices in terms of the training they require and the best training providers to deliver that training for them, and where the training which learners receive provides them with the job relevant skills they need both today and into the future.

COAG is also working to address the supply of skilled labour to industries and regions by sharing labour market information so as to better understand the extent and location of skills shortages (COAG Communiqué, February 2006) and through regional migration programmes. The Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme helps employers in regional Australia to fill skilled positions that they cannot fill with local labour. The Australian Government is also addressing skill shortages (especially prevalent but not confined to regional areas) with its National Skills Shortages Strategy (see 1.4 b).

### **Learning Regions**

The Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) (now subsumed into the Department of Education, Science and Training) funded the development of 12 learning communities in 12 rural communities in New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria, South Australia, and Western Australia<sup>24</sup>. The Victorian Government has funded the development in regional Victoria of 'Learning Towns' and more recently of 'learning regions' in metropolitan Melbourne. The fundamental aim of these initiatives is to provide access to learning pathways for all members of the community and to foster 'creativity, enterprise and innovation' (Global Learning Services, 2003). Typically a learning town, region or community is comprised of networks based on partnerships between government agencies, district councils, community organisations, education and training institutions and business and industry. Each of the partners provides either access to buildings, expertise or funding. Often a learning region is set up to redress issues of remoteness and associated economic and social disadvantage. The adult and community education sector has been active in this area. Its peak body, Adult Learning Australia (ALA) was involved in the inception of the Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN) in 2000, which now has 40 members around the country<sup>25</sup>. Appendix D provides some examples of the activities of different learning regions.

<sup>23</sup> Shah C and Burke G, 2006, *The future labour market and qualifications in Australia*, Report prepared for the National Training Reform Taskforce, Centre for the Economics of Education and Training (CEET), Monash University – ACER, Melbourne, Australia

<sup>24</sup> Newcastle (NSW), Deniliquin (NSW) Toowoomba (QLD), Launceston (TAS), Southern Grampians (VIC), Port Augusta (SA), Port Pirie (SA), Copper Coast (SA), Ceduna (SA), Peel region (WA)

<sup>25</sup> See <http://www.lcc.edu.au>

**1.4 b) Describe overall skills mismatch/shortage situation in your country. Do you have any economic policies that address the issue of skills shortage or skills mismatch? In what sectors/industries has the issue been most conspicuous?**

The *National Skills Shortages Strategy* investigates the issues of skills shortages and addresses barriers to training, especially for the traditional trades. It includes innovative projects to explore ways of increasing the skilled workforce and to examine skills needs on a regional basis; labour market forecasting; and mechanisms to increase communication across the sectors<sup>26</sup>.

DEWR monitors occupational developments and assesses whether skill shortages exist for particular occupations. It has adopted definitions, based on concepts used in the United Kingdom, to distinguish between 'skill shortages' and 'skill gaps'. Skill shortages exist when employers are unable to fill vacancies for an occupation generally involving skills that require a significant period of training and/or experience. Skill gaps occur where existing employees do not have the required qualifications, experience and/or specialised skills to meet the firm's skill needs for an occupation. Skill gaps do not simply relate to formal qualifications. Employees in an occupation may have the necessary vocational qualifications for the occupation, but not the specialised knowledge, skills and experience needed to adapt to new technology and new methods of working. This definitional split helps to clarify the causes of skill shortages and to develop well-targeted strategies to address these. (DEST, 2002, p.3)

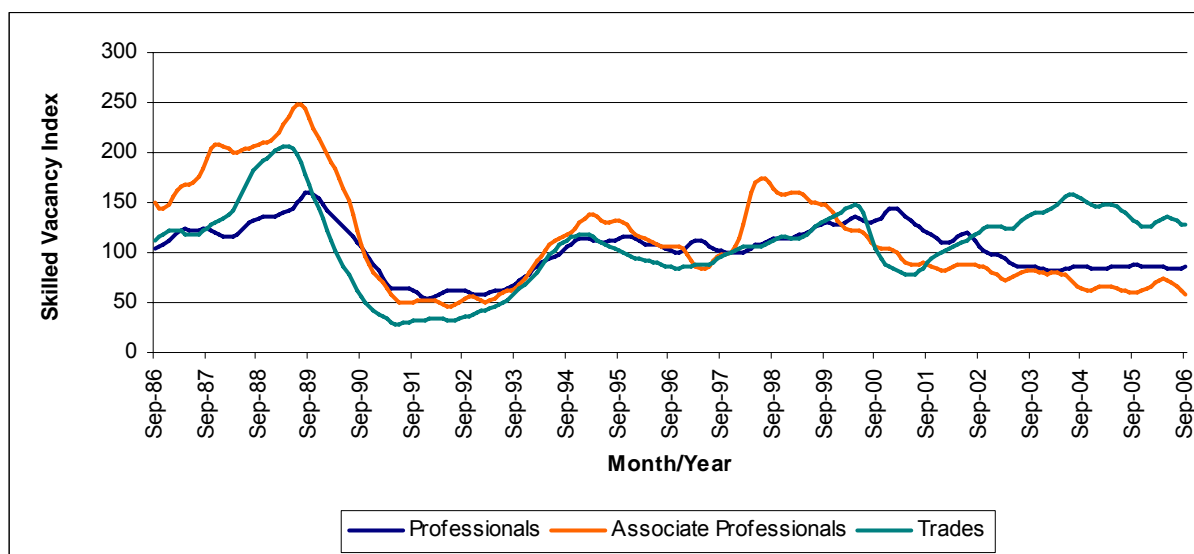
Skill shortages are especially significant in a number of health professions, and traditional trade areas. According to Toner (2005) sustained levels of output by industries employing the traditional trades (mining, construction, manufacturing, and tourism) have been a major cause of increasing skill shortages. In addition, the recent resources boom fuelled by increased demand for minerals resources, particularly by China, has led to increased demand for traditional trade skills. DEWR maintains a skilled vacancy index (see figure 9) which indicates the extent of skill shortages in the professions, associate professions and in the trades over time. The Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL) lists occupations identified by DEWR as being in national demand and with sustained employment prospects. Associated with each of these occupations are points that will be used for skilled migration visa approval processes<sup>27</sup>.

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<sup>26</sup> See <http://www.getatrade.gov.au>

<sup>27</sup> See <http://www.immi.gov.au/skilled/general-skilled-migration/skilled-occupations/occupations-in-demand.htm>

**Figure 9: Skilled vacancies index, for Total Professional, Associate Professionals and Trades, 1986-2006**



Source: Historical Skilled Vacancy Index Data, Skilled Vacancy Report, Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, September 2006

The policy response to addressing skill shortage issues has been to encourage skilled migration and the recognition of prior learning of those with relevant skills and experience to fast track the completion of training programmes.

In February 2006, COAG agreed that all RTOs and assessment centres in receipt of public funding will have a contractual obligation to offer all workers entering training a quick and simple process to recognise their existing skills. It aimed to implement this process by January 2007 so that workers do not have to repeat skills or undertake training for skills they have already acquired on-the-job (COAG, 2006).

COAG has also agreed to establish by 2008 a single accreditation scheme for the education and training of health professionals, and by December 2006 a national process for the assessment of overseas-trained doctors.

**1.4 c) Provide any evidence of increasing or decreasing economic and social disparities in your country (e.g. poverty rate such as gini-co-efficiency) among certain groups (low skilled, immigrants, youth, older workers, etc.). Provide also, if any, relevant documents addressing policies issues (economic, social, labour market, etc.) that account for such trends.**

#### ***Increasing disparities and risk of economic and social disadvantage***

The groups that are most likely to be at risk of economic and social disadvantage are Indigenous Australians, long-term unemployed, sole parent families, young people in low income households, and households whose main source of income are government pensions (ACOSS, 2003; ABS, 2006). For example, compared to other Australians, Indigenous Australians have significantly lower rates of life expectancy at birth, school retention, and median income and higher rates of unemployment. Of those receiving government pensions it was sole parents and young people,

followed by those on disability pensions that suffered most disadvantage. In addition, the longer the term of unemployment the more likely the individual will be at risk of experiencing poverty.

### ***Gini co-efficients***

In terms of disposable income for households the gini co-efficient in 1994-95 stood at .302. By 2003-2004 it had marginally declined to .294 (ABS, 2006).

**Table 7: Gini co-efficients for different measures of income earned**

	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Equivalentised disposable household weekly income	.302	.296	.292	.303	.310	.311	.309	.294
Annual income	.302	.302	.307	.312	.313			
Unadjusted household income	.377	.369	.368	.374	.380	.380		

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Household Income & Income Distribution Australia 2003-04, Cat. no. 6523.0; Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian Social Trends, 2006, Cat. no. 4102.0; Australian Bureau of Statistics, Measures of Australia's Progress, 2004, Cat. no. 1370.0; Saunders, 2003.

### ***Recent government initiatives to address disadvantage***

COAG agreed in 2006 to implement reforms aimed at raising the human capital of Australians, and especially of groups experiencing high levels of disadvantage in the community. The reforms were aimed at significantly improving the proportion of:

- children who are born healthy and acquire the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and closing the gap in this regard between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children;
- young people meeting the basic standards of literacy and numeracy, attaining increased levels of overall achievement, and making a smooth transition to work and further study; and
- adults who have the skills and qualifications needed to enjoy active and productive working lives.

They also included aims for increasing overall workforce participation with a particular focus on target groups and access to flexible working arrangements to meet the needs of individuals and the economy. COAG also agreed that a 'long-term generational commitment' was needed to address Indigenous disadvantage. It agreed to establish a working group to develop a detailed proposal for generational change including specific, practical proposals for reform which reflect the diversity of situations in Australia.

The Australian Government Budget for 2005-06 introduced from 1 July 2006 a comprehensive reform of the welfare system for working-age Australians called *Welfare to Work*. As part of the Government's broader response to demographic change, its goals are to lift workforce participation and reduce welfare dependency, while maintaining a strong safety net for those who need it. The scheme is premised on the fact that many welfare recipients are able to work part-time. It encourages self-reliance.

The Australian Government has committed AUD 3.6 billion (EUR 2 billion) over five years to help parents on welfare, people with disabilities, the long-term unemployed and mature age job seekers to move from welfare to work. One aspect of the package recognises that some of these people will need further education or training before being able to seek a job and so commits funds for an extra 12,300 vocational education and training places, at a cost of AUD 43 million (EUR 26 million)

over three years. The Australian Government's Language, Literacy and Numeracy Programme was also recently expanded by 2,900 places<sup>28</sup>.

**1.4 d) Provide data, if any, which points to the recognition of non-formal and informal learning as a way of re-distributing human capital and solve the issue of skills mismatch and skills shortage and, therefore, a way to drive economic development.**

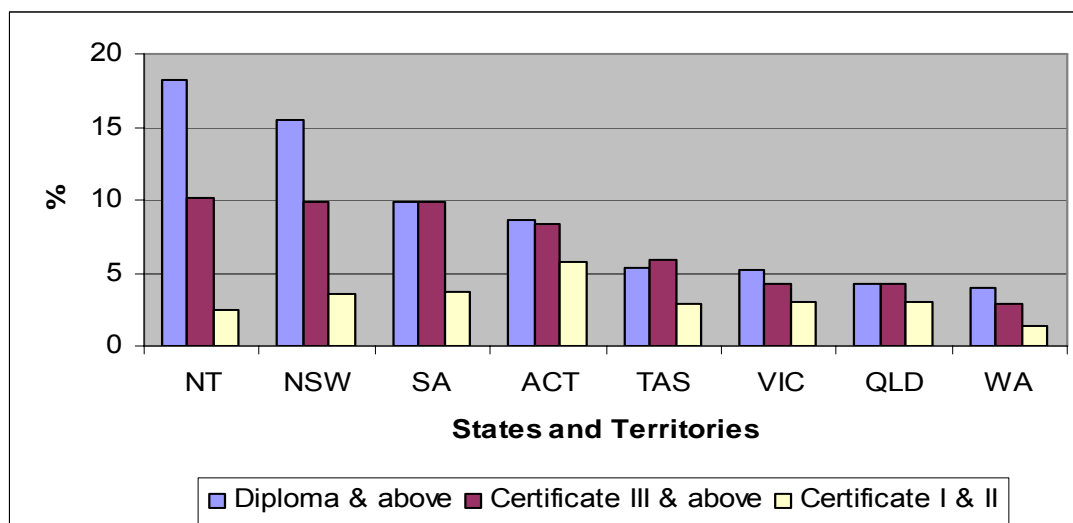
RPL is especially pertinent in the current climate of skill shortages, particularly in the traditional trades, where the main approach has been to recruit to apprenticeship programmes existing workers (for example, trades assistants who do not have the necessary qualifications, or other workers who have the work and life experience expected in an occupation). Typically these workers are provided with RPL assessments which are also used to identify areas for gap training.

Non-trade programmes have also applied RPL strategies to qualify workers. This is especially the case in community services like childcare and aged care. Childcare programmes in South Australia and New South Wales have also applied the fast-track approach by using RPL assessments for existing workers with experience. The major drivers of some of this RPL activity in these industries is to ensure that workers in childcare, aged care and community care occupations have the necessary qualifications to meet government compliance legislation.

The proportion of VET students who gained some RPL increased from 2.4 per cent in 1995 to 4.2 per cent in 2002. By 2004 there were 3.6 per cent of VET students who had been granted some RPL.

In 2005 the Northern Territory, followed by New South Wales displayed significantly higher proportions of RPL outcomes for VET students than did the other states. However, the ACT displayed a higher overall proportion of RPL outcomes for students than the other states.

**Figure 10: State/Territory variations in student RPL outcomes in publicly-funded VET 2005**



Source: NCVET, National VET provider collection, unpublished data.

Note: This graph does not include the small number of RPL outcomes for other programmes

In 2000 RPL was obtained by 3.6 per cent of students overall in VET (Bateman & Knight, 2001). Fields of study which had higher than average numbers of students with RPL were 'education' (8.4 per cent), 'veterinary science and animal care' (8.3 per cent), 'health and community services' (6.6

<sup>28</sup> See [http://www.budget.gov.au/2005-06/overview2/html/welfare\\_13.htm](http://www.budget.gov.au/2005-06/overview2/html/welfare_13.htm)

per cent), 'science' (4.5 per cent), and 'engineering and surveying' (4.8 per cent). However, 'services, hospitality and transportation' which accounted for 16.7 per cent of students, was below the average rate of 3.6 per cent.

The uptake of RPL levels is greater in higher VET level qualifications than for lower qualification levels (see table 8), and for higher age groups. Firstly, higher qualifications comprise higher numbers of units of competency, and this increases the opportunities for RPL assessments. They also comprise more complex units of competency which also increases potential for RPL. Naturally older age groups have also had a longer time to accumulate knowledge through life experience and work.

**Table 8: Proportion of students granted RPL in publicly-funded VET, by qualification level and age, 2001 to 2005**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
<i>Qualification levels</i>					
Diploma & above	10.1	11.0	10.5	10.0	8.9
Certificate III & above	6.3	6.7	6.6	5.5	6.3
Certificate I & II	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.8	2.2
Other programmes	.7	.6	.4	.3	0.4
<i>Age Groups</i>					
15-19 years	2.1	2.5	2.3	2.1	2.0
20-24 years	4.6	4.7	4.5	4.2	3.7
25-39 years	5.0	5.1	4.8	4.4	4.5
40-64 years	4.3	4.7	4.5	4.1	4.4
Other including age unknown	1.4	1.4	1.0	1.0	0.9
All students per cent	4.0	4.2	3.9	3.6	3.6
All students	1679.2	1.682.9	1.717.8	1.595.2	1641.3

Source: Australian vocational education and training statistics: National 2001-2005 VET provider collections, unpublished statistics

The limitation with this RPL data is it masks the considerable extent of RPL that happens in the modules themselves. That is, it is not unusual for students to be given RPL for components of a particular unit of competency. As AVETMISS reports only on the achievement of units of competency in their entirety, this does not account for all the RPL that may be occurring.

The Student Outcomes Survey (SOS) which reports on the experiences of those who complete full qualifications (graduates), as well as those who complete modules only (module completers) can be used to get some understanding of the extent of partial RPL. In 2005 around a third of all graduates across all reported age groups said they had been given some exemptions through RPL, with those in the older age groups being more likely to report RPL exemptions. A far lower proportion of 2005 module completers reported this to be the case for them, with those in the 15 – 24 year age group more likely to report RPL than those in older age groups. This pattern of RPL uptake has been similar between 2003 and 2005 (see table 9).

**Table 9: Proportion of graduates and module completers who received some recognition for prior learning by age, 2003 to 2005**

		2003		2004		2005	
		Graduates	Module completers	Graduates	Module completers	Graduates	Module completers
		per cent	per cent	per cent	per cent	per cent	per cent
Age	15-24	29	21	31	21	29	19
	25-44	38	21	37	19	33	15
	45+	39	17	39	13	31	13

Source: NCVET, Students Outcomes Survey, 2005, Unpublished statistics.

Recent changes to AVETMISS will require RTOs to record whether assessments undertaken via RPL or recognition of current competencies (RCC) resulted in the application for RPL or RCC being granted or not granted which will provide a more complete picture of RPL activity.

The Survey of Education and Training (SET) conducted by the ABS (2006) can also be used to indicate why individuals choose to undertake recognition processes. The main reasons are job related. Individuals who undertake RPL do so to gain a job, a promotion in a job, or to move into a better job, or a different career. Others did so for personal development reasons and to move into further study.

**Table 10: Number and proportion of RPL participants by reason for seeking RPL 2005**

Reasons for seeking RPL	Number	Proportion
Job related reasons	369100	82.4
Personal	57849	12.9
To get into further study	13954	3.1
Other	7215	1.6
Total	448118	100.0

Source: ABS, 2006, Survey of Education and Training, unpublished data, Cat. no. 6278.0

Length and quality of experience is also assessed by professional associations when awarding professional certifications.

Table 11 indicates that the uptake of RPL for higher education students has decreased over the last five years or so. In 2001, 3.6 per cent of Bachelor degree students had obtained recognition for non-formal learning; by 2005 this had reduced to 2.7 per cent. Similarly, where 8.2 per cent of postgraduate students had received RPL in 2001, this had reduced to 5.1 per cent in 2005.

**Table 11: RPL received by students enrolled in higher education qualifications 2001-2005 (proportion)**

Qualification level	2001	2005
Postgraduate degree	8.2	5.1
Graduate Certificate/Graduate Diploma (post graduate degree)	8.8	6.8
Bachelor degree	3.6	2.7

Source: ABS, Survey of Education and Training and Information Technology, 2001, and Survey of Education and Training, 2005, cat 6278.0

### Addressing skill shortages through RPL in the Western Australian (WA) Police Service

The WA Police Department has in place a policy for the recognition of prior learning of members and applicants (WA Police, 2006). It includes arrangements for recognising prior service and prior learning in informal training sessions. It states:

1. Prior policing service for members, re-engagees and applicants will be recognised on the basis of completed year/s and month/s (that is, one completed year and/or month/s of prior policing service with this Agency or another police jurisdiction (worldwide) will now equate to one year and/or month/s of service with the WA Police')
2. Recognition of prior learning (including informal learning) will be assessed against national training competency standards where applicable.

Source: Western Australia Police Service < [http://www.stepforward.wa.gov.au/direct\\_entry\\_applicant.php](http://www.stepforward.wa.gov.au/direct_entry_applicant.php) > (viewed Oct 2006)

### ***Student preferences***

Not all students who are eligible take advantage of RPL. There are those who want to start subjects from the beginning and do not mind if they duplicate already developed skills and knowledge. The RPL coordinator at the TAFE SA Regency campus stated 'we provide students with information about RPL, but most people want to do it (the learning) all again'. Cameron (2004) suggests that RPL may not be relevant to students who have not long been in the paid workforce and those who have not engaged in formal learning for a long time. However, Cameron notes that 'it is younger students who are more savvy about RPL and seek short cuts' (p2).

### ***Government initiatives***

In 2003 the Department of Employment and Training in Queensland established its commitment to improving the quality and rate of RPL provision in Queensland. Its vision was to see 'Queensland VET and industry confidently embracing user friendly, holistic recognition of prior learning as a valuable part of the skill formation strategies for credentialling and access in life-long learning'.

It set up an action plan with identified timelines for:

- improving the monitoring of RPL within publicly-funded provision through clearer advice about reporting (deadline September 2003);
- increasing expectations of RPL through contract and resource agreement information;
- working towards a clear understanding of RPL assessment between audit and delivery functions through workshops, fact sheets and enabling resources;
- working towards removing disincentives to quality RPL funding mechanisms;
- monitoring, documenting and modelling RPL processes and supporting mechanisms with industry strategies;
- implementing the development of up-front RPL processes and organisational arrangements through a coordinated state-wide RPL pilot in three distinctive industry areas in Queensland; and
- promoting RPL to employers and individuals through a coordinated campaign.

The action plan culminated in the establishment of RPL pilots as planned in 2005.

**1.4 e) Provide data, if any, if there has been any study that points to a certain group that would benefit most from the recognition system for their skills (e.g. retirees, older workers, women, immigrants (highly- skilled or low-skilled), part-time workers, unemployed youth, etc.).**

There are currently no empirical studies that have investigated the extent to which certain groups have benefited from RPL in comparison with other groups. Nevertheless, Australian researchers have looked at how RPL has been applied with specific groups, in particular mature age workers.

The Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training funded two projects, *Securing Success* (2003) and *Furthering Success* (interim report 2003), to gain an understanding of the forces influencing education, training and employment pathways for older disadvantaged workers across Australia. These studies found that older job seekers needed support to identify opportunities for training and work and to understand the scope of their existing skills.

ALA conducted a feasibility study in 2003, which considered how an individual learning audit process might assist mature-aged unemployed job seekers make productive learning choices. It found that for such an audit, which primarily involved identifying informal learning, to be helpful there needed to be a greater awareness within job matching agencies, of the diverse range of learning people undertook throughout their lives (Cross and Brennan, ALA, 2003)

Cameron has investigated the extent to which RPL processes are demanded or adequate for mature-aged job seekers (Cameron, 2004) and has found little support for the commonly held view that RPL will especially help mature aged job seekers without formal qualifications. Cameron found that RPL as it was currently applied by many providers lacked relevance for this group of clients. This was mainly because as a group mature-aged job seekers with little formal qualifications often lacked the confidence and self esteem to value the knowledge and experience they already had. They also needed to build their confidence by returning to learning and reflecting on their knowledge and experience so that they could prepare résumés and job applications which made best use of their work and training histories. They also needed to gain new skills and the confidence to talk about their skills and experience with potential employers in interviews for jobs. Nevertheless, Cameron did come across innovative ways to engage older people, noting that this required a skilled assessor and considerable time and effort.

***RPL uptake in equity groups***

RPL uptake is lower among 'equity groups', with students with a disability, and Indigenous Australians accounting for less RPL enrolments than other students. In contrast those of non-English speaking backgrounds were about equally likely to obtain RPL (Bateman & Knight, 2001). Around 1000 Indigenous students were granted RPL each year between 2001 and 2005. This represented between 2 - 2.4 per cent of all Indigenous students in VET for those years.

The reasons for these lower levels of uptake may be that students from disadvantaged backgrounds may not have been able to acquire the skills and knowledge to present for RPL assessment. Another reason may be that the application processes are reasonably complex to complete. According to Wheelahan et al. (2003) the 'paradox of RPL' is that making a claim for non-formal or informal learning requires high levels of knowledge that is usually acquired in formal education and training.

Information from the Student Outcomes Survey (NCVER 2006) indicated students from equity groups were more likely to report RPL exemptions than the total VET student population (see table 12).

Just over a third of graduates who spoke a language other than English at home received some RPL exemptions for each for the years 2003, 2004, and 2005. For module completers this was lower, and ranged from around a fifth to well over a quarter of students. A similar pattern was obtained for Indigenous students and students with a disability. However, RPL exemptions were less frequently reported for module completers with a disability.

**Table 12: RPL exemptions for VET students from disadvantaged backgrounds**

	2003		2004		2005	
	Graduates	Module completers	Graduates	Module completers	Graduates	Module completers
	per cent	per cent	per cent	per cent	per cent	per cent
Speak language other than English at home	36	28	35	22	34	25
Indigenous	36	28	34	20	36	29
Disability	35	20	34	19	29	20
Total students	34	20	35	18	31	16

Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey, unpublished data

#### Recognition of Informal Learning (RIL) in Victoria

The Victorian Qualifications Authority (VQA) and the Adult Community and Further Education Board of Victoria have undertaken joint projects to investigate the feasibility of recognising the informal learning of a range of different learners and different contexts (VQA, 2005). A feasibility study found that effective recognition arrangements could be used to assist groups of adult learners in Victoria including women, culturally and linguistically diverse learners, Indigenous people, learners with disabilities, young people and older learners. It could also help those who were unemployed, living in socially and disadvantaged areas, early school leavers, existing workers and volunteers.

An evaluation of the trial programme (Learning Australia 2005) has indicated that the RIL process (with some adjustment) may be used to help individuals from these groups to understand more about their own learning capacities and their confidence for further learning. Participants in the trial indicated that the process of recognition could help their promotion or employment prospects. This was especially the case for older workers lacking formal qualifications, and younger people wanting to move into part-time or full-time work. The process had provided for them a form of 'official confirmation' of the skills and experiences they had included in their résumés. The evaluation recommended an accredited induction programme for assessors which particularly concentrated on suitable questioning techniques, and marketing of the recognition model to employers, employment services, education and training providers, and other stakeholders.

Source: Information and reference materials provided by Program Officer, RIL, Victorian Qualifications Authority

**1.4 f) Provide data, if any, that discuss some issues linking between the recognition of non-formal and informal learning and the non-formal and informal economies.**

The informal economy in Australia is not large, nor is there data which details the linking of RPL to non-formal and informal economies.

**1.4 g) Please provide a list of occupations to which the recognition of non-formal and informal learning can be counted as a part of entrance (e.g. teachers, engineers, journalists, etc.). Of the list, which occupations are regulated professions, i.e. that requires a certain qualification (certificates, licences, etc.)?**

If we take entrance to mean entrance to a qualification or course then regardless of whether the course has an occupational outcome or not, all AQF guidelines for qualifications make provision for RPL pathways. This means that all students are technically eligible for RPL.

In terms of entrance to an occupation then the question of RPL is less straightforward. Certain occupations in Australia are regulated by law (including health-related professions, veterinary science and architecture). Here applicants must take prescribed examinations which they must pass if they want to qualify for registration. They may also be required to undertake a period of practical experience. Occupations may be self-regulated, partially regulated or un-regulated.

Unless occupations are regulated in some way it is up to employers to decide whether or not applicants for jobs have the necessary skills and experience for employment. Employers may also take into account non-formal, informal and formal learning in assessing the suitability of applicants for jobs in occupations that are regulated. Entrance into professional occupations would rarely, if ever, be based primarily on the recognition of non-formal and informal learning.

## **Component 1.5: Social developments**

**1.5 a) What are the newly evolved 'skills and competencies' to live in the knowledge economy, which have been identified to date? Make a list of such skills and competencies.**

There has been much attention paid by government and industry to the types of skills required for workers to compete in current economies, including the knowledge economy. Lists of competencies and standards that are required to gain nationally accredited sector-specific VET qualifications and higher education qualifications have been established to help graduates compete in current and future labour markets. Supporting these vocational competencies and skills are a set of generic skills that are considered important to acquiring, maintaining and progressing through suitable employment pathways.

In 2001, DEST and ANTA funded a project to analyse and report on current business requirements for 'employability skills'. The project, conducted by the Business Council of Australia with the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, was completed in March 2002. The definition of employability skills used in the project was 'skills required not only to gain employment, but also to progress within an enterprise so as to achieve one's potential and contribute successfully to enterprise strategic directions'. Employability skills are also sometimes referred to as generic skills, capabilities or key competencies. They include skills and knowledge in understanding and applying technology. Similarly professional bodies have worked with the higher education sector to identify the types of generic competencies required by professional graduates. This sector has also identified a set of generic competencies to help graduates compete in current labour markets.

*VET: list of employability skills*

- communication that contributes to harmonious relations between employees and customers
- teamwork that contributes to productive working relationships and outcomes
- problem solving that contributes to productive outcomes
- initiative and enterprise that contribute to innovative outcomes
- self-management skills that contribute to employee satisfaction and growth
- planning and organising that contribute to short-term and long-term strategic planning
- learning that contributes to ongoing improvement and expansion in employee and company operations and outcomes
- technology that contributes to effective execution of tasks

*Higher education: List of 'graduate skills'*

- critical thinking
- problem solving
- interpersonal understandings
- written communication

In 1996 the Australian Government launched its *Strategic Framework for the Information Economy: Identifying priorities for action* for bringing Australians into the information age. Major priorities included promoting confidence in the use of online technologies, increasing Australia's online presence, and developing the country's ICT industries. In terms of education and training, the framework was committed to making sure that all citizens could benefit from the online technologies by developing high quality information professionals with up-to-date skills.

In 2001 the Australian Government launched its *Backing Australia's Ability* strategy (Commonwealth of Australia, 2001) and in 2004 it announced *Backing Australia's Ability – Building our Future through Science and Innovation* constituting a total of AUD 8.3 billion (EUR 5 billion) over ten years (to 2010-2011) to science and innovation in Australia as a means of building a world class science and innovation system, maintaining an international competitive edge and creating jobs. The strategy has directed funding to the development of scientific, mathematical and technological (including engineering) skills. To this end it has focussed on increasing domain-specific skills and knowledge in the key areas of:

- science;
- mathematics;
- technology (including ICT, engineering, biotechnology, nanotechnology, medical technology); and
- research skills.

Government schools have been given funds for the purpose of achieving better scientific, mathematical and technological skills, developing school-based innovation and building science and innovation capacity in schools. Funds have also been allocated to increase university places in the areas of ICT, mathematics and science. Apart from providing funding for schools and universities in these areas, the strategy has also applied funding to the development and commercialisation of ideas in biotechnology, stem cell research, information and communication technologies, nanotechnology, medical research, and counter terrorism.

### Graduate attributes at the University of South Australia

*A graduate of the University of South Australia*

- operates effectively with and upon a body of knowledge of sufficient depth to begin professional practice
- is prepared for life-long learning in pursuit of personal development and excellence in professional practice
- is an effective problem solver, capable of applying logical, critical, and creative thinking to a range of problems
- can work both autonomously and collaboratively as a professional
- is committed to ethical action and social responsibility as a professional and a citizen
- communicates effectively in professional practice and as a member of the community
- demonstrates international perspectives as a professional and as a citizen

Source: University of South Australia, < <http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/gradquals/>> (viewed Oct 2006)

#### **1.5 b) Provide evidence, if any, that recognition of this type of learning has led to the uptake of further learning or progression in profession?**

Of all workers in 2005, 22.6 per cent were enrolled in a formal non-school qualification programme while being employed. In that year about 5 per cent of all workers enrolled in a formal course of study had used RPL as a way to move into the course. Workers in the 20-24 year age groups were more likely than other groups to use RPL (ABS, 2005).

Historically Australians have been rewarded for relevant experience in the job market (Richardson, 2004; Ryan, 2002). Typically advertisements for non-entry-level positions will identify the type of experience for eligible applicants. Selection processes for non entry-level applicants place considerable weight on the type and length of experience in related positions or positions which have required the performance of similar types of skills. Promotions are also based on the type and amount of experience that candidates present in support of their applications. Although each firm will have their unique methods for deciding on how they will reward experience, a typical approach (generally used in larger organisations) has been to provide workers with annual salary increments, or to set down a percentage increase over a predetermined period. According to Richardson (a research economist with the National Institute of Labour Studies) an average worker will add AUD 8.50 (EUR 5) to their weekly wage for an additional year of work experience. This comprises AUD 5 (EUR 3) due to an increase in general experience and AUD 3.50 (EUR 2) for extra tenure (Richardson 2004).

#### **1.5 c) Provide evidence, if any, of recognition of this type of learning that contributes to democracy and citizenship.**

Democracy and citizenship in Australia are underpinned by the concept of respecting the contributions and capacities of individual citizens. There has been little investigation of the extent to which RPL has contributed to democracy and citizenship in Australia. We do know, however, that non-formal programmes such as learning circles and the informal learning that occurs through community efforts (e.g. environmental programmes such as landcare) and volunteering can contribute to social cohesion and active citizenship. For example, a 2003 evaluation of Adult Learning Australia's Learning Circles included programmes dealing with democracy, reconciliation and crime prevention. The evaluation found that members of the learning circles had increased their knowledge of issues and many had changed their behaviours or attitudes in response to the learning activity.

### Developing Democracy Learning Circle

A group of people in Mudgee, having worked through the Developing Democracy Learning Circle, sponsored by the Australian Government, realised they had the right and capacity to contact their local council about problems in their community. They also wrote to their federal member to air issues of national concern they had discussed during the learning circle. (*Learning Circles, A Continuing Australian Success*, ALA, 2003, p.4)

Other approaches help disenfranchised groups and new migrants to feel more engaged with the wider community and to recognise the non-formal learning taking place in youth development programmes like the Duke of Edinburgh Awards or in programmes which emphasise voluntarism and community participation. In 2000 MCEETYA endorsed a strategy to recognise the skills of people who participate in youth development programmes. A framework for recognising such skills 'Due Credit' (DEST, 2001) was also developed. This was based on the premise that the skills young people gain in such non-formal programmes may relate to the knowledge and skills gained in the formal sector, and as such should be able to attract formal recognition. The skills gained in such programmes were classified in three ways: universal youth development skills (generic skills including key competencies<sup>29</sup>, leadership, managing risk, using initiative) which are also associated with attributes like determination, resilience, a sense of service and an ethical outlook. The second set of skills relate to common youth development skills including first aid, occupational health and safety, customer service, recreation and survival and event and activity management. The third set deals with specific skills applying to specific programmes such as business planning, land restoration, and anger management.

### Victorian Qualifications Authority

Individuals from disadvantaged groups who participated in the Recognition of Informal Learning<sup>30</sup> pilot project conducted by the Victorian Qualifications Authority were able to work with assessors to identify their personal training or employment goals and then to take the initial steps to record their experience and apply for jobs or for formal courses. This activity then allowed individuals who had left school early (even before compulsory schooling age) to identify and value the life experience they had accumulated, systematically document this life experience and apply for jobs and further training.

Source: Program Officer, Recognition of Informal Learning Project

## Component 1.6: Others

**1.6 a) Provide other contextual factors or trends that you think are influential – directly or non-directly – that drive changes of institutional and technical arrangements and stakeholder behaviour concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning which have not been addressed in Component 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5.**

Currently the major driver of RPL is the wish to address skill shortages in traditional trades and certain professions. Other drivers include:

- achieving maximum flexibility in education and training for employers and individuals;
- addressing inherent barriers to more people taking up training opportunities and their transition to employment, in particular for existing workers and mature age job seekers; and
- the need for individual providers to attract students into courses.

These are to be discussed later on in the report.

<sup>29</sup> Collecting, analysing and organising information, communicating ideas and information, planning and organising activities working with others and in teams, using mathematical ideas and techniques, solving problems, and using technology.

<sup>30</sup> The RIL project was conducted with individuals who had disengaged from the workforce and from the training system.

Careers counselling in senior secondary schools has raised awareness and demand by young people and their parents to have the skills acquired in non-formal learning environments recognised in Senior Secondary Certificates of Education for future pathways (see Component 5.5).

The OECD Review of Policies for Information, Guidance and Counselling Services put the spotlight on the issues of career and life-planning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. That review included Australia (see OECD, 2002, *Review of Career Guidance Policies in Australia*) and highlighted another avenue for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning. The framework for this is the *Australian Blueprint for Career Development*, currently being trialled across the country, in various settings, including schools, industry, ACE providers, universities and TAFEs<sup>31</sup>. The *Blueprint* is based on the assumption that life, learning and work, though sometimes distinct, are not separate and are best designed (and re-designed) in harmony. It identifies and elaborates the eleven career competencies that all Australians need to build their careers. These competencies are grouped across three key areas—personal management, learning and work exploration, and career building (Miles Morgan 2003, pp. 98-99).

The contemporary nature of work, in which jobs are changing quickly and the workforce is ageing, means that career development must occur across the lifespan. In particular, there is growing awareness that it is important to increase the career literacy of older people not working in the mainstream and of the disengaged learner—those least likely to access privately available careers guidance. In Victoria, the ACE sector has been identified as one potential conduit for community-based career guidance because of its provision of second-chance learning, which can create a path back to study and work by improving English and literacy skills, developing life and business skills, exploring a change in career direction and building a career portfolio. Since 2000, the Victorian Government has given funding to the Crossroads project. In its first phase this enabled several ACE tutors to undertake career guidance training and then to establish career and life planning services. In 2003 a second phase introduced the concept of career development to over 100 ACE providers around the state. Much of the guidance offered under the Crossroads project involves helping clients to recognise the skills and aptitudes they have gained through life experience and to identify potential learning pathways<sup>32</sup>.

**1.6 b) Provide historical backgrounds concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning in your country.**

See Components 2.1a, 2.1d, and 3.1e.

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<sup>31</sup> See <http://www.milesmorgan.com.au/projects/abcd>

<sup>32</sup> See <http://www.morrisonhouse.org/crossroads/>



## Component 2 – Description of institutional arrangements

The Australian Constitution deems that States and Territories have responsibility for the regulation and delivery of education and training within their borders.

The two quality assurance pillars of the national training system are the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) and Training Packages<sup>33</sup>. The AQTF was collaboratively developed by Australian governments to ensure national recognition of qualifications and the quality and national consistency in the delivery of training and issue of qualifications by registered training organisations (RTOs) (see components 1.1a and 2.1c). This is underpinned by the Australian Qualifications Framework and legislation enacted in each State and Territory giving effect to the AQTF. The AQTF enables individuals to have national recognition and portability of the national qualifications and statements of attainment they are awarded.

A key element of the national quality assurance framework for higher education is the *National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes* (the 'National Protocols'). They protect the standing of Australian higher education nationally and internationally by assuring students and the community that higher education institutions in Australia have met identified criteria and are subject to appropriate government regulation. This is also underpinned by the AQF and legislation in each State and Territory.

### Component 2.1: Political and legal framework

#### **2.1 a) Describe, if any, clear political will or statements and policy responses in your country on lifelong learning which are explicitly linked to recognition of non-formal and informal learning.**

The recognition of non-formal and informal learning is a major platform of the Australian approach to lifelong learning. As early as 1996 the former National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET, 1996) in its advice to the then Australian Government Minister for Schools, Vocational Education and Training, stated its belief that 'a key objective of all education and training sectors should be to assist the development of lifelong learning skills and the ability of people to be self-directed learners throughout their lives' (p5). NBEET also noted that the 'recognition of informal learning has a strong connection with lifelong learning because of the potential for enabling people who have gained significant skills through means other than formal education, to have these skills recognised and to access formal training opportunities' (p16). The adult and community education sector was also reported to be firmly of the belief that all 'learning was worthy and capable of gaining recognition and credit, regardless of when, where and how it is undertaken' (NBEET, p16).

Since that time MCEETYA endorsed the need to adopt a national set of principles and guidelines for RPL. The Australian Qualifications Framework Advisory Board (AQFAB) (2004) developed a set of *National Principles and Operational Guidelines* for the recognition of prior learning to provide advice at the national level about RPL, and to guide the four sectors of post-compulsory education and training to develop RPL policies and procedures.

In March 2006 the Victorian State Government launched its 'Maintaining the Advantage' strategy allocating a total of AUD 241.47 million (EUR 145 million) to implement strategies aimed at

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<sup>33</sup> See [http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/training\\_skills/policy\\_issues\\_reviews/key\\_issues/nts/aqtf/what.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/training_skills/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/nts/aqtf/what.htm)

'providing good jobs and better outcomes for Victoria through investment in quality education and training opportunities' (Victorian Government, 2006). This strategy also allocated funds to the establishment of 13 Skills Stores to assist with RPL.

#### RPL Well-Done Forums

In view of the requirement for VET providers to offer RPL services, the Australian governments funded 'Reframing the Future' programme<sup>34</sup> 'RPL-Well Done' forums were held across the nation in Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Perth in 2006. The aim of these forums was to provide opportunities for VET providers and industry to increase their understanding of RPL and to share examples of good practice. Participants used a process of 'appreciative inquiry' to identify good practice and to develop plans for the future. The forums concluded with the establishment of nine voluntary 'innovative teams' with individuals promising to work with their particular team to progress the uptake of RPL in their particular organisations. The end result would be the sharing of information gained across the teams at a national conference to be held in Sydney towards the end of 2006.

Source: RPL Well Done Forum, Adelaide, 2006

**2.1 b) Do you have legal regulatory frameworks concerning recognition of non-formal and informal learning? Please state – yes, under development/discussion, or no. For those who answered 'No', describe possible reasons for the inexistence as well as possible future prospects. For those who answered 'yes' or 'under development/discussion', please answer to the following questions.**

A set of *National Principles and Operational Guidelines* for RPL which applies to all sectors of post-compulsory education and training (senior secondary education, adult and community education, VET and higher education) has been developed by the AQFAB (2004) and endorsed by Ministers and the stakeholders represented on the Advisory Board. However, these principles and guidelines are non-prescriptive, providing only guidance on the application of RPL across the education and training sectors.

There is no universal approach to the application of RPL in post-secondary education in Australia. However, in South Australia the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia Act 1983, as amended in 1992, defines a function of the Board to recognise the experience of a student towards the prescribed requirement for completion of the senior secondary certificate (s.15 (1) (e)).

In the VET sector the AQTF requires RPL to be offered to students on enrolment and for RPL to be treated like any other assessment (see Component 2.1c). As previously noted the AQTF is underpinned by legislation enacted in each State and Territory.

**2.1 c) Describe the aim(s) and principles stated in the framework?**

The AQTF comprises Standards for RTOs and Standards for State and Territory Registering/Course Accrediting Bodies in the VET sector. Standards 6, 7, 8, and 9 deal specifically with RPL processes and Standard 1 addresses the need for RTOs to develop policies (which include assessment policies of which RPL forms a part).

- Standard 6 requires RTOs to inform clients of RPL arrangements prior to enrolment;
- Standard 7 refers to the competencies of staff who are to be engaged in assessments (including RPL);

<sup>34</sup>RFF provides professional development activities for the VTE sector and industry.

- Standard 8 states that the RTO must ensure that RPL is made available to all clients on enrolment, and that the RTO must have an RPL process that ‘minimises the time and cost to applicants’ and ‘provides adequate information, support and opportunities to engage in the RPL process’; and
- Standard 9 refers to the quality assurance of assessments. This means that RPL assessments are subject to the same monitoring and evaluation as other forms of assessment. Assessors must make sure that the evidence is ‘authentic, valid, reliable, current and sufficient’.

### National Principles and Operational Guidelines for RPL

The AQF provides the agreed framework for designing, developing and issuing recognised qualifications within Australia. The AQF sets out the qualification standard upon which RPL relies for its credibility with each qualification guideline providing for an (RPL) pathway. The AQF aims to provide nationally consistent recognition of outcomes achieved in post-compulsory education; and to assist with developing flexible pathways to enable people to move more easily within, and between the education and training sectors and between those sectors and employment by providing the basis for RPL and credit transfer.

The *National Principles and Operational Guidelines* for the Recognition of Prior Learning (AQFAB, 2004) were established to provide guidance on the application of RPL across the various sectors. They are a set of non-prescriptive statements which recognise the diversity of approaches to RPL, and aim to encourage national consistency of application through sharing and facilitating good practice across sectors and jurisdictions’. They also aim to address issues identified by government for the monitoring of key indicators including:

- parity of esteem for qualifications gained fully or partly through RPL assessment;
- cost efficiencies (to taxpayers and individual candidates) of RPL funding arrangements; and
- accessibility of good RPL assessment models

More specifically they address the following issues.

- Institutions and providers awarding AQF qualifications are urged to develop RPL policies and processes which enable individuals to claim recognition for any prior informal and non-formal learning relevant to the learning or competency outcomes of a particular subject, unit, course or qualification. There should be opportunities to access RPL for disadvantaged learners who may be currently out of, or marginally attached to, the workforce, and not in education or training.
- RPL assessments should be evidence-based, and conducted in ways which are equitable, culturally inclusive, fair, flexible, valid and reliable. Processes should be timely, fair, transparent, and cost efficient for the individual candidate.
- RPL assessment processes should be of a comparable standard as those used to deliver and assess the qualification in formal education and training pathways. Quality assurance procedures should make specific mention of RPL and that it is subject to the same validation and monitoring requirements as other assessments. Judgements should be accountable and transparent and subject to appeal and review.
- RPL information and support services should be actively promoted and made available to employers of students and potential students. Employers should be provided with information about the benefits of RPL for their business and encouraged to support their employees in taking up opportunities for RPL. Students with information and guidance about how to go about applying for RPL, the type of evidence that can be used, and guidelines as to what is considered to be ‘sufficient and valid’.
- Like all assessments RPL assessments should be conducted by lecturers, teachers or assessors, with specific content knowledge, skill and expertise in the area of RPL policies and procedures.

Source: National Principles and Operational Guidelines for Recognition of Prior Learning < <http://www.aqf.edu.au/rpl.htm>>

**2.1 d) Describe the historical background against which this issue has been taken up. What are the most important drivers of legislation? If there has been already reform of the legislation, describe the change and the pressure which made the change.**

The early historical background of what has driven the implementation of RPL, especially in the VET sector has been provided in Component 3. More recently the major driver of renewed attempts to increase the uptake of RPL has been driven by COAG in its agreements with States and Territories. This is in response to the environment of skill shortages where RPL is seen as one way to increase the numbers of skilled and qualified tradespeople.

In another section of this report we have referred to the processes being used by Queensland and Western Australia to address the problem of skill shortages through the use of RPL. A number of other states are also hoping to address the COAG initiatives by using a similar referral service model. For example, Victoria is looking to establish 'skills stores' based on the Skilling Solutions Shopfronts used in Queensland (to be discussed later in the report). Here intending students will come in to a store to get advice about whether or not their skills or experience will map to a specific qualification area. If it appears that there is sufficient evidence for making a claim for RPL, the client is referred to an RTO for formal assessment.

South Australia is also aiming to build the capacity of the South Australian system to deliver high quality RPL services for enterprises and individuals. It will also commence by targeting occupations and client groups and trial processes with a number of pilot RTOs. As already noted the Training and Skills Development Act 2003 (part 5, section 49) enables the issuing of qualifications or statements of competency based on recognition processes.

**2.1 e) What areas of competencies do governments have or intend to have? Are there any specific areas that are/ to be regulated by law or by social partners for professional recognition?**

There is no national legal framework but States and Territories do have laws regulating some professions and trades.

**2.1 f) Describe, if any, operational systems to put the legal framework into practice. Who set up the system(s)?**

No universal legal framework. See Components 1.2a and 1.4d and Appendix A.

**2.1 g) Provide information, if it exists, for any evaluation of how they work or how they have not worked.**

None.

**2.1 h) Describe outreach activities or awareness-raising activities of the framework or the operational systems. How are the objectives of outreach/awareness-raising activities articulated? Which audience(s) do the activities mainly target?**

RPL is a major focus in the capacity building of RTOs. South Australia and Queensland have been involved in a national project to develop resources to help RTOs implement RPL. Brochures have been published and made available to workers and employers to encourage them to seek access to RPL. In addition workshops have also been provided nationally on the delivery of RPL and on

the promotion of RPL. The ‘resource generator’ discussed later in the report (see Component 4.2c) has been developed to help lecturers access information on RPL. The Quality Directorate in South Australia runs RPL workshops as part of its strategy for capacity building in RPL. These workshops have also been provided for other government departments.

## Component 2.2: Governance and the role of government

**2.2 a) List all actors in governance and create a matrix of who (e.g. government, quasi-government, assessment centres, public educational institutions, private for-profit education providers, professional bodies, etc.) does what (provides academic/professional recognition, overseas assessment, etc.) for non-formal and informal learning. If there are more than one body who are responsible for an action (e.g. recognition), list all actors involved and describe how is the coordination managed? If there are more than one ministry of a government involved, specify which ministries have competencies for what. How clear are the different roles by different actors communicated among themselves as well as to users?**

See Table 13 below.

**2.2 b) Create the above same matrix for recognition of formal learning for comparative purposes.**

**Table 13: List of who does what for non-formal and informal learning and recognition of such learning, and who does what for formal and recognition of such learning**

'Who'	'What' in terms of recognition of informal and non-formal learning	'What' in terms of formal learning
Council of Australian Governments (COAG)	Initiates policy reform to underpin a national approach to skills recognition to provide a more flexible and responsive training system	Initiates, develops and monitors the implementation of policy reforms that are of national significance and which require cooperative action by Australian governments i.e. new national approach to apprenticeships, training and skills recognition, the Human Capital reform agenda, health workforce reform
Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA)	Endorsed AQF National Principles and Operational Guidelines for RPL	Provides coordination of strategic policy at the national level, negotiation and development of national agreements on shared objectives and interests (including principles for Australian Government/State relations) in the Council's areas of responsibility, negotiations on scope and format of national reporting on areas of responsibility, sharing of information and collaborative use of resources towards agreed objectives and priorities, and coordination of communication with, and collaboration between, related national structures.
Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education (MCVTE)	Endorses amendments to the AQTF	Overall responsibility for the National Training System, including strategic policy, priority setting, planning and performance as well as cross-sectoral issues impacting on the training system, such as skills forecasting and workforce planning (including skills needs)
Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST)	National policy leadership role, shared funding with States and Territories, taking the lead with the State/Territory governments on COAG initiative to streamline RPL processes for skills acquired on-the-job	National policy leadership role promoting national consistency and coherence in education and training, shared funding with States and Territories. Main source of funding for higher education and

	Negotiates funding (purchase) agreements with States and Territories for VET	negotiates funding (purchase) agreements with States and Territories for VET. Acts as the Australian National Information Centre on Australian education under the Lisbon Convention. development of country education profiles, guidelines on comparability of overseas qualifications, policy to government on qualification assessment issues, advice and assessment service for education providers and assessing authorities on recognition of academic qualifications Approves assessing authorities for the assessment of the skills of professionals
Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) <sup>35</sup>	Policy, legislation relating to migration and issuing of visas.	Policy, legislation relating to migration, issuing of visas, providing settlement services like basic language training
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR)	Compiling and maintaining the Migration Occupations in Demand List (MODL), and skilled occupations list, maintaining list of skill shortages, and skills vacancy index. Conducting skills recognition assessments for migrants and for domestic workers. Helping jobseekers identify skills	Recognising formal trade qualifications Referring clients to formal training Identifying the occupations and specialisations to be included on the MODL. Maintaining list of skill shortages and skills vacancy. Helping job seekers identify employability skills.
Trade recognition bodies (DEWR agency)	Assessment of overseas and domestic skills and experience in the traditional trades	Recognition of overseas trade qualifications
VETASSESS	Conducts RPL assessments for domestic workers	Pre-migration assessing authority for generalist overseas professional qualifications and trade qualifications that fall outside traditional trade area
State and Territory Overseas Qualification units		Recognition of overseas qualifications for permanent residents of Australia
State and Territory departments of education and training	Development of RPL policies and strategy, enacting legislation, funding and quality assuring RPL assessment processes	Development of education and training policy, enacting legislation and administration of schooling, VET and higher education (non-self-accrediting) sectors Quality assurance arrangements, shared funding with the Australian Government (main source of funding for schools and VET)
Australian Qualifications Framework Advisory Board (AQFAB)	Develops and disseminates National Principles and Operational Guidelines for RPL.	Promotes, monitors and maintains the Australian Qualifications Framework for all post-compulsory education and training including qualification titles and guidelines
National Quality Council (NQC)	Advising MCVTE on the endorsement of Training Packages and other quality assurance arrangements under the National Skills Framework including the AQTF against which RPL is aligned/implemented and RTOs are registered and audited-to ensure national consistency	Advising MCVTE on the endorsement of Training Packages and other quality assurance arrangements under the National Skills Framework to ensure the quality and national consistency of qualifications and the delivery of training in the national training system.
National Industry Skills Committee (NISC)	Ensures the national training system is meeting the training needs of industry.	Provides strategic advice to MCVTE on workforce planning, future training priorities and other critical issues facing the national training system
State and Territory qualifications/registration and accreditation authorities	Undertakes recognition/registration and audit of provider's compliance with AQTF (VET providers)	Undertakes recognition/registration and audit of provider's compliance with AQTF and the National Protocols for HE Approval Processes, accreditation of courses

<sup>35</sup> The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) is now called the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

Assessment Centres	Assessment of skills and knowledge (RPL) and certification of VET qualifications	Receiving and processing applications for admissions
Public, private, enterprise and community RTOs	Assessment of skills and knowledge (RPL) and certification of VET qualifications	Accredited VET courses are authorised by State/Territory accreditation authorities. Undertake assessment and issuing VET qualifications
Public and private universities and higher education institutions	Assessment of relevant existing worklife experience and knowledge (RPL) and awarding of advanced standing or credit based on these in higher education qualifications	Self-accrediting higher education institutions (mainly universities) authorised to set standards for HE qualifications. Other higher education providers have courses accredited by State/Territory accreditation authorities. Undertake assessment and issue qualifications.
Community organisations, organisations providing specific non-formal training	Conducting their own assessments and issuing certificates and awards	Delivering and developing activity programmes and examinations for their particular organisation

**2.2 c) Describe the competencies (direct and indirect role) of government in the practice? Which of the following three models would your country be classified with respect to governance: 1) a ‘predominance-of-industry’ model; 2) a ‘predominance-of-public authorities’ model’; and 3) a ‘shared responsibility’ model\*. Explain why that model fits into your country context. If there is a trend to shift to another model, describe driving forces for such change. Describe the details. If none of which is suitable to your country, describe your own country model.**

RPL comes under the same governance arrangements as do other forms of assessment in the VET sector and the higher education sector. The Australian approach to the governance of RPL is a ‘shared responsibility’ model. In the VET sector the government shares responsibility with industry. Industry is responsible for developing and reviewing Training Packages which identify the competency standards that must be met, and the qualifications that are available. Government endorses these, provides funding, and undertakes the quality assurance role through AQTF arrangements.

Universities and other self-accrediting higher education institutions are established by, or under relevant State, Territory and Australian Government legislation and have authority to accredit their own courses and maintain academic standards. Higher education qualifications offered by other higher education institutions are accredited by the various State and Territory higher education authorities who also formally approve and audit the providers. Within individual institutions, departments will determine the extent to which they will recognise prior learning. The AUQA has responsibility for reviewing, through audits, universities and other self-accrediting higher education institutions, and State and Territory higher education authorities<sup>36</sup>.

**2.2 d) Describe, if any, inter-ministerial approaches to the issue? Describe also the policy objectives behind such approaches as well as positive results and challenges to date.**

Different government ministries at the national, state and territory level are involved in various ways in issues which affect the application RPL for migrants and for residents. The Australian Government Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA)<sup>37</sup> is responsible for

<sup>36</sup>Universities are ‘self-accrediting’; that is, they are authorised to accredit their own courses and are responsible for their academic standards. They must have appropriate quality assurance processes in place, including peer assessment processes, external examination of higher degrees and the involvement of professional bodies in the accreditation of particular courses. Reflecting particular historical circumstances, there are also a small number of self-accrediting higher education institutions which are not universities.

<sup>37</sup> The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) is now called the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

administering the migration programmes and as such it determines the extent to which the experience and knowledge of migrants will attract points required for issuing visas. However, DEWR will determine the extent to which certain occupations are in demand and will identify these on the MODL. Information from DEWR will also help to develop the 'Skilled Occupation List' (SOL) which identifies the maximum number of skills that an intending migrant can claim for certain skills and qualifications.

DEST administers national policies which apply to the recognition of skills and qualifications. It is also responsible for endorsing national training and assessment policy which includes RPL. State and Territory authorities dealing with employment and training administer local arrangements regarding funding of RPL assessments. State and Territory governments also play a significant role in addressing skills recognition issues.

The Skills Recognition Support Services Unit in South Australia represents a collaboration between the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology (DFEEST) and DIMA<sup>38</sup>, to provide a one-stop shop for providing migrants with employment and settlement information and assistance, and overseas qualifications assessment.

South Australia has established a trades recognition process which enables individuals who have the experience and skills to work as a tradesperson but may not have the recognised trade certificate or Certificate of Competency to have their skills and knowledge assessed and recognised. Assessment panels made up of employee representatives and industry stakeholders will assess the skills and experience and qualifications that are presented for the issuing of a Certificate of Recognition.

The Trades Recognition Support Services Unit in South Australia provides services to help Australians, new migrants, and temporary residents with permission to work in Australia to have their qualifications and/or skills and experience recognised. Typically individuals, who have been working in a trade-related occupation or an occupation that allowed the individual to develop trade-related skills without formal trade qualifications, will be helped to apply for a Certificate of Recognition. If they need further training to be able to satisfy the requirements of such a certificate the unit will also provide them with advice about how they can access this training.

New South Wales has a similar process in place. The New South Wales Department of Education and Training will issue a Certificate of Proficiency for those who have been working in a trade for at least 4 years, have gained industry experience and have been awarded a relevant qualification by a RTO. It will issue a craft certificate if the applicant can satisfy the Vocational Training Tribunal that he/she has gained relevant experience but not been awarded a relevant qualification by a RTO.

The Northern Territory in connection with the Australian Government have made grants of AUD 40,000 (EUR 24,078) available for RTOs and industry advisory bodies to conduct RPL projects. These projects are to assist RTOs and assessment centres to offer 'streamlined and readily available skills assessment and recognition and assist individuals and employers to be better informed about RPL' (NT Department of Employment, Education and Training 2006).

Funding under the Strategic Priorities Programme in the Australian Capital Territory is designed to develop opportunities for people from priority groups and provide training in priority industry areas.

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<sup>38</sup> The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) is now called the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

## Component 2.3: Resources

- 2.3 a) *Who is/are the financing body(ies) for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning? What is the policy thinking behind such financing? What is the annual budget 2004/2005? (Please convert to Euro.) Provide data, if possible, on the breakdown of how the budget has been spent.***
- 2.3 b) *If the system has existed for some years, please provide the budget data since it existed. Has there been any increase/decrease of budget for recognition of non-formal and informal learning since a framework/system has been taken up? If so, describe any elements that have driven such change.***
- 2.3 c) *Who pays for the assessment and recognition processes? If an individual is to pay, how much is it cost to him/her? Break down the costs by levels assessed or by types of subjects assessed, if relevant. Are there any cost-sharing arrangements between educational institutions and employers, between education institutions and government, etc.? Describe the costs arrangements.***

In general, the cost of RPL to a VET institution is subsidised by the relevant State Government (see table 14). However, in practice, the amount of subsidy rarely covers all of the direct and indirect costs to the institution. Some institutions carry all of the additional costs themselves, while others pass some of the differential on to the applicant. It should be noted that applying for RPL can sometimes impose significant indirect costs on applicants for such expenses as transport, photocopying, and communication.

In practice, charging for RPL generally follows one of three approaches: a 'flat rate' fee (typically AUD 200 (EUR 120)); a percentage of the calculated cost for RPL (typically either 50 per cent or 100 per cent); or a charge per nominal hour of the programme for which RPL is sought (typically around AUD 1.00 (EUR 0.6) per hour). This latter method accommodates the varying length of programmes without creating undue complexity for either the provider or the prospective student.

There are some significant differences in the approach to when RPL can be sought and thus a fee applied. In some cases, RPL is sought and paid for prior to enrolment with the student subsequently enrolling only in those subjects for which RPL has not been granted. However, in most cases the prospective student must initially enrol in the desired programme or award, and pay 'normal' enrolment charges, before RPL can be sought. In these situations, a common practice is not to charge for RPL, but to charge the student the normal enrolment fee for each subject, irrespective of whether it is taught or exempted through RPL.

Most states do not differentiate RPL fees on the basis of the level of the award. Nevertheless, some assessment centres do have a sliding scale of charges for different award levels, generally with the charge increasing – sometimes quite significantly – the higher the award on the AQF.

**Table 14: Resourcing RPL in VET by state and territory**

State and Territory	Approach to RPL	Fees and charges
New South Wales	RPL funded at a discounted rate. Targets are set. Penalties apply if targets not met.	Providers determine charges for RPL
Victoria	<p>No differentiation between RPL and other assessments.</p> <p>Private providers delivering User Choice programmes funded according to time taken to conduct RPL assessments.</p> <p>Other fee-for-service training receive no resources for RPL</p> <p>Students will pay normal enrolment fee and the cost of RPL is covered by the claiming of institutions of full nominal hours</p> <p>In 2006 funding RPL for apprentices and trainees' training – private providers are funded 8 hours maximum per unit of competency. Victoria currently does not fund non-apprentices or trainees.</p> <p>In 2007, Victoria will pay up to the nominal hours per unit of competency. Nominal hours per unit of competency are published in the purchasing guide.</p>	<p>Providers must charge no more than the actual cost of RPL assessment.</p> <p>Institutions are at liberty to charge their own fees</p>
Queensland	<p>No differentiation between RPL and other assessment pathways. TAFEs funded for full nominal hours. User Choice programmes funded for full nominal hours.</p> <p>Other programmes to offset costs.</p> <p>Skills First scholarship distributed through Skilling Solutions Queensland - AUD200 (EUR 120) offset of participant charge – can be used with regulated or fee-for-service programmes delivered by RTOs contracted for this specific service.</p> <p>Skills First Apprenticeship Programme – up front assessment service to skilled individuals intending to become supervisors of apprentices or to complete apprenticeship through User Choice funded programme.</p>	Charge AUD 1.10 (EUR 0.7) per nominal hour for government funded programmes.
Western Australia	RPL funded at standard rate applicable to funding agreement for full nominal hours	Set at same rate as tuition fees rate
South Australia	TAFEs are granted full nominal hour fee for RPL. User Choice RPL funded at 50 per cent of funding price. No funding for existing workers or contracted training	<p>Providers may charge 50 per cent of RPL delivery fee</p> <p>Fee-for-Service programmes TAFE can determine charges</p> <p>User Choice: Providers charge AUD1.00 (EUR 0.6) per nominal hour, may not relate to RPL</p>
Tasmania	No differentiation between RPL and other assessments. RPL is fully funded in accordance with relevant contractual arrangements.	No guidelines as to fees and charges
Northern Territory	A Registered Training Organisation that has a Resource Agreement with the Northern Territory Department of Employment, Education and Training (NT DEET) to deliver VET may utilise its allocated annual hours curriculum (AHC) for RPL under the General Recurrent Programme at 100 per cent of the nominal AHC rate.	Providers determine fees and charges
Australian Capital Territory	Fully funded with TAFE provider (provides 100 per cent of cost of RPL measured in nominal hours). User Choice programmes have AUD 200 (EUR 120) for qualification for RPL. 50 per cent of cost of programme for other programmes	Providers determine fees and charges

**2.3 d) How many assessment centres and/or assessors exist to date, if any? Where are such assessment centres located? Please specify the areas/regions with characteristics of such areas/regions (e.g. the average income, the income disparity, etc.) How was the decision made where to locate such centers? How much does it cost to maintain such centres and/or assessors? How many training programmes exist: specify how many in a given year, if there are significant increases per year? How much does it cost to train such assessors? Break down by levels assessed, if relevant.**

A variety of bodies provide assessment services in Australia. These include:

- RTOs registered to provide both VET training and assessment activities;
- RTOs registered to provide assessment-only services;
- private agencies and individuals that specialise in RPL and workplace assessments;
- universities and other higher education institutions;
- professional associations, and/or assessing authorities, registration and licensing bodies;
- private training providers and assessment centres who deliver their own specific industry or vendor qualifications; and
- national and international organisations delivering specific performance and community service programmes (for example, Trinity College London, St. Johns Ambulance, etc.).

At present there are 4,200 providers registered as RTOs under the AQTF. There are currently no national databases of assessors but under the AQTF providers must maintain records of their trainers and assessors for audit purposes. Nevertheless, by 2005 there were 13,317 Australians who had completed either the Certificate IV in Assessment and Workplace Training, or its replacement the Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. In 1999 there were 1,738 Australians with such qualifications. These qualifications are the basic qualifications for workplace assessors.

In Australia there are currently 37 public universities, 2 private universities, 1 branch of an overseas university, 4 self-accrediting institutions and over 150 other non self-accrediting higher education providers with authority to offer courses leading to awards such as Bachelor and Masters Degrees or higher. These non self-accrediting higher education providers offer courses which are approved by State and Territory accreditation authorities as meeting the standards which apply to the granting of such awards. Thus, it is difficult to determine the exact number of assessors across Australia.

## Assessing authorities

An example of the variety of ‘assessing authorities’ in Australia to recognise, certify and assess the skills and qualifications of those wishing to come to Australia as skilled migrants in various professional, para-professional and trade occupations is provided below. A number of these organisations also provide assessment and recognition services for domestic candidates.

**Table 15: Examples of assessing authorities in Australia**

Organisation Name	Organisation Name	Organisation Name
Architects Accreditation Council	Australian Nursing and Midwifery Council	Institute of Engineers
Australian Association of Social Workers	Australian and New Zealand Society of Nuclear Medicine Incorporated (Accreditation Board)	Institute of Surveyors
Australian Council of Physiotherapy	Australasian Podiatry Society	National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters
Australian Computer Society	Australian Pharmacy Examining Council Inc	National Institute of Accountants
Australian Dental Council	Australian Psychological Society	
Australian Institute of Management	Australian Veterinary Boards Council Inc	Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand
Australian Institute of Medical Scientists	Civil Aviation Society	State Chiropractors/Osteopaths Registration Boards
Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors	Council of Occupational Therapists Registration Board Inc	State Legal Authorities
Australian Institute of Radiography	Certified Practising Accountants	Speech Pathology Association of Australia
Australian Institute of Welfare and Community Workers	Dietitians Association of Australia	Trades Recognition Australia
Australian Maritime Safety Authority	Institute of Chartered Accountants of Australia	Vocational Education and Training Assessment Services

## Location of assessment centres

Education and training institutions, government agencies and community providers will customise programmes and services to suit the needs of local clients.

For example, the ‘Skilling Solutions’ strategy already discussed for Queensland is being rolled out in four major phases, in areas of high unemployment. The first four centres have been located in areas where the unemployment rate is 15.1 per cent. Stage 2 will locate centres in areas where the unemployment rate ranges between 15.3 per cent and 15.8 per cent. Stage 3 will locate centres in areas where the unemployment rate ranges between 15.1 per cent and 21.7 per cent. Stage 4 will locate centres in areas where the unemployment rate ranges from 15.1 per cent and 20.1 per cent.

Although the main campuses of major VET providers will be found in city, metropolitan, or major regional areas, they continue to service less populated areas either by maintaining a small physical presence in these areas or sending staff to remote locations to conduct training and assessment. In addition, it is possible for students to access training and assessment via distance learning including online learning methods. In some states, namely New South Wales and Queensland there are RTOs with a specific mandate to provide distance learning. Originally established to provide access to people in regional and rural areas, these institutions cater for all clients who choose this form of education rather than the traditional face-to-face approach.

The older universities (represented by the Group of Eight<sup>39</sup>) have their main campuses in the capital cities or suburbs, and often have a branch in regional or country areas. They too allow students to undertake programmes by distance education. Assessments on institutional campuses will follow similar procedures. For distance students in remote areas assessments may be supervised by approved examiners acting on behalf of the university. Online assessments are also available.

## Component 2.4: Others

### **2.4 a) Provide any other institutional arrangements that you think are the most important characteristics that exist in your country, which have not been addressed in above Component 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3.**

The recognition of prior learning no matter how, when or where it has been attained underpins the Australian approach to RPL assessment for nationally recognised VET qualifications. This learning must be relevant to the qualifications sought, and must be assessed to a similar standard as learning that is acquired through formal programmes of training or study. Although RTOs in the VET sector are bound by the AQTF to provide RPL options and information to clients, there is no such national requirement in higher education institutions, or other training or assessment service providers. Nevertheless, many higher education institutions have policies in place to recognise the prior learning of individuals.

There is a diversity of approaches to RPL being used across and within education and training institutions and community organisations and government agencies. In addition, human resources and training departments will use their own particular approaches to recognise the prior learning and experience of external and internal applicants for jobs.

In some VET institutions there are staff members allocated to coordinate or to conduct all RPL activities for a particular programme. In other places there is a unit that will be responsible for all RPL assessments, while in others it is part of a teacher's regular workload. Formal application processes for recognition co-exist with informal approaches where the student is exempted from certain parts of a course.

Assessors are required to conduct RPL assessments in a timely, fair, transparent, valid and reliable manner. The timing of a request becomes an important determinant of whether the learning is assessed as part of a formal programme or as part of informal or non-formal learning. For example, request for skills and knowledge gained through experience in work, short non-school courses, and community activities, can only come under the umbrella of RPL if it is used to gain admission or advanced standing towards a course. Once these activities are part of a formal course (for example, work experience programmes) then they must be treated as part of the formal programme. In addition, there are experiences that are acquired in informal and non-formal settings within formal educational environments.

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<sup>39</sup> <http://www.go8.edu.au>



## Component 3 – Description of technical arrangements

### Component 3.1: Qualifications, qualification systems, qualification framework

**3.1 a) What term does your country use for ‘Recognition of non-formal and informal learning’? Please provide the original term in your own language as well as the literally translated term in English. Please describe if the term has certain connotations, implications, specific associations, etc.**

The term used in Australia is ‘recognition of prior learning (RPL)’, with the key notion being that RPL involves the assessment of previously unrecognised skills and knowledge an individual has achieved outside the formal education and training system to determine admission or to grant credit for a component of or a whole course. RPL assesses this unrecognised learning against the requirements of a qualification, in respect of both entry requirements and outcomes to be achieved. By removing the need for duplication of learning, RPL encourages individuals to continue upgrading their skills and knowledge through structured education and training towards formal qualifications and improved employment outcomes.

RPL is an assessment process that assesses the *individual's* non-formal and informal learning to determine the extent to which that individual has achieved the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification.

There are also specific definitions, which espouse similar principles that have been outlined in the AQTF Standards for Registered Training Organisations in the VET sector. Here RPL is defined as the: ‘recognition of competencies currently held, regardless of how, when or where the learning occurred. RPL assesses the individual’s prior learning to determine the extent to which that individual is currently competent against the required learning outcomes, competency outcomes, or standards for entry to, and/or partial or total completion of, a qualification’ (DEST, 2005a, AQTF Standards for RTOs p.17). The AQTF definition not only refers to recognition of informal and non-formal learning but also to the recognition of learning that has occurred in formal programmes.

Evidence may take a variety of forms and include certification, references from past employers, testimonials from clients and work samples. The assessor must ensure that the evidence is authentic, valid, reliable, current and sufficient. In addition, assessments including RPL assessments should only use the English literacy and language or numeracy skills that are intrinsic to the learning competency outcomes for the course. They should be culturally inclusive and flexible so that students may choose how they go about showing that they have acquired the required competencies or learning outcomes.

RPL does not only provide recognition of skills and experience for qualifications. It is also used in the assessment of a candidate’s suitability for positions, promotions or awards. It is practised in a variety of ways, depending on the learner’s needs and objectives. The two major approaches can be described as:

- the developmental model where RPL is used to help students integrate learning they have obtained outside a formal educational setting with their learning inside this setting and to improve their outcomes. The developmental model is generally used in senior secondary schools and in adult and community education;
- the credentialing model, common in the higher education and vocational training sectors, which uses RPL to lead to the partial or full completion of credentials. (Note that while it is possible to acquire full qualifications in the VET sector through RPL processes this is not the case for the higher education sector.)

**3.1 b) Describe if recognising of non-formal and informal learning is linked to qualifications, qualification systems, or qualifications framework in your country. Provide data, if any, on the impact of such linkages.**

See Component 2.1c. RPL is intrinsically linked to nationally recognised qualifications available under the AQF. The framework is structured to provide opportunities for people to move freely within and between the schools, VET and higher education sectors and between the sectors and employment. The guidelines for each of the AQF qualifications provide a basis for the recognition of prior learning obtained in work and life experience in Australia and overseas. This arrangement 'keeps the system of qualifications open to recognition of the value of learning achieved outside the formal system, as part of everyday living in a continuum of learning throughout one's life' (AQFAB, 2004).

For both VET and higher education qualifications, RPL can be used to satisfy entry criteria. In the VET sector it is possible to achieve a full qualification through the RPL pathway. This is for two reasons:

- VET qualifications are based on units of competence related to performance in employment so it is possible to gain all the required skills and knowledge from non-formal and informal workplace experience; and
- the national standardisation of units of competence means that the requirements for assessment are the same irrespective of the particular RTO responsible for the assessment and issuance of the qualification.

Conversely, because the academic knowledge and skills required by higher education qualifications are less likely to be acquired on the basis of non-formal and informal learning, and because there is no national standardisation of the subjects or units to be assessed—apart from the core requirements of the professional bodies where this is relevant—individual institutions regard a certain proportion of learning as particular to the institution 'name' and not eligible for RPL. Therefore, it may follow that the more prestigious the institution, the less RPL credit is granted. RPL is a particularly useful aspect of the VET competency-based system of qualifications in a context of skill shortages in traditional trades by enabling existing workers with specific industry expertise and experience to acquire trade qualifications. To this end, particular State and Territory governments (namely Queensland, New South Wales, Tasmania and Western Australia)<sup>40</sup> have adopted specific 'accelerated apprenticeship' programmes to fast-track the completion of trade qualifications on the basis of the non-formal and informal learning of existing experienced workers. See also the Skills for the Future initiative (Component 1.4a).

While it is possible for full VET qualifications to be gained via RPL, in practice it is more common that there are gaps that must be addressed through some form of training to reflect current practices. Where existing workers (especially in the mining towns of rural and regional Australia) have been identified for acceleration through apprenticeships, they have often been required to undertake gap training through self-paced learning processes, for example to improve their literacy skills. (West Australian Chamber of Minerals and Industry, 2006). Self-paced learning is often associated with RPL in that it builds upon learning abilities independent of an institutional environment.

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<sup>40</sup> Tradestart at TAFE is the New South Wales programme, TradesExpress is the Western Australian and Tasmanian programme. Western Australia and Queensland have also an 'accelerated apprenticeships' programme.

**3.1 c) What kinds of qualifications (e.g. certificates, diplomas, degrees, licenses, etc.) are more linked to recognition of non-formal and informal learning? What are the difficulties or obstacles in linking recognition of non-formal and informal learning to qualification framework?**

For the reasons given in the previous section, VET qualifications—Certificates I-IV, Diploma and Advanced Diploma—are more linked to RPL than higher education qualifications, with one important exception. The higher education Graduate Certificate is quite commonly accessed on the basis of a significant period of work experience by which the candidate is able to demonstrate potential to undertake study at a graduate level. The RPL pathway is more closely linked to the Graduate Certificate because, like the VET qualifications, it is focused on preparation for professional practice and is less reliant on academic learning. This award provides a second-chance opportunity for experienced practitioners to develop the academic skills required for further career progression and higher degrees, and is an important alternative pathway to higher degrees in the overall qualifications system.

Related to this, two new higher level VET qualifications have been added in the past year to the qualifications system, the Vocational Graduate Certificate and Vocational Graduate Diploma. Like the other VET qualifications, these qualifications may be entered and partly or wholly achieved on the basis of recognition of non-formal and informal learning. As the academic discipline base in higher education becomes more inclusive of new specialised forms of knowledge generated in the workplace—the subject of a recent body of theory—it is to be expected that these high-level VET qualifications will become established as pathways to Masters and Doctoral degrees. As such, and as ‘graduate level’ qualifications, these new awards represent an important extension of the capacity of the national system of qualifications to be inclusive of non-formal and informal learning.

To date, prior to the trade skills shortages, RPL is more frequently observed in higher level VET qualifications (see table 8). RPL was in part intended to assist people who had acquired experience in the workplace, or in life, but who had not completed any formal schooling pre-requisites typically required for admission to post-school courses. However, these individuals have not made the most use of RPL. Instead it has provided benefits to those with the most experience in post-school education and training who have been aware of opportunities for RPL and have been able to document their experience in a systematic way (Wheelahan et al., 2002)—evidence of the ‘Matthew’ effect.

There are no structural obstacles for linking the recognition of non-formal and informal learning to the AQF. However, a major issue raised in both the higher education and VET sectors is the question of ‘parity of esteem’ of qualifications or components of qualifications gained via RPL compared to those gained through the completion of formal studies. Closely related to this is the extent to which students are willing to engage in this form of assessment, and to which providers are prepared to invest time to make such assessments work. RPL assessments are often viewed and experienced as time-intensive for both students and providers (Bowman et al., 2003).

The credibility of the entire system of qualifications can be placed in jeopardy if qualifications gained through the RPL pathway are not trusted. Without transparent quality assurance, the RPL pathway can become a point of vulnerability in the system. Conversely, if there has to be excessive investment in quality assurance, the systemic advantages of RPL tend to be counteracted. Therefore, it is encouraging that consultations with assessors and assessment experts have also highlighted the fact that less time-intensive approaches may also be used. For example, having students undertake challenge tests (see Component 3.3 b) and observing students in their place of work can be far less time consuming for both assessors and students. Such approaches can provide assessors with sufficient evidence to determine whether or not the student has the learning and the competency for which RPL is being requested. They can also reduce the amount of time needed by students to gather evidence to support their claims for RPL.

**3.1 d) Describe if there are differences in such linkages depending on whether the qualifications are professional or academic recognition? Can the link to the qualification systems legitimacy of such recognition be a means for establishing 'legitimacy' both in working life and in the educational system ?**

RPL is especially important in the awarding of professional accreditation or further professional qualifications, which are in the main contingent on the completion of initial academic qualifications in a particular field or profession. Various professional bodies and registration authorities in Australia take into account initial academic qualifications combined with the number of years experience as a basis of their assessments. Where the initial academic qualifications are legitimated under the AQF, the awarding of professional accreditation and further professional qualifications, remain outside the framework. This means that such accreditation and qualifications are legitimated by processes other than the qualifications framework.

**Becoming a Chartered Engineer**

Engineers Australia is the professional association for professional engineers, engineering technologists and engineering officers (associates). They provide assessment and recognition of the skills and experience of these practitioners for the purposes of registration on National Registers.

In its applicant's handbook for practitioners the professional body notes that:

Engineering employers, clients and governments are increasingly valuing quality and professionalism that Chartered Status represents as insurance against risk and uncertainty and to match expectations of value and safety. The value to our community is the linkage to registration which is becoming important to governments and consumers of engineering services (Engineers Australia, 2006).

Source: Applicants Handbook for Chartered Professional Engineers, Chartered Engineering Technologies and Chartered Engineering Officer, 2006 < <http://www.engineersaustralia.org.au/education/chartered-status.cfm>>

**3.1 e) If your country has a national qualifications framework or in the process of establishing one, has the development towards recognition of non-formal and informal learning been one of the drivers for your country to establish one? Is the development of the qualifications framework and its implementation in practice with the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in parallel?**

AQFAB was established by the agreement of, and with the authority of MCEETYA. The object of the Board is to promote, monitor and maintain the AQF. To achieve this goal AQFAB operates as a cross-sectoral forum, inclusive of the industry parties, to consider national qualifications policy issues. The AQFAB Charter is currently being reviewed.

**Why the Australian Qualifications Framework was developed**

The AQF was established in 1995 by MCEETYA—to give support to the major reforms in vocational education and training introduced in the late 1980's and early 1990's to create an integrated system of national qualifications spanning all three educational sectors (schools, vocational training and higher education) with cross-sectoral articulation of programmes, credit transfer and recognition of prior learning. In 2004 the AQF published its *National Principles and Operational Guidelines* for Recognition of Prior Learning, thus emphasising the high priority it placed on the RPL pathway (see Component 2.1c).

The new suite of national qualifications was informed by workplace competency standards set by industry and based on workplace practice. Industry driven training shifted the focus of qualifying as a competent worker from the classroom to the workplace. Where the workplace sets the standards for assessment towards a qualification and is the primary model of learning, employment experience itself becomes directly assessable against the requirements of the qualification. This

model gives value and legitimacy to the informal and non-formal learning achieved in the workplace, which may be assessed on an equal basis with a formal programme of work-based training and assessment, or a formal programme delivered in an institution. So from the outset the AQF has had, for the VET sector in particular, the two objectives of upgrading the skills and knowledge required in the workplace and establishing RPL as a mainstream pathway to a qualification in the VET sector. For further details refer to the AQF website<sup>41</sup>. As already indicated at Component 1.4d, to date there has not been the expected increase in take-up of the RPL option. Factors such as high levels of employment in this period partly account for this, but it may also be that the availability of formal training at a range of levels closely linked to the workplace and able to be accessed at an early stage of employment reduces the demand for RPL.

Other factors such as the ageing of the Australian workforce are focussing governments' attention on the need to recognise the existing skills of all people entering training so that workers do not have to repeat or undertake training for skills they have already acquired on the job. Therefore, COAG has agreed that all RTOs and assessment centres in receipt of public funding will have a contractual obligation by January 2007 to offer all workers entering training a quick and simple process to recognise their existing skills.

The COAG agenda also includes the review of the AQTF to place a stronger focus on quality skills outcomes.<sup>42</sup> An outcomes-based auditing model for RTOs is also being developed to support the new AQTF standards, aiming for implementation by July 2007.

The Queensland Government has adopted the following view on RPL for mature and experienced adults in its Queensland Skills Plan:

When highly skilled individuals with industry currency opt to train for a whole course rather than undertake RPL for at least some units of competency, the trainer, the registered training organisation, and the whole system has failed to meet a fundamental tenet of the vocational education and training sector—to acknowledge and value adult learning through meaningful, portable and industry-recognised credentials. We are sending a message that privileges classrooms and 'trainers' as the most legitimate learning pathway and misses a profound opportunity to genuinely promote life-long learning as valid, valued and central to vocational skills (Queensland Department of Employment and Training, p21).

**3.1 f) *What are some potential threats of recognition of non-formal and informal learning to higher education institutions, employers, and individuals? How can resistance from the higher education sector be overcome to embed the recognition of non-formal and informal learning into the qualification framework?***

***Higher education institutions***

One of the major RPL concerns of higher education institutions is the perceived threat to their educational standards and subsequently to their reputation if they are seen to recognise for formal credit learning which may be viewed as not comparable to the amount and complexity of learning acquired by students in formal higher education courses. There is also a concern that learning gained in practical work-based or community activities may not prepare individuals adequately for the analytical and theoretical tasks which will be required of them in higher education courses.

RPL is often used to gain a VET qualification, which may then be used to articulate into a higher education qualification. However, the significant differences between the sectors in mission,

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<sup>41</sup> <http://www.aqf.edu.au>

<sup>42</sup> There will also be a stronger focus placed on the development of an outcomes-based auditing model for RTOs to support the new AQTF standards aiming at implementation by July 2007.

institutional culture and approaches to course design, defining learning outcomes, delivery and assessment presents barriers to cross-sectoral articulation and credit transfer. There is a concern about the level of achievement that students have been able to demonstrate in VET programmes (especially as the programmes use non-graded reporting on assessment), and the extent to which it compares to educational achievement in higher education, which is generally graded. Higher education institutions are also concerned about the perceived variability in standards of training organisations that are issuing qualifications. To this end they will be prepared to establish linkages with some institutions and not others. Where relationships are established and successful collaboration takes place there is a greater chance of articulation and credit transfer between sectors.

A major concern for higher education institutions preparing students to enter regulated occupations (like registered nursing) is that they are able to justify to Registration Boards and to higher education institutions that they have appropriately qualified individuals to work in regulated environments. Another concern is that often these RPL processes have to be treated on a case-by-case basis and may require extra resources that may not always be available. Interviewing students and verifying and validating the evidence they provide for RPL claims requires time and effort.

Although higher education institutions may resist the prospect of RPL ostensibly to safeguard the integrity of their qualifications, and to maintain reputations, there is also a view among VET administrators and practitioners that there are a number of misconceptions around the whole concept of RPL. Such misconceptions could be allayed in part by ensuring institutions that RPL is just another form of assessment and if done properly can provide judgements that are as credible as those provided for assessments in formal courses.

The Australian, State and Territory governments have sought to improve access to higher education for students transferring from VET. In May 2005 MCEETYA endorsed a package of initiatives including:

- Good Practice Principles to encourage further improvements in institutional practice and information provision for students;
- improvements in data collection; and
- a national study of the current practices in credit transfer from VET qualifications to higher education to identify gaps and make recommendations for initiatives to drive further improvement.

Findings from this National Study are currently being considered by MCEETYA and will inform what can be done to address the reluctance of universities to recognise the prior formal learning that has happened in other educational sectors and learning environments. It will also indicate ways to encourage higher education institutions to increase their acceptance of credit transfer and RPL as a legitimate process for awarding advanced standing in qualifications.

The key drivers for recognition were identified as:

- government policy at national and State and Territory levels to address skill needs, especially at the para-professional level;
- efficiency and cost savings to be gained through increased collaboration between sectors;
- competition for students in view of recent downturn in higher education enrolments;
- strong commitment to collaboration in missions of some universities; and
- employer and student needs requiring a mix of vocational and technical skill in addition to higher levels of analytical skills and understanding of theory.

### **Robust Assessments**

We need to assure higher education institutions that an RPL assessment based on the demonstration of competence (used in the VET system) is robust, valid and reliable as other assessments. In addition, we need to build relationships between individuals in the same or related programme area across sectors so that they talk about their courses, students and outcomes. This builds trust and credibility. *Senior government official in VET, South Australia.*

### **Employers**

In Component 2 we have detailed the considerable emphasis placed on relevant and desired work experience (however it is acquired) by Australian employers in making employment and promotion decisions. Potential threats to continued reliance on such experience for making employment decisions include the risk of employing people who do not have the level of skill for which they have been employed, bring the company into disrepute, or place work colleagues and customers in danger either by their lack of expertise or experience.

### **Individuals**

Potential threats for individuals is the extent to which their qualification (especially if it has all been acquired through RPL processes) is considered to be of equal value to qualifications gained via formal studies. An unequal valuing of these qualifications can lead to difficulties in finding or progressing through jobs. Gaining RPL may also prove to be a difficult process for those who are returning to study and may not be able to get sufficient evidence to prove they have the skills and experience to be admitted to programmes or be exempted from certain components of programmes. This is especially the case for those who have limited language and literacy skills to complete written application processes, or migrants (especially refugees) who may not have been able to access formal evidence of prior work experience. In addition, those with interrupted work histories may be unable to gain sufficient corroborating evidence to assure training providers that they will be able to cope with the demands of the courses they want to study.

## **Component 3.2: Credit accumulation and transfer**

**3.2 a) Describe any formal credit arrangements for non-formal and informal learning, if they exist. What are general policies, objectives, and legislative, regulatory or sectoral agreement frameworks for such credit arrangements? How are the arrangements used - at similar levels, between different levels, or between different sectors. Provide data, if any, of actual users (number of users, at what level, which sector, transition path, etc).**

RPL and credit transfer in higher education operates in ways which are unique to each institution. The universities collectively have, since 1993, agreed to a set of principles for Recognition of Prior Learning which originally described RPL as learning achieved other than in a university or TAFE college. Since the expansion of formal VET beyond TAFEs to the private sector, this definition has changed in line with international definitions and the universities have subsumed their set of principles under those agreed by all sectors in the *National Principles and Operational Guidelines* for Recognition of Prior (RPL) established by the AQFAB in 2004, and already discussed in this report (see Component 2.1c).

Under these National Principles, a subject or unit gained through RPL is not distinguished from a subject or unit gained through any other form of assessment. Granting of credit for a subject or unit—irrespective of how it is assessed—from an AQF qualification issued by another provider then comes under arrangements for credit transfer, noting that the decision to grant credit ‘is a matter for individual authorised organisations to determine in collaboration with each other’. This principle is set down in a set of National Guidelines on Cross-Sector Linkages (2002) which were developed between the universities and the VET sector as an initiative within the AQF.

RTOs in the VET sector are bound to recognise the qualifications of other RTOs under the mutual recognition principles of the AQTF. In addition, when students arrive at any RTO they will hear about RPL in initial information sessions with lecturers. If they decide to undertake RPL they will sit down with lecturers to understand the types of evidence that will be required to support a claim for RPL. Each institute will have its own specific arrangements for the administration of RPL.

#### RPL at Edith Cowan University (ECU)

The university's policy on advanced standing states that: 'in the recognition of prior learning the informal or non-formal learning of individuals is to be assessed against the learning outcomes of an ECU module, unit or units for which the student is seeking entry and or credit. It is up to the student to provide appropriate evidence to support claims for RPL. Where appropriate a student may be asked to complete an assessment to determine the level of prior learning. This could be a written or practical assessment, including the requirement to sit the final examination for the unit or modules.'

Source: Advanced Standing (including policy statement on RPL), Edith Cowan University, 2006

#### RPL at the University of Adelaide

The University of Adelaide has in place a Graduate Certificate in Management course which is open to individuals on the basis of the learning they have acquired in the workplace. (Such arrangements are also in place in a number of other Australian universities). Applicants must have at least 7 years' relevant management experience. Applicants will complete a formal application and provide the university with a curriculum vitae which list the jobs they have held, major achievements, and any courses and results of courses they may have completed. Applicants must also provide the university with two referee reports from their managers or Chief Executive Officers. Typically potential students will attend an information session where lecturing staff and a small group of recent graduates will talk to participants about the course, and administrative personnel will discuss fee structures and financial assistance. The university verifies the experience by contacting employers. The university is keen to know that in admitting students to the course they will be able to meet the requirements of the course by integrating theoretical knowledge and practice.

Source: Information and material provided by University of Adelaide Graduate School of Management

#### RPL at the University of South Australia

The University of South Australia recognises non-formal and informal learning of students who would like to enter the Bachelor of Nursing or Diploma of Nursing programme. However, it is a university requirement that students must complete one year of full-time (or equivalent) studies, irrespective of prior learning. In the registered nursing degree programme, RPL is linked to associated formal training that has been done in the past. This is because the university needs to be sure that at one time the student has been provided with a theoretical basis for practical workplace behaviours.

If students have a Diploma of Nursing they will receive a standard 36 units towards the nursing degree. If they have been enrolled nurses who have done their training in the former hospital training system they will get 18 hours credit. This is based on the recognition that these enrolled nurses have accumulated a degree of expertise that is relevant to the registered nursing programme. There are also opportunities for mature-aged entry. For example, unregulated care workers who have completed a Certificate III in Community Services, will be able to enter the degree or diploma programme and be exempted for some components. Typically they will be exempted from the practical workshop which deals with appropriate feeding and showering of patients.

Students who want to make a claim for RPL must demonstrate that they have met all or most of the learning objectives of the course for which they are applying for credit. This is the basic principle on which RPL is based.

Source: Program Director, Nursing and Midwifery Program

### Admission to TAFE SA programmes: South Australia

A basic principle of the student selection policy for 2007 of TAFESA (TAFESA, 2006) is that academic merit and/or relevant experience is to be considered for entrance to courses. This will ensure that admission processes do not preclude from selection people who may not have completed formal schooling.

Admission to programmes is based on the concept of students meeting minimum entry requirements to be eligible for a course. Each course will have its minimum entry requirements for student eligibility. If there are more students than available places then a process of selection against a set of general, related and other academic merit prevails. For example, if a student is wanting to undertake the Certificate III in Real Estate they must meet the minimum entry requirements. That is they must have:

- satisfactory completion of Stage 1 of the South Australian Certificate of Education (or equivalent); or
- any Certificate II; or
- 1 year full-time equivalent verified work experience in any area; or
- satisfactory achievement in the TAFE SA Basic Skills Test (a test of basic literacy and numeracy skills).

When there are more eligible students than available places then students will have to score a maximum of 40 points made up of:

- 20 points for general academic merit (which reflects the minimum entry requirements including employment experience);
- 10 points for related academic merit (which deals with related formal subjects);
- 20 points for other merit (which deals with employment experience, or work related studies).

Source: TAFE SA Student Selection Guide for 2007

### Admission to TAFE courses in Western Australia

A similar system to that used by TAFESA has also been in use in Western Australia. However, from 2007 Western Australia is implementing a process which refers to qualification pathways, general academic merit and employment experience. Applicants will be assessed on the completion of full or partial qualifications including school, university and VET studies. They will also be assessed on their general academic merit. Here school leaver applicants will be asked to identify their four best subjects and if applying for an Art subject to provide a portfolio of skill development. Mature-aged applicants will be asked for evidence of skill development provided in a portfolio which addresses the selection criteria. Applicants will also be judged according to their experience of paid or unpaid employment, and evidence of community service and other life experience.

Source: Western Australian Department of Employment and Training

### **3.2 b) Who is/are responsible for credit arrangements for non-formal and informal learning? Is it different from the arrangements for formal learning?**

The responsibility for credit arrangements for informal and non-formal learning in higher education institutions will vary according to the institution and programme. There are some higher education institutions, like Edith Cowan University, that will have an organisation-wide formal policy on the maximum number of credits that may be available in a programme for RPL. Others will leave it up to departmental administrators and staff to map out how informal and non-formal learning can be mapped to the learning outcomes of the course and apply their own systems of exemptions. For example, the University of South Australia's Registered Nursing programme, and the University of Adelaide's Graduate Certificate in Management programme. No matter who is responsible for credit arrangements all university records must be able to show that all learning outcomes for each subject in a particular course have been achieved before the relevant qualification can be issued.

There is no nationwide policy for the amount of credit that will be given for RPL for VET courses. Nevertheless, a national system of Training Packages identifies the units of competency required for different AQF qualifications available in the VET sector. When students make claims for the recognition of informal and non-formal learning, these claims are mapped to the units of competency. These RPL assessments are generally undertaken at the programme level. However,

where the institution has a dedicated recognition centre in place or a dedicated RPL assessor then this centre or assessor is responsible for coordinating RPL arrangements. Advice and validation of such assessments is also provided by subject matter experts.

In some states a centralised admissions process is based on a system-wide approach to determining the maximum number of points available to students for employment experience or involvement in community activities. The determination of such points is often deliberated by system-wide programme committees or groups. In the VET sector there is also a small number of assessment-only RTOs who will be independently responsible for conducting assessments towards qualifications (including RPL).

In the majority of higher education courses there are restrictions on the amount of credit that can be granted for RPL. It is a requirement at the University of South Australia that whatever a student has done they must also complete one year of full-time equivalent studies with the institution.

**3.2 c) *How is a credit counted? Number of hours of a course? Please specify how credits are counted on what base in your country.***

There is no national system of credit points for individual units of a qualification based on levels and nominal hours. Qualifications within the AQF are described in terms of the learning outcomes or competencies characteristic of each qualification title. It is the learning outcomes which are the determinants of the value of the qualification, rather than inputs such as hours of learning. This is a strong policy position in the VET sector in particular, where past practices of institutionalised 'numbers of hours' have been replaced by a system where the focus is on the capacity to assess directly the performance criteria in the competencies specified within the qualification, so that 'hours'—except where time taken may be an element of the particular competence—are not relevant.

In the VET sector, most qualifications are based on nationally endorsed Training Packages and therefore individual units have a common credit value across the sector, based on a national coding system. For higher education, qualifications are accredited on an institutional basis and credit is subject to institutional arrangements. This means that credit achieved through any form of assessment, including RPL assessment, has national currency within the VET sector, but within the higher education sector credit is variable between institutions except where explicit agreements are in place.

To guide the credit transfer of formal learning across the sectors, there are National Guidelines on Cross-Sector Qualification Linkages, which include percentage levels of credit at the main credit interface, that is from Diploma to Bachelor degree. For example, 33 per cent credit for a Diploma when it is linked to a three-year Bachelor degree. These national guidelines are an integral part of implementation of the AQF and are subject to monitoring and review by the AQFAB. Credit transfer also occurs from higher education qualifications to VET qualifications and is a focus for future work.

For administrative and funding purposes, but not as part of a credit system, government departments calculate nominal hours for the programmes offered and these vary across the jurisdictions. Where credit point systems are used by institutions and some national industry bodies, these are internal mechanisms for counting components adding up to the requirements of the qualification and are not based on a universal system.

The award of credit as a result of a successful RPL assessment in either sector may take the form of:

- credit for the entry requirements for a formal programme;
- credit for specific subjects or units;
- exemption from elective units;
- exemption from a first semester or first year; and
- credit for a whole qualification in the VET sector, and up to two-thirds of a qualification in higher education.

In the VET sector, credit may be recognised below the level of a full qualification in the form of a Statement of Attainment. Achievement of discrete units or sets of skills of particular value to an area of employment may be recorded on this Statement of Attainment. Over time, the units achieved and recorded may accumulate towards a full qualification. This is an illustration of the way in which the credit system operates in the VET sector to reflect the particular orientation of that sector, with various institutions taking their own approaches to determining credits.

#### The Victorian Qualifications Authority's Credit Matrix

The Victorian Qualifications Authority (2006) has developed the credit matrix. It is a credit-based system to describe qualifications in post-compulsory education and training in Victoria (from secondary, vocational education and training, adult and community education and higher education sectors) and recording achievement in them. It is based on a system which measures learning outcomes acquired in the smallest part of a qualification which can be recognised, (namely units or modules of learning) according to eight levels of complexity and volume of learning. The levels of complexity range from level 1 (lowest level of complexity) to level 8 (highest level of complexity). Every 10 hours of learning equates to one point.<sup>43</sup>

Points can be gained in any sector and from any provider offering relevant courses at the required level. This allows learners to better understand their qualification and negotiate their way through to different qualifications. It also allows them to present for recognition learning that has been acquired outside formal settings. For those who do not want to do a full qualification, the credit matrix will provide 'a tangible record of effort and achievement over many years'. It also allows providers to better understand the type and amount of learning that students have already acquired so that they may provide them with the best advice for future learning.

Source: Victorian Qualifications Authority

### **3.2 d) What are the incentives or disincentives for participants to gain credit and providers to give credit?**

There are incentives and disincentives for individuals to gain credit and for providers to give credit.

#### ***Incentives***

The major incentives for individuals to gain credit for RPL are that it reduces study workloads, duplication of training and the financial costs for tuition. If they get recognition for the whole qualification then this reduces the study load in very significant ways. In addition governments in different States and Territories have also provided some financial incentives to students to help with their costs for RPL. This allows students to complete their qualifications in a quicker timeframe and to move on to higher qualifications or designated jobs in the workforce. In addition, obtaining credit allows individuals to make up for lost time in the event of illness or unanticipated employment commitments. For those who have not had success in the formal education system, gaining credit for prior informal and non-formal learning builds confidence and enables them to have their experience legitimated and to open up pathways to desired qualifications.

<sup>43</sup>In the secondary education sector the smallest parts of a qualification that can be recognised are units. In the VTE sector they are units of competency from Training Packages, or units or modules from VTE curriculum. In the higher education system they are subjects, modules or units of qualifications.

### VET student in TAFE who used RPL to complete Advanced Diploma of Hotel Management

I decided to take up RPL because I had a lot of experience and lecturers advised me to make a claim for RPL. I wanted to complete my Advanced Diploma which I had started 10 years ago and did not want to study what I knew. I got my information together to back up my claim including a résumé detailing my work experience and references from employers. Once I had this information the lecturer checked the units of competency I had done and see whether they matched the competencies that were expected. I received RPL for four subjects and I had to do a Hygiene subject. I had to pay tuition fees but not the cost of the materials. Although I expected that I did not have to pay for this, not having to attend classes and using up extra time to do the extra four subjects was good. But TAFE is quite cheap (inexpensive) anyway. In getting RPL I was able to finish my course earlier. Now I have gained a position at front office at the Hyatt Hotel (one of the major international 5 star hotels in Adelaide).

If you are applying for a subject that you have experience in it is easier. I had left my employer on good terms to make a different career move. The lecturer also knew my employer so he knew the standard of work my employer expected. One lecturer thought I would get RPL for the Hygiene subject but the RPL assessor did not agree. When I went through (the Hygiene unit) he was right so I am glad I did do it.

Source: TAFESA graduate

There are also incentives for providers to give credit for RPL. These include increased opportunities to provide service to students and to employers and so increase their attractiveness as institutions of first preference. It also enables providers to access new sources of students and to diversify student intake. Given the recent decline in domestic demand for education places this would be an important incentive.

Having motivated students who are not sitting through irrelevant training will also improve the learning environment for other students. Where providers are working closely with employers and students to customise workplace learning and recognition, it keeps providers current and engaged with what is happening in the workplace. In giving credit providers are also able to free up training places for other students.

In some States, providers have always been able to claim the total cost of RPL, in others this was not the case. Recently the Australian Government has driven the requirement for all providers in all States and Territories to get 100 per cent subsidy for RPL provision.

### ***Disincentives***

Disincentives for students relate to the expectations of providers for too much physical documentation to verify their skills. The amount of work that is required to prepare applications and to track down documentary evidence to support claims for credit can be a major disincentive. This is especially the case if they are not able to get in touch with employers for references, have left employers on bad terms and are loath to contact them, or have not kept required documentation that would be useful to support their application for credit. Students may also find it difficult to interpret what is required if providers make the system of RPL unnecessarily complex. There are also difficulties for those who have been out of the education and training system for a long time. These difficulties are associated with having the confidence, and adequate literacy skills to negotiate RPL and to complete formal applications.

### Student concerns

The major problem with regard to RPL for students is the collation of information they require for proving evidence of prior learning. They may also have raised expectations of what they can get. For example, enrolled nurses in South Australia are not by law able to have the same level of responsibility as registered nurses. Sometimes these students perceive that they have been doing similar activities. However, the university cannot give them RPL for this experience because under law they cannot perform such activities. (*University Director of Nurse Education Programme*)

Some students come in confident and then they find the course harder than they thought. They may experience problems with integrating theory and practice, or they might find that it requires more time than they originally thought. Some may just want the piece of paper that says they have a university qualification but we stress that they need to be able to apply principles to practice. (*Programme Administrator of University Business School Programme admitting students totally on basis of RPL*)

The disincentives for providers relate to the amount of work and effort involved in speaking with students about their applications, helping them to identify the types of evidence that would be suitable, and validating and verifying the evidence once it has been provided. Sometimes this is not reflected or recognised adequately in workloads for teachers, and in recouping the actual costs associated with RPL. Unless groups of students have followed a standard pathway and are claiming a similar amount of credit for similar sorts of activities, each application for credit must be treated on an individual basis. For providers this is resource and time-intensive. Bearing in mind that RPL will allow students to move through qualifications at a different pace there will be pressures on providers to increase the flexibility of training delivery and learning processes. This has implications for staffing, timetabling and record-keeping. In addition, there are financial disincentives for giving credit as this reduces the amount of revenue that providers can access from tuition fees. In the main, there is no charge for RPL in universities.

These difficulties may be exacerbated in the case of giving credit for learning acquired overseas.

### Administrative Burdens

At the Australian College of Natural Medicine a major disincentive for RPL relates to administrative burden. Lecturers tend to find the RPL system onerous as it is a form of assessment demanding more time and, often, double or triple handling. This also creates a burden for the administration. Often lecturers are not provided with enough information to allow a sound assessment of knowledge and experience. There is also some risk of falsification of claims when students believe they have more learning than they are able to demonstrate, and they want to use RPL to reduce the length and costs of their courses.

A major disincentive for universities is the complication and administrative burden it adds to the enrolment process, and the amount of time it takes to enrol students.

Source: Australian College of Natural Medicine Lecturer

The major impediments for recognising prior learning for credit transfer and articulation purposes may include:

- differences in funding and accountability regimes;
- cultural differences and attitudes of staff in VET and higher education;
- administrative issues;
- differences in curriculum and assessment; and
- lack of resources.

### Views on the RPL Assessment Process

There are a lot of misconceptions regarding the policies of RPL and the complexities of RPL. Practitioners across the sectors think that it is different rather than the same as other assessments. It is also sometimes easier for large providers to put people in classes rather than use flexible entry and exit points associated with RPL. *(Senior VET government official in Victoria)*

Sometimes lecturers may not be as confident about their professional judgements for RPL assessments as they are for normal assessments, and so they demand too much physical documentation. This places a burden on students. Lectures may require more hard evidence for RPL assessments so that they find it easy to satisfy what they perceive will be the quality assurance demands of auditors. What we need is to ensure that auditors do not ask for more evidence for RPL assessments than they would for other assessments. *(Senior VET government official in South Australia)*

In terms of VET assessment activity, I know from both my work as a practitioner as well as a researcher and as an auditor, that there are very many good examples of effective RPL practice across the VET sector. However, I think the outdated view and interpretation of RPL has certainly served its purpose and we should move on to not just viewing RPL as another form of assessment but also to accept its many guises and manifestations.

For the student, such processes as 'fast track' and 'partial RPL' are strategies that enable a more effective and individual learning and assessment plan.

For providers, RPL should become an integral part of a teacher's learning and assessment plans for their students. In addition, assessors should undertake their assessment judgements with rigour balanced with confidence.

Finally, we should acknowledge and accept the parity of esteem of RPL judgements with other assessment judgements. *(Andrea Bateman, Assessment Expert)*

### **3.2 e) Describe, if any, how the recognition of non-formal and informal learning is integrated in your VET system through credit system: e.g. the dual system to integrate experiential learning.**

The recognition of non-formal and informal learning is integrated into Australia's VET system through the AQTF by making it possible for students to demonstrate competency no matter how or where their learning has been acquired. The Victorian credit matrix system described above is based on the concept of assigning a level and credit point to all learning whether it be acquired in the schools, VET or higher education sectors, or in informal or non-formal contexts. This system is currently being rolled out in secondary schools in Victoria. It has yet to be applied to the post-compulsory VET or higher education systems in that state. It remains to be seen whether such a system will be adopted nationally and across all sectors.

### **3.2 f) Provide data, if any, how the recognition of non-formal and informal learning is integrated in your HED system through credit system: e.g. research on the growing number of take-up of internships, etc.**

Not available.

### Component 3.3: Assessment methods and procedures

**3.3 a) Describe the assessment arrangements. Who carries out assessments, and with what type of approaches? Who validates the results of the assessments? How long will the assessment procedures take? If methods or procedures vary depending on sectors, list the name of the sectors and the methods used for the recognition for the sector. What assessment procedures do participants go through to get their non-formal and informal learning recognised? Describe different stages.**

**3.3 b) Describe different types of assessment methods and procedures. Provide data on advantages and challenges for the different types of assessment (e.g. competence-based assessment, summative assessment, portfolio assessment, etc.) What are the principle drivers of costs of different types of assessments to different actors? Provide evidence, if any, of certain types of assessment may become beneficial or a barrier to participants (e.g. psychological, financial, etc.)**

The AQF provides a description of the organisations that have ultimate responsibility for assessment (including RPL) for each of its qualifications in the AQF. These are briefly described in table 16.

**Table 16: Organisations responsible for assessment**

Qualification	Responsibility for assessment
VET sector: Certificate 1, Certificate II, Certificate III, Certificate IV, Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Vocational Graduate Certificate, Vocational Graduate Diploma	Assessment is the responsibility of RTOs. These bodies must comply with Standards of the AQTF, regarding the quality of assessments (including RPL), issuing of qualifications, and providing Statements of Attainment. They must also comply with standards for maintaining student records.
Higher education: Diploma, Advanced Diploma, Associate Degree, Bachelor Degree, Graduate Certificate, Graduate Diploma, Masters Degree, Doctoral Degree	Responsibility for assessment lies with the body that issues the AQF qualification, namely universities, other self-accrediting higher education institutions, and non self-accrediting institutions authorised by State/Territory accreditation authorities to offer AQF qualifications. The body that issues the qualification is responsible for ensuring the quality of the assessment strategies, i.e. that they are flexible, valid, reliable and provide for the recognition of prior learning. It is also responsible for providing and maintaining student records.

In Australia a variety of organisations carry out assessments (including RPL). Individuals with responsibility for assessments (working on behalf of these organisations and acting independently or in collaboration) are involved in developing, conducting, marking and moderating assessment activities. These include lecturers and instructors, subject matter experts, RPL coordinators, workplace assessors, programme coordinators and programme directors.

The time taken to do assessments varies according to the amount and level of complexity associated with individual claims for RPL. Each individual assessing organisation develops its own policy and procedures for RPL assessments. Typically individuals in the VET sector who seek to have prior learning recognised, may do so in response to information provided to them about the availability of RPL at enrolment time<sup>44</sup>. They may also seek RPL when they have commenced their studies and realise that they have already covered a lot of the learning material being taught. Individuals may also be encouraged to seek RPL by their lecturers or teachers who realise that certain components of a qualification may have already been covered. In the higher education

<sup>44</sup>A requirement of the AQTF is that RTOs must offer students RPL at enrolment time.

sector individuals will generally seek RPL prior to enrolment. RPL in the higher education sector is generally more applicable to programmes which have large components of practical experience.

### ***Assessment mechanisms***

Assessors across and within the different sectors will use a variety of methods in assessing RPL. Each of the approaches has its own particular sets of advantages and disadvantages. The four key methods used to conduct RPL assessments are:

- **Initial interviews** with candidates where the assessor and student discuss the units, subjects, modules or components of these for which the student is claiming RPL. The VET assessor and student will identify how the informal and non-formal learning aligns with the units of competency in Training Package qualifications, or units in accredited courses. The higher education assessor will discuss with students how the prior learning aligns with learning objectives in subjects or courses. The student is provided with advice on the types of evidence required, then collects the evidence and prepares a formal application for RPL. The advantages of such preliminary arrangements is that students are provided with advice on whether they are likely to be successful in claims for RPL, and the types of evidence that will be considered to meet assessment requirements. This makes the application process less complex and does not waste the time of candidates and assessors.
- **Challenge tests** in which individuals are asked to demonstrate a particular competency for which they are claiming credit. In higher education institutions such tests may include sitting the same examination taken by students in formal classes or oral tests (or formal interviews) where assessors use questioning techniques to assess a candidate's knowledge of a particular topic. The advantages of challenge tests are that they require less time on the part of the candidate and the assessor. Assessors will also find it easier to defend judgements made on the basis of objective results provided by these tests. A disadvantage is that the challenge test will only assess a candidate's performance on one occasion.
- **Observations of a candidate's workplace performance** where the assessor will visit the workplace and observe the candidate performing tasks which comprise competencies being claimed for RPL. They will also provide an indication of the competency of individuals in real work situations. This is a fundamental objective of competency-based assessment. A key disadvantage is that assessors must be careful not to interrupt the productive work of the individual and their work colleagues.
- **Portfolios** prepared by candidates which document or portray the evidence that is being provided in support of claims for RPL. Portfolios will be arranged in ways which make it easy for assessors to judge the extent to which individuals have met the learning objectives and the competency standards. The key advantage of portfolio-based assessments is that individuals can be as creative as they would like in presenting evidence to support their claims for RPL. Moreover, an integral, though not formal, part of this exercise is the self-reflection the candidate undertakes about their prior learning and experience and their further pathways. A key disadvantage is that it takes time and effort for candidates to compile a portfolio, and for assessors to assess the portfolio.

RPL usually occurs:

- close to enrolment;
- just before training begins or on the cusp of training;
- within a training scenario and negotiated with a trainer;
- as part of a package of units of competency assessments; and
- as part of the development of an individual learning plan.

**3.3 c) Describe the current relationship between academic standards, professional standards, and occupational standards in your country. Who owns and controls such standards?**

Academic standards are established and owned by higher education institutions having regard for requirements set by peer review, professional bodies, and employers. Professional standards are developed and owned by professional bodies within an individual occupation with input from government and industry as to the competencies they require. Some professional bodies also develop occupational standards. Occupational standards for the trades and some para-professional occupations are developed by specific Industry Skills Councils. Where specific enterprises develop their own occupational standards (in cases where these are not met by the national industry competency standards) then these belong to enterprises who have developed them. Where VET accredited curricula are funded by States and Territories, these belong to the jurisdiction. For regulated occupational standards covered by mutual recognition obligations, governments mandate specific requirements or delegate the power to impose entry requirements to the relevant registration or assessing authority.

**Speech Pathology Australia**

Speech Pathology Australia is the professional body representing speech pathologists in Australia and has a role in assessing qualifications required for practice in Australia. It also accredits university programmes at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The Competency Based Occupational Standards for Speech Pathologists (CBOS, 2001) details the knowledge, skills and attributes required for graduate entry into the profession of speech pathology. University speech pathology programmes that are accredited by Speech Pathology Australia have demonstrated that their graduates have attained CBOS entry-level competencies and are thus eligible for practising membership to Speech Pathology Australia. In this example, we can see that occupational standards drive the professional standards because a speech pathologist may not practise if they have not attained the CBOS entry-level competencies. The professional association accredits speech pathology programmes and then influences the academic standards associated with academic courses in speech pathology.

Source: Speech Pathology Australia, competency-based occupation standards for Speech Pathologists  
<<http://www.speechpathologyaustralia.org.au>>

Industry has been given responsibility for the development of national industry competency standards for qualifications that are acquired in the VET sector. These include traditional trade and para-professional qualifications. Standards describe the skills and knowledge that are to be demonstrated before an individual can be judged as competent in a particular industry. As such they inform the type of training and assessment strategies that are used in training organisations. Industry Skills Councils have operational responsibility for the formal development and review of these competency standards and associated assessment guidelines (which make up the endorsed components of national industry Training Packages as previously discussed).

**3.3 d) Has the issue been raised in your county of how the assessment practice should be balanced with the right of individuals to have their learning completely independent of assessment and recognition processes be retained? Describe the debate to date, if any.**

There is not a strong debate about the right of individuals to have their learning separated from formal assessment regimes.

Some of the learning that occurs across the education and training sectors and in industry does not have to be, is not designed to be and is not associated with formal assessments. The adult and community education sector provides programmes which develop specific skills that are not formally assessed and do not lead to accreditation. Indeed, for some people it is precisely this informal nature which attracts them back into learning. Industry training programmes often provide worthwhile skills development without any formal assessments. There are also opportunities for individuals to 'audit' courses in higher education institutions which mean that they are at liberty to sit in classes and listen to lectures.

**3.3 e) How is the recognition of non-formal and informal learning quality-assured in your country? Who is responsible for the quality assurance process? How is the issue of quality assurance treated in the internationalisation context?**

**VET sector**

RPL assessments in the VET sector are treated like any other assessment for quality assurance purposes and are subject to the regular audit and monitoring requirements of the AQTF. In April 2006 the Australian Government Minister for Vocational and Technical Education also indicated an expanded role for employers to assure the quality of training. He announced the establishment of the Institute for Trades Skills Excellence which will be industry led through the involvement of peak industry bodies. The Institute will give a rating on the quality of courses and institutes providing those courses.

**Higher Education Sector**

Arrangements for the quality assurance of RPL assessments in the higher education sector will be treated in similar ways to other forms of assessments. In practice all institutions in the higher education sector must ensure the quality of their assessment processes, including RPL.

Nevertheless, the national framework for quality assurance of higher education is based on a strong partnership between the Australian, State and Territory governments and the higher education sector. The *Higher Education Quality Assurance Framework* (DEST, 2000) sets out the responsibilities of each of the players who have a major role in the quality assurance process. For example, universities (and a small number of other self-accrediting institutions) are individually responsible for their own academic standards. The Commonwealth, States and Territories have responsibility for approval of institutions of higher education (including self-accrediting and non-self accrediting institutions) based on a set of *National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes* (the 'National Protocols') ((MCEETYA, 2000 and 2006). The Australian Government has responsibility for funding and performance data and quality assurance research plans. The AQF maintains public national registers of post-compulsory education providers and accreditation authorities. The AUQA audits universities, some other higher education institutions, and Commonwealth, State and Territory higher education accreditation authorities on a five yearly cycle.

The National Protocols<sup>45</sup> which are a joint agreement approved by all Commonwealth, State and Territory Ministers are a key aspect of the framework. The guidelines for the national qualifications under the Australian Qualification Framework state that each qualification must provide RPL pathways.

Australia is also committed to maintaining the quality of its international reputation by ensuring that its transnational education and training (also known as offshore or cross-border education and training) is of the same quality standard as the education and training that is delivered onshore in Australia. To this end Ministers of Australian education and training agreed in 2005 to implement a Transnational Quality Strategy (DEST, 2005c) to protect and promote the quality of offshore delivery. The strategy deals with key areas of communication, data collection and quality assurance and enhancement.

The Australian Government recognises that the 'benefits of education depend on the service it provides to the overseas student (who comes here to study) and on public confidence in its integrity and quality' (DEST). To this end it has implemented a National Code for the quality assurance of education services for international students. This code has been established under the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000* and became effective from 4 June 2001. Providers of international education must be registered under the Commonwealth Register of Institutions and Courses for Overseas Students (CRICOS), and must comply with the National Code which is legally enforceable. State and Territory Authorities will approve providers and accredit courses to be entered on the CRICOS. The National Code is also used to supplement existing arrangements under the Australian Quality Training Framework for VET, and the National Protocols. The purpose of the Code is to provide nationally consistent standards for CRICOS registration and for the conduct of CRICOS-registered providers.

### **Component 3.4: Others**

**3.4 a) Provide any other technical arrangements that you think are the most important characteristics that exist in your country, which have not been addressed in above Component 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3.**

None

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<sup>45</sup>Ensure consistent national criteria and standards in the recognition of new universities, the operation of overseas higher educations in Australia: accreditation of higher education: courses offered by non-self accrediting institutions; delivery arrangements for higher education institutions involving other organisations; and endorsement of courses for overseas students.



## Component 4 – Stakeholder behaviour

### Component 4.1: Characteristics of stakeholders

**4.1 a) Identify all possible stakeholders involved (with specific characteristics) and complete a list below concerning non-formal learning and informal learning in your country to complement the list for Component 2.2.** The 2.2 list is to map out governance and the role of government while this list aims to map out the relationships between providers of non-formal learning or types of informal learning, recognisers of such learning, recognition to be received, regulatory of such recognition, and main users of such recognition. Please note, due to the difference of nature of non-formal and informal learning, that the grid for non-formal learning uses a provider of non-formal learning or an input-side as a starting base- first column – as non-formal learning seems to be more recognised after going through a non-formal learning programme. On the other hand, the grid for informal learning uses output/ skills as a starting point because it is not feasible to list all types of informal learning where there is no such supplier as the individual is the active entity to create such learning opportunities. Therefore, there is a separate grid for non-formal and informal learning. The annex also aims to examine characteristics of users for aggregation of data, but please provide micro-level data about users in this section.

**Table 17: Non-formal learning (Characteristics of Stakeholders Grid)**

Provider of non-formal learning (eg. universities, for-profit private companies, company's in-house training, government, NGOs etc)	Recogniser of such non-formal learning (eg. government, quasi-government, universities, companies, professional bodies, trade unions etc)	Types of recognition received (eg. academic qualifications – degrees, diplomas, credits, awards, certificates, professional qualifications etc)	Regulator (eg. quality assurance agency, professional body, government, etc.)	Main user(s) (Specify)	
Higher Education Institutions	Universities are established by, or under relevant State, Territory or Australian Government legislation. Universities and other self-accrediting higher education institutions have authority to accredit their own courses. State and Territory accreditation authorities accredit the courses of non self-accrediting institutions. Each has its own arrangements in regard to RPL. For a full list see: <a href="http://www.aqf.edu.au/register.htm#university">http://www.aqf.edu.au/register.htm#university</a> Examples of approaches are covered in 4.2	Entry to, credits, advanced standing towards academic qualifications	The universities operate under the AQF guidelines for the higher education qualifications. See 3.1.f.  Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA)  AEI-NOOSR	✓	Working professionals
				✓	People after army service
				✓	High skilled immigrants
					Low skilled immigrants
				✓	Retired people
				✓	Unemployed (over 30 years old)
					NEET (not in employment nor in education or training) age between 15/16-30
					Others (specify)
Registered Training Organisations (listed on a comprehensive national database: <a href="http://www.ntis.gov.au/">http://www.ntis.gov.au/</a>  These can be public or private educational institutions offering vocational qualifications, including	RPL can only be granted by qualified assessors working with or on behalf of RTOs. They are only able to grant RPL for courses and competencies they are authorised to deliver and assess by their State Training Authority  AQTF Standard 8.2 (b) which states: The RTO must have an RPL process that:  i. is structured to minimise the time and cost to applicants, and	Full AQF vocational qualifications but more usually credit for a module within, or units of, competency	State Training Authority  National Quality Council	✓	Working professionals
				✓	People after army service
				✓	High skilled immigrants
				✓	Low skilled immigrants
					Retired people
				✓	Unemployed (over 30 years old)

<b>Provider of non-formal learning</b> (eg. universities, for-profit private companies, company's in-house training, government, NGOs etc)	<b>Recogniser of such non-formal learning</b> (eg. government, quasi-government, universities, companies, professional bodies, trade unions etc)	<b>Types of recognition received</b> (eg. academic qualifications – degrees, diplomas, credits, awards, certificates, professional qualifications etc)	<b>Regulator</b> (eg. quality assurance agency, professional body, government, etc.)	<b>Main user(s)</b> (Specify)	
government agencies with RTO status	ii. provides adequate information, support and opportunities for participants to engage in the RPL process.			✓	NEET (not in employment nor in education or training) age between 15/16-30
					Others (specify)
Employers, trade unions	Recognised industry assessment programme overseen by a State or Territory authority.	Australian Recognised Trade Certificate (ARTC); professional recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trades Recognition Australia (TRA)</li> <li>• Employers</li> </ul>	✓	Working professionals
				✓	People after army service
				✓	High skilled immigrants
				✓	Low skilled immigrants
					Retired people <sup>46</sup>
					Unemployed (over 30 years old)
					NEET (not in employment nor in education or training) age between 15/16-30
					Others (specify)
In-house training in government, private industry, unions,	Employers—government and private Professional bodies	Credits towards professional qualifications, professional standing Promotion	Professional associations  AEI-NOOSR	✓	Working professionals
				✓	People after army service
				✓	High skilled immigrants
					Low skilled immigrants
					Retired people*
					Unemployed (over 30 years)

<sup>46</sup> There is no statutory retirement age in Australia. The retirement incomes system envisages a possible span of retirement starting between the ages of 55 to 70 years during which retirement savings can continue to accumulate or retirement income can be accessed. Australian workers can only access superannuation once they have reached the minimum age set by law and have permanently retired from the workforce, unless there are exceptional circumstances. This minimum age is 55 for people born before June 1960. The government has recently introduced tax incentives to encourage people to delay accessing their superannuation entitlements. Men may qualify for an age pension at 65 years or over. Women born after 1949 must also be 65 to receive the pension.

Provider of non-formal learning (eg. universities, for-profit private companies, company's in-house training, government, NGOs etc)	Recogniser of such non-formal learning (eg. government, quasi-government, universities, companies, professional bodies, trade unions etc)	Types of recognition received (eg. academic qualifications – degrees, diplomas, credits, awards, certificates, professional qualifications etc)	Regulator (eg. quality assurance agency, professional body, government, etc.)	Main user(s) (Specify)	
					NEET (not in employment nor in education or training) age between 15/16-30
					Others (specify)
Adult and community education (ACE) providers and non-government organisations	Assessors within the Australian Qualifications Framework, with many ACE providers having RTO status or an auspice relationship Employers Volunteer groups	AQF qualifications but more usually credit for a module within, or units of competency or recognition of prior learning and experience which serves to build esteem and re-engage reluctant learners Employment Promotion Certificates required for occupational health and safety reasons	ACE providers are private providers, many of which receive public grant monies. To that extent they are regulated by their funding agencies, usually State Government authorities		Working professionals
					People after army service
					High skilled immigrants
				✓	Low skilled immigrants
				✓	Retired people*
				✓	Unemployed (over 30 years old)
				✓	NEET (not in employment nor in education or training) age between 15/16-30
					Others (specify)

**Table 18: Informal learning (Characteristics of Stakeholders Grid)**

Types of skills gained by informal learning (eg. ICT skills by using computers, literacy by reading books, numeracy, business protocol, negotiation skills, etc.))	Recogniser of informal learning	Types of recognition received	Regulatory body	Main user(s) (Specify)		
				✓		
Professional or trade knowledge in the workplace; ICT skills and IT literacy; Employability skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communication</li> <li>• teamwork</li> <li>• problem solving</li> <li>• initiative and enterprise</li> <li>• self-management skills</li> <li>• planning and organising</li> <li>• learning to learn</li> <li>• technology</li> </ul>	Employers	Employment, promotion;	Industry	✓	Working professionals	
				✓	People after army service	
	Professional Associations	Reference	Membership; professional accreditation	Industry In case of high skilled migrants NOOSR	✓	High skilled immigrants
						Low skilled immigrants
					✓	Retired people*
						Unemployed (over 30 years old)
	Higher education providers; RTOs; Adult & community education providers Trades Recognition Australia State/Territory assessing authorities	Full qualification, or a statement of attainment for partial completion of a qualification. Unit or units of competency	AQTF, with each State and Territory having legislation that underpins the system		NEET (not in employment nor in education or training) age between 15/16-30	
					Others (specify)	
Life experience (e.g. budget skills acquired in the household; computing skills, research or management ability, speaking a second language). Volunteering (e.g. budget skills acquired as an honorary treasurer of a community organisation, teacher support, canteen or library support/management at schools; emergency management through membership of a volunteer fire brigade).	Employer	Employment, promotion	Industry	✓	Working professionals	
				✓	People after army service	
	Education provider, particularly adult community education provider	Credits, unit of competency, admission to preparatory course	AQTF for formal qualifications	✓	High skilled immigrants	
				✓	Low skilled immigrants	
				✓	Retired people*	
					Unemployed (over 30 years old)	
	Non-government/ community organisation	Paid or voluntary work, units of competency	Bodies responsible for administering legislation such as occupational health and safety	✓	NEET (not in employment nor in education or training) age between 15/16-30	
				✓	Youth at risk	
	Women returning to the workplace					
	Others (specify)					

### **Characteristics of Stakeholders**

The Australian education and training system is characterised by diversity and choice. As described in earlier components, it operates within the AQF. National policy directions are aimed at providing learners with a seamless transition from one education sector to another and into work. In terms of providers, the main stakeholders in RPL are:

- registered training organisations;
- higher education providers;
- adult and community education providers;
- employers; and
- non-government organisations.

As has been recognised by the COAG (see Component 3.1.e), there is potential to extend the uptake of RPL in Australia, which has not been as widely used for various reasons, including:

- lack of knowledge of the system;
- the daunting amount of paperwork required;
- the expense of implementing an effective process, which can be intensive; and
- learner and employer preferences for actual training.

The current users of the system tend to be those with higher levels of education, wanting their non-formal and informal skills recognised, and who have the paper-based evidence to document this prior learning. However, this is changing with many innovative practices being implemented around the country, some specifically designed to encourage more people with few or no accredited skills to participate in RPL processes both for development purposes as well as to acquire credentials (see Component 3.1.a).

In the last couple of years research and funding has been concentrated on improving access to RPL in Australia. This work has identified some of the enabling factors for effective RPL:

- adequate support of candidates through the process, which might include non-graded and self-assessment;
- streamlined processes which are user friendly and efficient;
- adjusted student enrolment and counselling procedures;
- courses which incorporate RPL processes;
- formal networks between providers of training and assessment and enterprises;
- consistency between evidence of prior learning and assessments within training programmes and across training organisations; and
- targeted marketing.

In addition, Bateman (2006) has found it important that assessors who are involved in RPL in VET are:

- accepting of the concept of RPL;
- highly skilled in their vocational field;
- have industry 'currency' and be conversant with the Training Packages;
- highly skilled assessors and assessment tool developers; and
- confident in their judgements.

We present here a snapshot of approaches to RPL in the higher education, VET and adult and community sectors. These have been chosen to illustrate how different kinds of institutions offer

RPL and to give some idea of the innovation taking place in the field, as well as to give a picture of the characteristics of RPL users.

### **Higher Education**

As has been explained in Component 3, each higher education institution has its own arrangements with regard to RPL, credit transfer and the granting of advanced standing. Wheelahan et al. (2003, p.11) reports that of the 37 publicly-funded universities, 26 have an institutional RPL policy, two of which have RPL policies for postgraduate programmes only. This diversity in approach reflects the diversity among higher education. In addition to the examples cited in Component 3.2, the following approaches give an insight into how institutions cater to particular client groups.

#### **The University of New England (UNE)**

UNE was the first Australian university established outside a capital city, with around 17,000 students, some 15,000 of whom study externally. Its policy on advanced standing (approved in December 2004) allows for the granting of advanced standing (credit) on the basis of prior learning whether from formal studies, or professional work or life experience. The onus is on the applicant to provide appropriate evidence or demonstrate the relevant skills, knowledge and understanding. The maximum credit that can be granted is 66.67 per cent of the total credit points for the Bachelor degree being sought. It is at the discretion of faculties as to how they measure prior learning.

Source: <[www.une.edu.au/rmo/policies/acad/advstanding.pdf](http://www.une.edu.au/rmo/policies/acad/advstanding.pdf)>

*Main users: older external students with considerable work experience.*

#### **Swinburne University of Technology**

Swinburne is a public dual sector institution which offers both VET and higher education courses. It has a strong vocational focus. It aims to provide a multi-level system of post-secondary programmes with provision for recognition of prior learning and flexibility of transition between programmes. Its RPL policy recognises that learning takes place not only through formal studies at accredited institutions, but also through activities such as employer-based training and development, and relevant life experience.

Source: Policy on Recognition of Prior Learning, < <http://ppd.swin.edu.au/stuinf/default.htm> >

*Main users: students undertaking vocational programmes, which may later be articulated into higher education degrees*

#### **The Australian College of Natural Medicine (ACNM)**

ACNM was established in 1975. A private provider, it offers accredited Bachelor degree courses as well as nationally recognised vocational training in the niche market of natural therapy. Courses are developed through consultation with professional associations, external academics and western medicine representatives. Students are made aware that they can apply for RPL on application forms for both higher education and vocational courses. Given the highly regulated nature of the industry there are limits to the amount of prior learning and experience that can be recognised, with more available to those pursuing vocational qualifications.

To gain RPL ACNM unit learning outcomes have to be met through:

- previous formal study in, with, or without follow-up in the workplace;
- informal training such as industry courses, in-service training;
- work experience; and/or
- life experience including hobbies, responsibilities, community work, volunteer work.

A fee of AUD150 (EUR 90) per unit of study is payable upon application.

*RPL can be of particular benefit to students who already have experience in the health industry, for example nurses, who do not have to repeat learning they have already acquired and which is current.*

Source: National VET Manager, ACNM

### **Vocational Training**

While all States and Territories are part of the national VET system, they differ in their approaches to providing state-wide policy frameworks for the implementation of RPL in their jurisdictions. State

and Territory registration and accreditation authorities in Victoria, Queensland, the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory all audit RTOs for compliance with the AQTF, while allowing providers the freedom to develop policies that reflect their institutional circumstances and the communities they serve. The audit process can be used, as is the case in the Australian Capital Territory, not only as a compliance tool but also to market RPL and to spread good practice and give direction to providers.

The other States have in place RPL policies which guide the implementation of RPL in TAFE institutes, and to a greater or lesser degree in private and other providers. Many States have RPL policy and funding arrangements for apprenticeships and traineeships, and arrangements that facilitate RPL for those working in the trades (Wheelahan et al., 2003, pp.13-14).

Below are examples of RPL policies and practices from a variety of providers in the vocational education area. These include publicly-funded courses, private and community training providers. Other examples, such as work in Queensland and South Australia have been mentioned at Component 1.4d.

## Western Australian ACE to VET Pathways programme

A collaborative project between several TAFE Western Australia (WA) colleges has seen the introduction of the *ACE to VET Pathways programme* which provides a pathway between non-accredited adult education courses and a formal qualification in Business or Information Technology studies. The pilot project was devised to:

- increase ACE students' awareness of VET opportunities that build on their ACE experience;
- maximise the potential for skills recognition within a related VET qualification;
- develop a workable, replicable model for 'skills recognition' to enhance pathways from ACE to VET.

The project included professional development workshops for lecturers and assessors.

Source: TAFE Institute, Western Australia

## Trades Recognition in NSW

In New South Wales, the Vocational Training Tribunal (VTT), a part of the NSW Department of Education and Training, is responsible for assessing and formally recognising trade skills. The tribunal consists of representatives from industry, RTOs and the NSW Commissioner for Vocational Training. It assesses applications for recognised trade certificates in accordance with the NSW Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act 2001. Similar processes apply in the other states. The NSW guide to getting trade skills recognised sets out the steps required.

(See [http://apprenticeship.det.nsw.edu.au/docs/trade\\_skills\\_0905.pdf](http://apprenticeship.det.nsw.edu.au/docs/trade_skills_0905.pdf) for the full document.)

As part of the application for a trade certificate it is possible to use evidence of four years' work experience. Such evidence might be a reference from an employer, taxation records or statements from suppliers and clients. This process may involve a work-based assessment for which a fee is payable.

Through a national system of advisory bodies, industry has a strong voice in Australia's VET system. Each of the ten Industry Skills Councils works in partnership with individual enterprises and industry bodies in all States and Territories to promote a learning culture in the workplace and increase participation in training, including access to nationally recognised skills development. Recognition of prior learning has assumed particular importance in those industries experiencing skills shortages or with ageing workforces.

## Community Services and Health

The community services and health industry has a large highly experienced and feminised workforce, a significant proportion of whom do not have formal qualifications. The need to recognise existing workers' skills, in terms of the Training Packages introduced over the last ten years, led the Victorian Community Services and Health Industry Training Board to develop a model for recognising competency. The approach uses primarily interviews and observation, and takes account of the fact that most of the industry's key competencies are based on interpersonal skills. The assessor mentors the candidate through the RPL process and concurrently addresses gaps and training needs. This means that the evidence can be generated during a candidate's normal work rather than relying on an historical approach.

Source: Spencer, Brian, *A common sense, client centred approach*, Community Services and Health Industry Training Board Victoria, 2006)

## The construction industry

The delivery of training in the Australian construction industry has been undergoing a process of reform for the last decade in recognition that the skills base of the industry was being seriously depleted. The response of the union (the Construction Forestry Mining Energy Union (CFMEU)) and the industry to these difficulties has included the establishment of a tripartite industry training body, Construction Training Australia, which has links to a construction industry training advisory body in most States and Territories. In Western Australia, that body is the Building and Construction Industry Training Council (BCITC) made up of members from industry, sub-contractors, employer associations, union groups, professional associations, government agencies and training providers. BCITC oversees the RPL process, offering people assistance in preparing an application. A registered assessor reviews the application and arranges a suitable time and place to assess skills and knowledge. This could be in the workplace or off-the-job. The cost of assessment has been funded by the Building and Construction Industry Training Fund to a total of 45 per cent, with the applicant required to pay AUD 320 (EUR 192.628). This covers the assessment and paper work. An additional charge may be applied for off-site assessments at a TAFE College or private provider's facilities and for hire of venue and materials. The process takes between three and twelve weeks.

Source: < <http://www.bcitcwa.com.au/skills/index.shtml> >

The public sector is also recognising the need to upgrade skills by aligning these to the AQTF. Some government departments and other authorities have become RTOs able to offer training and RPL to their employees.

### Protective Security Coordination Centre (PSCC)

The Australian Government's Attorney Generals Department has established an RTO which specialises in offering qualifications under the Government Security Management stream of the Public Sector Training Package. In addition to training services, the PSCC Training Centre offers an assessment service providing RPL for the qualifications up to Diploma level.

Source:

<[http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/agd.nsf/Page/OrganisationalStructure\\_NationalSecurityandCriminalJustice\\_ProtectiveSecurityCoordinationCentre\\_ProtectiveSecurityCoordinationCentre](http://www.ag.gov.au/www/agd/agd.nsf/Page/OrganisationalStructure_NationalSecurityandCriminalJustice_ProtectiveSecurityCoordinationCentre_ProtectiveSecurityCoordinationCentre)>

### Sydney Opera House

In 1999, the Sydney Opera House was awarded RTO status and became the first performing arts centre in Australia to be able to award nationally-accredited qualifications in the Entertainment Training Package. The Opera House has used the package in conjunction with recognition services so that qualifications can be awarded to people based on their prior learning or experience gained on the job, rather than going on a training course. This has meant many employees who have been in the industry for years with extensive experience but often no accredited qualifications, can gain a formal qualification. Staff can also see where their skill gaps might be in order to work towards a qualification.

Between 1999 and 2006, the Sydney Opera House has issued over 100 qualifications in the field of entertainment to staff and 20 to the wider industry through RPL. A suite of resources have been developed via funding from the NSW Department of Education and Training, 'You Deserve a Qualification', which provide participants with an outline of the process, examples of job roles and equivalent qualifications, examples of job tasks and unit clusters and a simple assessment checklist for over 100 units.

Participants typically provide references from employers, thank you letters from clients, records of past projects, job descriptions, flyers or plans from different stage productions, rosters showing involvement in a show. It is recognised that it is not always easy for someone to locate all of this information, so two assessors, a generalist and a content expert, are always involved in an interview process where the recognition assessment is focused on hearing about the person's experiences and skills and involves questions, scenarios and problem solving, as well as reference to observation in the workplace to supplement the evidence.

While the process is human resource intensive, there is strong support for RPL in the technical theatre areas. Staff are now upgrading their qualifications from Certificate IV to Diplomas based on work projects and development plans.

Source: Training Officer, Organisation Development and Learning, Sydney Opera House

In order to encourage greater attention to RPL in enterprises, the former ANTA funded pilot projects in five enterprises (Cleary & Down, 2005). An evaluation of the project found that the objective of enterprise RPL is likely to be the recognition of competency for recruitment, promotion and pay-rate purposes, although it could also be used for credit transfer towards qualifications. The design and assessment of RPL should therefore focus on the everyday practice and quality standards that occur within an enterprise rather than on the participant's suitability to undertake an institution-based course of study. The report concluded that enterprise-based RPL should be characterised by:

- RPL assessments that occur on-site and within workplaces;
- partnering arrangements that result in enterprise trainers and RTO personnel collaborating to produce quality assessment of participants;
- esteem and trust between suitably qualified workplace assessors and trainers, and RTO assessors and trainers;
- recognition of the economies of scale available within enterprise RPL;
- recognition of the economies that can be produced by collaboration between enterprise trainers and RTO assessors;
- involvement of both enterprise and RTO stakeholders in designing and implementing the RPL process; and
- flexibility in the design, implementation and delivery of the RPL process so that the specific needs of the enterprise can be met within a quality RPL framework and process.

Many professions in Australia are represented by societies and associations which, in turn, often are authorised by the Australian Government to take on the role of skills recognition and accreditation. As described above, there are national guidelines for the recognition of overseas qualifications, although the processes may vary from state to state. This is also the case for the recognition of Australians' skills.

### The Australian Computer Society (ACS)

ACS is the recognised association for Information & Communications Technology (ICT) professionals and also the approved professional organisation providing advice on skills recognition for prospective migrants to Australia. It uses RPL assessment to provide an avenue for applicants without conventional tertiary ICT qualifications to demonstrate that they have acquired a body of knowledge equivalent to that acquired by a graduate of a formal course of tertiary ICT study. Emphasis is placed on demonstrating what has been learned rather than what has been done. ACS has found that applicants find demonstrating their learning rather than merely years of work the hardest single hurdle to clear. To guide them in this, the ACS asks them to measure themselves against a Core Body Of Knowledge (CBOK: <http://www.acs.org.au/index.cfm?action=show&conID=cbok>), which was developed to assist in the accreditation of ICT courses in Australian academic institutions. CBOK consists of fourteen areas of ICT knowledge spanning topics from computer hardware and communications technology, through software, systems and database design to project and quality management, professional ethics and interpersonal relations. Applicants must explain what they have learned about each of the fourteen topic areas in which they claim to have knowledge. In addition they must submit two project reports, each giving a detailed description of a career episode which shows they have applied the claimed knowledge to a working situation. ACS considers this evidence and then decides what qualification level is appropriate. Based on this it will assess the applicant's skills as suitable or unsuitable for the nominated skilled occupation applied for under the General Skilled Migration category. See [https://www.acs.org.au/assessment/docs/RPL\\_Pack\\_2.doc](https://www.acs.org.au/assessment/docs/RPL_Pack_2.doc) for the policy and application. The fee for RPL is AUD 400 (EUR 241) (as opposed to AUD 350 (EUR 211) for skills assessment of formal learning).

Source: Skill Assessment Officer, ACS

As noted earlier in this paper, ACE is very diverse in Australia. Inter alia, it offers an alternative pathway into the VET sector. Formal RPL processes within ACE only apply to accredited VET and further and adult basic education provision. However, RPL is relevant to all ACE providers, because even if they are not RTOs, they play a role in supporting participants to take up more formal education and training. In the past few years, it has been attracting greater emphasis as a way in which to help disadvantaged groups overcome barriers to learning and to find a pathway to vocational training and employment.

### Life Experience Counts

The NSW Local Community Services Association (LCSA) coordinates the Life Experience Counts (LEC) programme using material developed by Learning Centre Link, the State Association for Community, Neighbourhood and Learning Centres in Western Australia. (See <http://www.learningcentrelink.asn.au/newslink.htm#Managingpercent20thepercent20Maze>). LEC is based on RPL principles and acts as a pre-access course for people who have limited formal schooling and/or who are not engaged in formal education, training or employment. It enables participants to gain a basic understanding of the RPL concept; identify the skills and expertise they have learned from life experience; and produce a simple portfolio which demonstrates their skills progress on to further formal or informal learning, training and/or employment.

In 2006, the programme was enhanced to enable participants to gain a statement of attainment and to go on to do courses in computers and first aid, occupational health and safety as well as modules in the Certificate II in Business Services, and Food Handling.

An important feature of LEC is that it is delivered in neighbourhood centres around the state. This represents a collaboration between those centres and the ACE providers, known in NSW as community colleges. Referrals are made through adult education networks and are advertised in neighbourhood centre flyers and community college pamphlets. The partnership model allows participants to learn about the services available at each of the organisations, such as childcare, community transport, pensioner discounts and so on, and means courses are offered in a non-threatening, local environment. This assists learners overcome some of the barriers they encounter in returning to learning and work. The programme is funded by the State Government.

Source: Project Officer 'Life Experience Counts', Local Community Services Association

## **Arrangements for Particular User Groups**

### *Indigenous*

The Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education in the Northern Territory currently enrolls more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at the higher education level than any other tertiary institution in Australia. The majority of the Institute's students are mature-aged—between 30 and 45 years—while almost 63 per cent are women. It is recognised that many of these people bring with them a rich background of skills and learning which can be relevant to their chosen course of study. The Institute offers RPL. Applicants are advised to put together a portfolio before arranging a meeting with an assessor. They are invited to bring someone who knows about skills and knowledge with them to help at this meeting, which is conducted in an informal manner with an Institute lecturer and RPL adviser. At the end of the discussion the applicant will be told what recognition will be recommended to the RPL Committee<sup>47</sup>.

A recent research project conducted at the University of Ballarat in Victoria (funded under the Australian Flexible Learning Framework) investigated a model of online RPL which catered to the strong preference of many Indigenous candidates for oral rather than written communication (on which traditional RPL/RCC processes heavily rely).

The assessment itself was conducted orally, online. The questions were designed specifically for the web-based environment to elicit the knowledge and skill of the individual worker. They were presented both in text format, and orally through the use of embedded audio Flash® files in a web page. The voice tool enabled candidates to record their answer to the question, play back the answer, and re-record if necessary. Once satisfied that the answer reflected their knowledge, they would click on the 'send' button and the audio file was transmitted to the assessor. The assessor would then make a judgement about the quality of the answer and provide feedback via email.

The model was found to be practical and could have broader application for assessing the capabilities of other groups (for example, people from non-English-speaking backgrounds, people with low levels of English language literacy, and people with specific disabilities) whose preferred method of demonstrating competence is through conversation rather than writing or other forms of text evidence (Eagles, Woodward and Pope, 2005).

### *Migrants*

As mentioned in Component 2.2d, there is a variety of professional assessing authorities which recognise the overseas qualifications and skills of people wishing to migrate to Australia under the GSM programme. DEST has issued a good practice guide to assist assessing authorities establish and conduct assessments.

A programme in Brisbane has used a flexible approach to RPL to engage newly arrived migrants. The Inner City Hospitality Strategy was funded under the Community Training Partnerships (CTP) programme and was run by the Multicultural Community Centre (MCC) in partnership with the Hospitality & Tourism Association (HTA), an RTO in Queensland. It involved the training and assessment of prior learning of chefs (all new immigrants, of mature age, mostly male (95 per cent)) in 29 Chinese and Indian restaurants in inner city Brisbane. The approach took into account the need to have supportive mechanisms for arriving immigrants in terms of employment, training and recognition, and to ensure the chefs became familiar with Australia's hospitality industry standards. HTA staff spent time in the kitchens of all the restaurants, collecting evidence from the style of menu, the products being used and the levels of skill involved in preparing the dishes. In addition, HTA ran some formal off-the-job sessions and engaged an interpreter. Overall, the

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<sup>47</sup> [http://www.batchelor.edu.au/file/webpage/about\\_history.html](http://www.batchelor.edu.au/file/webpage/about_history.html)

assessment process was not unlike a job interview in terms of the methods used and the process of matching past experience, acquired either formally or informally, with the job description. Challenges presented by the project included the change of training environment for the trainers and gaining access to the restaurants to conduct workplace observations. Nevertheless, the RPL was achieved without compromising the industry standards and accredited curriculum. (Cameron, 2004, pp 56-65)

### *Veterans*

The Veterans' Vocational Rehabilitation Scheme (VVRS) is operated by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), to help eligible veterans, with or without a disability, who need special assistance to obtain or hold suitable paid employment. They provide free services including help when leaving the Australian Defence Force and moving to civilian employment and thereafter, comprising:

- assistance with updating or upgrading skills, for instance, helping to get recognition for on-the-job training where this is essential for gaining or keeping employment;
- training and educational assistance;
- a professional vocational assessment to determine opportunities; and
- advice on job seeking and finding work.

### **The Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act 1946**

The Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act 1946, administered by Trades Recognition Australia, provides a mechanism for assessing and formally recognising skills in the metal and electrical trades of eligible Australian residents who developed their trades skills informally in Australia (through means other than the traditional apprenticeship system), in the Australian Defence Force or overseas. Successful applicants are issued with an Australian Recognised Trade Certificate (ARTC). To work in the metal and electrical trades, it is usually necessary to obtain a licence or registration from the relevant State or Territory authority.

Source: < [http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol\\_act/trra1946316/](http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/cth/consol_act/trra1946316/)>

### *Volunteers*

There are around 6.3 million volunteers in Australia, and approximately 8 out of 10 volunteers seek training as part of their volunteering because of increasing demands from funding providers and the broader community for volunteers to have accredited training. In response to this need, the National Volunteer Skills Centre (NVSC) was established. It is a project funded by the Australian Government Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and managed by the peak body, Volunteering Australia. It has three key goals:

- to support volunteers and organisations to build their skills and knowledge;
- to strengthen networks and encourage collaboration and the sharing of information; and
- to reduce the duplication of resources and the costs associated with skills development and training.

Part of the project has been the development of an RPL Toolkit to support volunteers and managers of volunteers in learning about the process involved in attaining RPL for existing competency. The information and templates in this toolkit are generic and can be applied to all the skill sets or 'competencies' within the VET system.

### Explaining RPL to volunteers

...if you regularly volunteer as a librarian or a manager of a canteen at community events (or if you are a library or hospitality student and you have already worked in these fields), you will have some skills and knowledge that may form part of the learning outcomes of an accredited training course... you do not actually have to be a student to apply for RPL. If you have volunteered or worked in a field that is relevant to a formal course of study, you may be able to demonstrate competency through your experience that will be acceptable for RPL purposes.

[If]...as part of your ambition for a career in the arts and entertainment industry, you... volunteer at your local theatre company as the stylist and make-up artist. To strengthen your résumé you might decide to apply for RPL for the competency, CUFMUP01A Design, apply and remove period and specialised makeup and put together a portfolio of evidence to demonstrate your skill and knowledge. Promotional flyers and theatre programmes with photos of your work would form key pieces of evidence to support your application, along with third party reports and references from directors, stage managers and the like.

Source: Recognition of Prior Learning Toolkit < [http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/files/8LDS2M13K4/Toolkit\\_recognitionpercent2030-06-06.pdf](http://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/files/8LDS2M13K4/Toolkit_recognitionpercent2030-06-06.pdf)>

## Component 4.2: Access

### 4.2 a) What are the eligibilities to go through the recognition process? If it differs in different sectors/levels (e.g. HEd, VET, upper secondary, basic education, professional, etc.), describe different eligibilities for different levels/sectors.

In the VET sector, anyone able to provide evidence that they have acquired skills and knowledge through prior non-formal or informal learning can apply for RPL within the AQTF. This must be done through an RTO and involves a fee, which is sometimes subsidised by government. In the higher education sector eligibility is subject to particular guidelines issued by individual institutions. If the applicant is successful they may receive part or all of a credential. As explained in Component 3, it is more usual to receive advanced standing or some course exemption in the higher education sector, with full completion of a qualification more likely to be granted in the VET sector. In the ACE sector, the tendency is to use the process to help learners develop confidence, to recognise their own skills and training gaps and to go on to further study.

#### Reaching the disengaged

To give an idea of how RPL is being extended to equity groups in Australia, the following outlines the characteristics of people who accessed the Life Experience Counts course (see above) in 2005, when there were 322 enrolments and 4,821 student contact hours. (Statistics provided by LSCA)

##### Gender and Age

Women made up 88 per cent of participants.

Age ranged from under 19 to over 60 years with the following breakdown:

Under 19 years	7 per cent	20-29 years	10 per cent
30-39 years	17 per cent	49-49 years	33 per cent
50-59 years	26 per cent	Over 60 years	7 per cent

##### Target Equity Groups

84 per cent were Australian citizens

32 per cent were born overseas

16 per cent spoke a language other than English in the home

3 per cent identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander

19 per cent indicated a disability.

##### Education Levels

17 per cent of people were aged 14 years or younger when they completed school

14 per cent were aged 15 years

31 per cent were aged 16 years

38 per cent were aged 17 years or older.

22 per cent finished school in Year 9

15 per cent completed the Higher School Certificate

6 per cent completed an Associate Diploma or Diploma

4 per cent completed postgraduate studies.

29 per cent finished school in Year 10

17 per cent had completed a Certificate qualification

7 per cent completed an undergraduate degree

##### Employment Status

Not in paid employment and looking for part-time work 35 per cent

Not in paid employment and looking for full-time work 17 per cent

Engaged in volunteer work 8 per cent

Employed part-time 13 per cent

Employed full-time 2 per cent

Retired 4 per cent

Not looking for work 10 per cent

Other 11 per cent

##### Source of Income

60 per cent received social security benefits as their main source of income.

Source: Local Community Services Association, NSW

For the highly regulated professions, the use of RPL is very restricted. In this area it is qualifications and formal experience which count. As the demand for skilled workers rises in Australia, there is a trend towards greater application of RPL processes, and funding for these, in the vocational sector.

#### Skills recognition to address skills gaps

In the Australian Capital Territory, the Department of Education and Training is piloting an alternative skills recognition process in the construction, cooking/hospitality and automotive trades. This is giving people in these industries financial support to undertake a recognition process (the Government pays AUD 500 (EUR 301), and the apprentice another AUD 500 with the RTO assessing a person's capacity to get RPL at the Certificate III or trade qualification level.

The assessment is based on actual skills rather than the length of the apprenticeship. It also aims to address actual skills gaps and avoid unnecessary training, making the overall process of qualifying quicker, although the RPL may take a couple of months of formal assessment and interviews. This is an alternative to the system of issuing certificates. See <http://www.det.act.gov.au/services/SkillsRecognition.htm>

Source: Officers from ACT Department of Education and Training

#### **4.2 b) How many educational institutions (in comparison with the total number of educational institutions) at different levels practise the recognition of non-formal and informal learning as an admission policy?**

All RTOs in Australia (c. 4,200) are required to offer RPL as a potential avenue for admission to a course and/or part or full completion of that course. Each higher education institution has its own arrangements with regard to RPL, credit transfer and the granting of advanced standing.

#### **4.2 c) Describe the situation of access to information and communication. Is there one-stop information service centre or help-desk concerning questions which may arise about the recognition system? What medium has been used (leaflet, CD-ROM, website, etc)? If there is a website, please provide the figure of 'click ratio (how many clicks per month – please provide all the records available since the launch of the website.)'. Attach an example. What media channels have been used to publicise the existence of such medium (newspaper, journals, free journals, publicity on the metro, etc)? Specify the names of such media channels.**

The AQTF specifies that the registered training organisations must disseminate clear information about RPL to each client prior to enrolment. The most common forms of dissemination are:

- information in course handbooks and on websites;
- advertising brochures;
- information sessions for intending applicants; and
- advice at interviews.

There is little discussion of RPL in the mainstream media, nor has there been a campaign of billboards. The primary channel used to publicise RPL has been through RTOs.

The Australian Government has funded the development of a set of VET guides for assessors and managers of assessment processes. This includes a Recognition Resource which gives RTOs a framework from which to develop an RPL assessment system tailored to their target groups' needs and resources. The guide is available free from the Resource Generator website<sup>48</sup> which has had 3,291 hits (on the index page) since November 2004. This site also has available, at no cost, RPL Eeezy Kits, which provide a starting point for assessors conducting RPL assessment and suggest options for gathering evidence beyond the portfolio approach. This can enhance the flexibility of

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.resourcegenerator.gov.au>

assessment and minimise the time and effort for both the assessor and the candidate. Kits are available for a variety of Training Packages and contain assessor instructions, advice to candidates and assessment tools. These tools include questions and practical assessments with marking guidance, suggestions about third party reports and how to supplement assessment validation processes. The kits also contain sample recording sheets to assist assessors in the critical task of recording evidence notes and judgement.

Bowman et al. (2003) found in their analysis of written documentation available to learners about RPL in the VET sector that most providers do have written information (print-based and web-based) on RPL, which consistently covers:

- simple definitions;
- a listing of the benefits of recognition for clients;
- the steps involved in the process;
- details of how to apply;
- brief descriptions of the types of evidence needed; and
- contacts for support or further information.

Nevertheless, the study found there remained widespread ignorance among learners about the availability of RPL. Moreover, three-quarters of learners in the study stated they had heard about RPL through personal interaction in face-to-face interviews, information evenings, through work colleagues or by directly asking teachers or course advisers. Only a fifth found out about RPL purely by accessing printed materials such as brochures, handbooks and module guides (Bowman, p. 18). Generally, material on websites is not easily located, even by people who know what they are looking for and are familiar with the terminology.

The need to do more to publicise the availability of RPL has been recognised by the Australian, State and Territory governments, who have committed to a national RPL Initiative to fund infrastructure and resources to increase the uptake of RPL (DEST, 2005a, p. 8).

## **Component 4.3: Participation**

### ***4.3 a) How many people have actually taken up the process at different educational levels? Provide any evidence on the patterns of participants (gender, age, socio-economic groups, ethnicity, employment status, marital status, educational levels and their family educational levels)?***

In 2005 around 3.5 per cent of VET students were granted some type of RPL. The fields of study which had higher than average numbers of students with RPL were 'education' (7.9 per cent) 'natural and physical sciences' (3.4 per cent), 'health and society' (3.1 per cent) and 'engineering and related services' (3.1 per cent). The majority of those taking advantage of RPL are in mid-career, established in the workforce and in associate professional, professional or managerial occupations (Wheelahan, et al., 2003, p.20; Cameron, 2004).

To encourage further uptake of RPL, efforts in the past several years have focused on increasing funding for RPL activity and on encouraging greater use of recognition processes within equity groups.

See also Components 1.4b, 1.4d and 1.4e.

**4.3 b) Provide details of any survey – national household survey, user survey, etc. – that explains any linkage of the background of participants and the uptake of the recognition process.**

The ABS conducts a Survey of Education and Training every four years and this collects information on RPL as does the NCVER 'Student Outcomes Survey'. (See Components 1.4d and 1.4e)

**4.3 c) Provide evidence, if any, that the recognition of non-formal and informal learning worked as an innovative pathway for disadvantaged groups to get on the 'learning leads to learning' and 'training leads to training' track? Who constitutes the 'disadvantaged group' in your country?**

Alternative pathways into learning and accredited training leading to jobs is proving to be a successful way of re-engaging disadvantaged groups. Much of this involves building self-esteem and confidence, often encouraged by recognition of skills the individual does not recognise or undervalues. This does not always start out as a formal RPL process but can lead to skills recognition and credits for study already undertaken.

*Mature-aged jobseekers*

Cameron (2004) notes that those older people benefiting from current RPL processes (in terms of fast tracking the attainment of qualifications) have been people with high levels of self confidence and self esteem, as well as developed ability to engage in self-recognition activities and the recording of these through print-based mediums. Her research did identify innovative approaches to RPL which are benefiting lower-skilled mature-aged jobseekers, a group with the longest rates of unemployment in the Australian labour market.

**Helping mature-aged job seekers**

Joblink is a Commonwealth-funded employment service run by the Veterans Support & Advocacy Service Australia (VSASA) in Queensland. It offers one-on-one guidance and job seeking assistance to 'ex' and soon to be 'ex'-service personnel, veterans, their families and the unemployed and mature-aged within the wider community. Its success is based on its personalised one-on-one service for mature-aged jobseekers, which builds self esteem and confidence, fosters reflection and assists participants to identify and re-value their skills and knowledge. The RPL process involves facilitation with translating informally acquired skills, knowledge and experience into a résumé.

Source: < <http://www.ausvets.powerup.com.au/joblink.htm>>

*People with a disability*

In the area of disability, it is the Australian Government agency CRS Australia which is the largest provider of vocational rehabilitation programmes in Australia. These programmes assist people to manage the effects of their disability, injury or health condition to improve their quality of life and help them to get or keep a job. They include career counselling to help people identify skills and their options. Such counselling involves one-on-one sessions which explore the client's existing skills and how these might be transferred to new occupations. Counsellors offer assistance in putting together résumés, as well as advice on training and areas in which RPL might be obtained. RPL is considered an important element in this, as it can avoid unnecessary repetition of training and reduce the term of unemployment.

*Migrants*

Systems to ensure proper recognition of overseas qualifications and experience have been described at Component 1.2a. However, some migrants still experience obstacles to having their

experience properly acknowledged, with the Federation of Ethnic Community Councils Australia (FECCA) arguing in a 2005 submission to the Productivity Commission that 'too often, skilled migrants arrive in Australia only to discover that nobody will employ them in their skill area'. This, it asserts, is because of discrimination in the Australian labour market<sup>49</sup>.

For many migrant women, poor English and a degree of isolation in the home, can be impediments to skills acquisition and finding a job. For them, adult and community education centres offer an attractive starting point. The informal learning environment encourages them to prepare for further study and work and to improve their English, while also increasing their connection to the local community.

#### **Maria becomes a teacher**

Maria came to Australia from Italy when she was 13. She enjoyed doing courses at her local community centre but it was the Life Experience Counts course that really changed things for her: 'It made me to introduce myself...which before I couldn't...Too scared to talk, for my English.' She went on to do an Asian cooking course. That was where her teacher discovered Maria's Italian cooking skills, and persuaded her to teach a course in Italian cuisine. This in turn led Maria to realise she must improve her English so she could translate her recipes. 'Now, I'm doing an English class at Community College Macarthur.' (Extract from LEC DVD, LSCA, 2006)

#### *Women returning to the workplace*

Women are often attracted to learning in the more relaxed settings provided by community learning centres. These providers are catering to the needs of women returning to the workplace, in particular by raising their levels of confidence and identifying the many skills they have acquired in the home and their local communities. Often, the pathway back to work starts with a non-formal course of learning.

### **Component 4.4: Incentives and disincentives**

**4.4 a) Provide evidence of any, if not all, that the recognition of non-formal and informal learning functions as a transitional or multi-directional pathway in your country (e.g. a way to further studies, shorten study period, find a job, change a job, get a better salary, etc.) If it functions as a way to find a job from the unemployment status, is there any evidence that the length of unemployment influences the transition.**

As can be seen from the examples above, RPL is increasingly recognised as an important component in encouraging greater learning and re-engagement in the workforce, particularly for mature-aged people. Various initiatives at the state level are seeing funds channelled towards career advice and skills recognition for job seekers.

<sup>49</sup>

<http://www.fecca.org.au/Submissions/docs/FECCASubmissiontoProductivityCommissionIssuesPaperAugust2005.pdf#search=percent22skillspercent20recognitionpercent22>

**Profit from Experience**

One programme in Western Australia, called Profit from Experience, reports a very high success rate. The programme gives mature-aged job seekers (unemployed/underemployed aged 40 years and over) access through the Employment Directions Network (EDN) Career Centres to assistance in recognising skills, as well as career guidance and information about training options. For example in 2003-2004, of the 4,233 new registrations at the EDN, 1,379 found a job and 3,380 went on to further education and training. (WA Department of Education and Training website www.det.wa.edu.au accessed 8 September 2006)

**RPL in Queensland VET**

The Queensland Government's Skills First (RPL) enables Skilling Solutions clients to have their skills and experience recognised for full or partial qualifications. Here trained assessors (generally teachers from the TAFE sector) sit down with individuals to develop customised plans for employment and skills recognition. They then refer these individuals to RTOs to have their skills formally recognised and to enrol in training to address any identified skills gaps. AUD 200 (EUR 120) voucher is given to applicants to pay for the RPL assessment. In the first 64 weeks of operation, 8,000 have contacted the service. 6,100 have undertaken face-to-face interviews and 3,386 have been referred on to RTOs for RPL and gap training. (see components 1.4d, 2.3c and 5).

**4.4 b) Provide evidence, if any, of detailed case studies where the actual length of studies was shortened by their recognition of non-formal and informal learning (e.g. number of such cases, the maximum and minimum reduced length and, thus, the costs of the study, the most practised subject areas, etc.).**

There are no detailed case studies dealing with these issues for non-formal and informal learning. However, accelerated apprenticeship programmes are based on the recognition of experience gained in the workplace to shorten the length of time required by apprentices to gain their trade certificates.

**4.4 c) Provide data, if any, of the returns of investments for different stakeholders. Any evidence of better private returns of investment (e.g. earnings) afterwards? Any evidence of fiscal returns? Any evidence of recognition that this type of learning contributes to democracy and citizenship as social outcome of learning?**

Limited data is available. See Component 1.5b.

**4.4 d) Provide data, if any, of practices of fiscal incentives for employers (e.g. tax incentives).**

To encourage greater use of RPL, the Australian, State and Territory Government Ministers responsible for vocational education and training agreed in 2006 that henceforth States and Territories will be able to claim up to 100 per cent of the nominal funded training hours for all competencies awarded to students through RPL.

This decision follows several reports showing that funding RPL at a lower level than actual training provision was a considerable disincentive, given the resource intensive nature of RPL processes, which are usually offered on an individual basis (Wheelahan et al., 2002; Bowman et al, 2004) and can also require site visits to observe work practices and the like. Therefore, even an increase to 100 per cent of nominal funded training hours may not be sufficient to persuade all employers and learners to pursue the RPL option.

Given that on-the-job training, where workers learn informally from co-workers while doing their job, is the most commonly experienced form of skills development provided by Australian

employers (Richardson, 2004, p. 5), the provision of incentives to embrace RPL are likely to see greater recognition of informally acquired skills.

As mentioned above, in 2004 the former Australian National Training Authority funded a national pilot programme aimed at tailoring recognition mechanisms to better meet the needs of individual learners and businesses in a variety of enterprises. AUD 224,554 (EUR 135,173) was allocated to the enterprises to develop and trial their approaches. The project generated significant understanding and practical information about RPL within enterprises (Cleary & Down, 2005, p.12).

**Mitsubishi Motors (Australia) Ltd (MMAL)**

...the (ANTA-funded) pilot has provided the company with a new suite of learning and assessment strategies which complement their existing training efforts and gives the training department more flexibility in upskilling its workforce. The reality is that without the financial support of this pilot project it is unlikely that we would have considered being involved. Our past experiences of costly and time-consuming RPL practices and processes undoubtedly would have had us walk away from this opportunity even though we could see the merits of exploring better ways of engaging RPL into our learning and development strategy.

(MMAL Final Report in Cleary and Down, 2005, p. 30)

**4.4 e) Has the government made an explicit statement about promoting equity and social cohesion by using the recognition of non-formal and informal learning? If so, what kinds of schemes exist?**

As part of the Australian Qualifications Framework, there is a commitment to encouraging individuals to progress through education and training by improving access to qualifications, clearly defining avenues for achievement and generally contributing to lifelong learning.

**4.4 f) Describe a situation in your country if stigmatisation exists for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning (as opposed to the formal recognition) in the academic world and/or in the labour market? If yes, have there been any attempts to change such effects and to increase up-take of such recognition? What strategies have been tested so far?**

The tenth Principle in the AQF *National Principles and Operational Guidelines for RPL* states that RPL assessment processes should be:

- of a comparable standard to those used to deliver and assess the qualification;
- be evidence based, transparent and accountable; and
- explicitly subject to the quality assurance processes used to ensure the standard and integrity of assessment processes within sectors or institutions, and be validated and monitored in the same way as other assessment processes are validated and monitored<sup>50</sup>.

Such quality assurance processes are important to ensure that RPL has the support of educators and employers. With this in mind the joint Australian, State and Territory governments' RPL Initiative will be striving for good practice through professional development and other projects (National Quality Council October 2006 newsletter).

<sup>50</sup> <http://www.aqf.edu.au/rplnatprin.htm#principles>

**4.4 g) Describe any incentives or levers that promoted public-private partnership in the recognition practices in the labour market? What schemes or incentives exist to encourage SMEs to engage in the recognition arrangements?**

See Component 4.4d. The then ANTA Enterprise RPL project conducted in 2004 found that RTOs offering RPL services to private enterprise needed to better understand how to engage with enterprises, large and small, in order to foster greater enthusiasm for using RPL. This would involve:

- greater tailoring of assessment tools, so they better suited the practice within an enterprise; and
- more emphasis on cost-effective models of assessments, for example by carrying these out for a group of employees rather than on the more usual individual basis (Cleary & Down, 2005, p. 63).

## Component 4.5: Others

**4.5 a) Provide any arrangements of collective bargaining that exists in your country. If there are accomplishments gained by collective bargaining for recognition of non-formal and informal learning, please provide details (driving forces, technical arrangements, beneficiaries, etc).**

In March 2006 the *Workplace Relations Amendment (Work Choices) Act* came into force. The Act established the Australian Fair Pay Commission which sets and adjusts the federal minimum wage. The Australian Industrial Relations Commission retains its role as a national tribunal dealing with employment disputes. The guiding principle of this approach to workplace relations is a system which retains a genuine safety net while encouraging conditions of employment to be negotiated at the workplace through agreements<sup>51</sup>.

The Office of Employment Advocate<sup>52</sup> has the role of accepting lodgments of workplace agreements. In so doing, it provides free support and information to both employers and employees on agreement making. In addition to individual workplace agreements there exist collective union agreements, made between the employer and a union or unions. The agreement sets out the terms and conditions of employment, which must comply to the Australian Fair Pay and Condition Standard<sup>53</sup>.

**4.5 b) Provide any other technical arrangements that you think are the most important characteristics that exist in your country, which have not been addressed in above Component 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3.**

None.

<sup>51</sup> <https://www.workchoices.gov.au/ourplan/overview/Anewworkplacerectionssystem.htm>

<sup>52</sup> <http://www.oea.gov.au>

<sup>53</sup> <http://www.oea.gov.au/graphics.asp?showdoc=/home/externalsite.asp&lu=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Ffairpay%2Egov%2Eau%2Ffairpay%2F>



## Component 5 – Case studies on benefits and barriers

### Component 5.1: Economic benefits

This component provides nine ‘real life’ case studies of RPL pathways in action in Australia. The people referred to in the case studies are ‘real’. The case studies have been selected in order to convey insights into the RPL process as experienced by students, teachers/ lecturers, employers and system administrators. Further, each case study has been chosen in order to provide insights into the range of RPL pathways available in Australia and the approaches employed to access those pathways with greatest flexibility for the student while still ensuring high quality outcomes. The information gleaned from these case studies is used to address the listed questions for this component.

The first two case studies actually address pre-access initiatives designed to assist potential students to understand their career options and to realise their capacity to count prior knowledge, skills and experience towards formal qualifications. The *Life Experience Counts* initiative allows people from all backgrounds, including migrants and those from low socio-economic environments, to understand the importance of what they have already done and achieved in life. *Skilling Solutions Queensland* provides a structured support process for people seeking to improve their employment and career pathways, including assistance in acknowledging the importance of what they have already achieved in life, and assistance in converting their experiences into RPL through recognised education and training providers.

The *Hunter Recognition Centre*, located at the TAFE NSW Hunter Valley Institute, provides an example of how a public vocational education and training provider organises assessments of credits for previous study and assessments of prior learning (RPL). This is followed by a case study account of the *Australian College of Natural Medicine*, a private provider of training operating from campuses across Australia. *Hortus Australia*, a registered training organisation operating in all states and territories of Australia, is the third ‘training provider case study’ and has been included because it is arguably the leading national provider of assessment services to rural industries. The final training sector case study is of an initiative to ‘fast track’ mature-aged workers in the retail motor industry in Victoria through acknowledgement and assessment of the knowledge and skills they have accumulated through non-formal experiences.

The seventh case study of the University of New England at Armidale in New South Wales provides insights into some of the RPL pathways and processes available into, and through the university sector in Australia.

The eighth case study reports on the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre which uses RPL as a basis for admission to courses, and the final case study deals with processes for recognising non-formal and informal learning in the South Australian Certificate of Education.

In summary, the case studies show the value of RPL pathways from the perspective of a range of stakeholders. They also demonstrate opportunities for enhancing RPL processes to achieve positive outcomes for both learners and employers.

#### Life Experience Counts initiative

*Life Experience Counts* is a 17-hour flexible delivery course based around recognition of prior learning (RPL). It acts as a pre-access course and builds personal confidence in learning which is especially positive for people who have limited formal schooling and/or are not engaged in formal education, training or employment.

*Life Experience Counts* involves structured sessions, as well as participants converting their life experiences into a story to be shared with peers. It enables participants to: gain a basic understanding of the RPL concept; identify the skills and

expertise they have learned from life experience; produce a simple portfolio that demonstrates their skills; and progress on to further formal or informal learning, training and/or employment.

Neighbourhood Centres and adult and community education (ACE) providers work collaboratively to deliver *Life Experience Counts* programmes. The initiative is funded by the NSW Board of Adult and Community Education, and managed by the Local Community Services Association (LCSA).

Cheryl, a mother of three, left school at the end of Year 11 and got married when she was nineteen. She hadn't worked before, devoting her time to the raising of her children, and now would like to obtain work but in her view lacks the necessary experience, knowledge, skills and confidence. In relation to the *Life Experience Counts* programme, Cheryl says: "Before I did the programme, I didn't think I could get a job. I didn't even know I had skills. I thought to get skills, you have to be working, or you have to go to a TAFE course, or be an apprentice or something to get those skills. And then when I did this course, they asked you: "What do you do every day?". Like: "You know, I help out at the canteen". And they'd say: "Okay, you deal with money, so that's cash handling. And then you'll write receipts, so that's book-keeping". You know, they just bring out these skills and you think "Okay, I do that all day, I *can* at least attempt to look for a job".

Cheryl, a mother of three, is now working as a platform attendant at City Rail. (Extract from *Your Life Experience Counts* DVD, LCSA, 2006)

Rosemary, who became a volunteer teacher after completing the programme, comments: "I recognised what I could do. I was doing things but there was no recognition inside of me. I was just doing them .... But then I started to recognise, 'Hey look at this! I've got all this going for me!'"

## Skilling Solutions Queensland

*Skilling Solutions Queensland* is a new initiative of the Queensland Government designed to provide a structured support process for people seeking to improve their employment and career pathways in today's highly competitive employment market.

Currently, services are provided free of charge through dedicated customer service centres located in a number of cities throughout the state. Plans are also in train to provide a mobile service centre for the benefit of people in the more isolated areas of the vast state of Queensland.

*Skilling Solutions Queensland* offers five primary services:

*Smart Skilling Information* that gives access to current, reliable training and career information on sustainable opportunities at the local level, and maps out the qualifications required for these jobs;

*Smart Skills Fast Track* that connects prospective students with a network of registered training organisations that can assess their current level of skills as part of a recognition of prior learning process;

*Smart Training Guide* that helps people find quality registered training organisations who can help them to develop their own individual training plans;

*Smart Training Choice* that provides information on the training services offered by local, public and private registered training organisations to assist people make the best choice about their learning and skilling needs; and

*Apprenticeship Brokerage Service* that provides face-to-face referrals to job network providers who specialise in assisting individuals to gain employment.

Mary is nineteen years of age and has largely been unemployed since leaving school three years ago. She has had some casual work, but her lack of a post-school qualification has, at least in her view, significantly hampered her capacity to obtain steady work.

Friends have suggested to Mary that she should visit the new *Skilling Solutions* centre at her local shopping centre at Logan, just south of the state capital of Brisbane. They tell her of other young job-seekers who have been assisted by the centre to access courses at local registered training organisations. Further, through the centre, some of these friends have found that many of the things they have done and learned since leaving school can count towards their study with such training organisations, cutting the time needed to obtain their award and, in turn, access steady employment.

Mary becomes one of several thousand people who have sought help from the Logan *Skilling Solutions* centre since it opened less than a year ago. The centre is situated in a major shopping centre, making it easy for her to get to because she can use public transport. It is also good that from the outside at least, the centre looks more like a shop than an educational agency – Mary has some very unpleasant memories about school, and seeking further study has been a big step for her.

Inside, Mary finds that the centre is nothing like the educational offices she remembers. It is open, uncluttered, brightly painted and furnished in a very modern style. There are five other people seeking assistance in the centre, but it is well staffed, and she does not have to wait long before a friendly staff member attends her.

The staff member, Stephen, helps Mary complete a computer-based worksheet called *MYFUTURE*. Stephen shows Mary how to establish a user account with *MYFUTURE* and then Mary works through a series of questions to build up a personal profile. She answers questions about her aspirations, personal interests, formal and informal education, acquired skills and knowledge, values, desired life balance and work conditions, and locations where she would be able and/or willing to work.

Using this profile, Stephen helps Mary explore possible career options through the *MYFUTURE* programme. The information she has entered regarding her education, interests, preferred work conditions, and current knowledge and skills is used to identify a number of possible careers for Mary to consider, along with the main duties and tasks, indicative salary, and desired or requisite training and qualifications for each option.

Mary feels somewhat overwhelmed at this stage, and decides to go home and consider her options. Her profile and suggested career options are saved for her to access at a later time if she feels so inclined. The next day, Mary is surprised to find a letter from the Logan *Skilling Solutions* centre in the mail, thanking her for accessing the service and indicating that a consultant will be in contact with her in two weeks to see if she needs any further assistance. She determines to return to the centre the next day and make a decision about her future.

Mary decides to undertake a hospitality course leading to a nationally accredited Certificate at a nearby TAFE campus. Assisted by Stephen, she puts together a portfolio of information that will assist her not only to gain access to the course she seeks but also to be credited with recognition for a variety of knowledge and skills she has already accumulated through her experiences since leaving school.

Mary now visits the local TAFE where a staff member works with her to assess what prior learning can be recognised. The TAFE is paid AUD 200 (EUR 120) by the Queensland Government towards these RPL costs. The TAFE follows 'standard' procedures for RPL assessment.

Mary is very happy about the support she has received through the *Skilling Solutions* centre. She believes the centre not only helped her clarify her options, but gave her the confidence to approach the TAFE for both enrolment and RPL. She also believes the centre experience helped her to understand that many non-formal experiences she had taken for granted actually represented important skill and knowledge acquisitions for her working life. Alternatively, the TAFE staff are very happy about the work done by the *Skilling Solutions* centre which they consider helped Mary to "get her act together" which in turn made their efforts much more efficient and effective.

### Hunter Recognition Centre (HRC)

Established in 1995, the *Hunter Recognition Centre* provides assessments of credits for previous study and assessments of prior learning (RPL) for the TAFE NSW Hunter Valley Institute. The purpose of the *Recognition Centre* primarily is to coordinate the administration of the application process. Specialist teachers, nominated by Faculty Directors, undertake the actual assessments. Once an assessment has been made, the *Recognition Centre* notifies the applicant of the outcome and stores the evidence of assessment in both hard-copy and electronic formats. Student Administration sections of the seventeen campuses of the Hunter Valley Institute then transfer the data relating to the successful recognition onto their student records as appropriate.

Students who are enrolled in a course at the TAFE NSW Hunter Valley Institute may apply for recognition of prior learning at any time during a year – they do not have to wait to apply during the semester in which courses or modules are offered. In line with most TAFE courses in Australia, students may apply to be granted up to 100 per cent recognition towards the vocational education award.

When students are granted recognition for a module, their transcript records this as being achieved 'by advanced standing'. The 'Statement of Competencies Achieved', however, will contain no statement about how modules were achieved.

When students apply for RPL just prior to the commencement of a semester in which the module(s) for which they are seeking recognition is offered, they are advised to attend the class in the event that their application for recognition is not successful. In addition, students who receive AUSTUDY benefits (financial assistance) may have their benefits reduced if they receive RPL because it reduces the number of hours that they are in full-time study (AUSTUDY benefits are directly linked to the number of hours of instruction).

There are about 200 assessors or specialist teachers who conduct the assessments of RPL for the *Hunter Recognition Centre*. Currently, about 3 per cent of all modules offered through the Institute result in an RPL outcome. Arrangements for quality assurance of the RPL process involve assessors and their Directors meeting to moderate the assessment.

Students who enrol in a course at the TAFE NSW Hunter Valley Institute pay an enrolment fee for at least one semester's tuition. This fee covers all course costs, including the costs of any RPL. If an individual wants 100 per cent

recognition for a qualification, there is a commercial fee attached to the assessment and the relevant Department of the Institute can set the fee for this. Typically this fee will also depend on the location of the assessment, any costs of travel for the assessor, and the level of qualification. RPL assessment for a complete Advanced Diploma, for example, typically costs about AUD 830 (EUR 500) but can cost as much as AUD 2,000 (EUR 1,204).

Interviews with students at the TAFE NSW Hunter Valley Institute revealed that the major benefits from their perspective of the RPL process are the savings in time and money to complete their award. RPL is also seen to be important in developing self-esteem and confidence by allowing students to realise the importance of their prior experience and non-formal learning in contributing to their future studies. Alternatively, students indicated that their major concerns related to lost transcripts, references and letters of commendation required as 'evidence' of their prior experience and achievements, and to the general issue of how to validate non-formal learning in a way that will satisfy the quality assurance processes of the institution to which they are applying for RPL. They also find difficulties in getting evidence to substantiate their work experience if employers have gone out of business or are otherwise difficult to contact.

According to the Director of the *Recognition Centre*, RPL does not require much more effort from teachers than normal face-to-face teaching, and it reduces the number of assignments they may have to mark. A reduced class size (due to RPL) means that they can also spend more time with other students who may require more assistance. Other issues raised during interviews with teaching staff at Hunter Institute included that RPL:

- provide a more relevant, timely and meaningful service to students and employers by better addressing their prior experiences and contexts;
- helps teachers to keep up to date with what's going on in the workforce by allowing them to interact in a more direct and frequent way with 'real' workplaces;
- improves networks with employers and workplaces; and
- improves access by freeing up a greater number of places in classes.

A number of major benefits for employers, include:

- less time needed to be spent by their employees in classrooms (and thus away from the workplace);
- enhanced capacity for employers to gain a much better understanding of the training and qualifications structure and processes; and
- enhanced capacity for employers to gain direct feedback on work practices.

Reportedly, one disincentive for students in seeking substantial amounts of RPL is that it reduces the amount of interaction they can expect with teachers and other students. Decreased interaction with students may also be an issue for teachers who are concerned about the quality of learning for students.

### The Australian College of Natural Medicine (ACNM)

ACNM Pty Ltd is a registered private provider of training operating in three Australian states in the areas of natural medicine and beauty. Nationally recognised and accredited vocational education courses are offered from Certificate to Advanced Diploma levels, and the College also offers degree courses accredited through the Offices of Higher Education in Queensland and Victoria.

Students at ACNM are informed about the availability of RPL and the mechanisms for accessing it through a range of materials provided before and at enrolment. RPL procedures are detailed in student and staff handbooks, and in the College's *Policies and Procedures Manual*. Students can apply for RPL on the basis of formal education and training, informal training (such as industry-based courses), work experience, and life experience (including family responsibilities, hobbies, community involvement, and volunteer work). Students are given informal advice about the likelihood of success of an application prior to formal submission. A fee applies for the assessment which is less than one-third the cost of undertaking the equivalent programme of study.

Candidates for RPL are required to complete an application form, submit an application with accompanying documentary evidence, and enrol as a student (to obtain a student identification number). Applications are reviewed by an RPL Assessment Panel, consisting of a dedicated RPL Assessor, a course expert (relating to the applicant's chosen course of study), and if considered necessary, a person(s) with relevant industry and/or technical expertise. Applicants may be asked to attend an interview with the panel, and/or demonstrate their proficiency if not completely obvious from the documentation. An appeals mechanism is in place for candidates who are unhappy with the decision of the Assessment Panel.

ACNM has an internal policy of not granting more than 75 per cent credit towards a degree qualification and 66 per cent towards a VET qualification through RPL. This is to provide sufficient time for the College to be sure that all graduating students attain the professional standards set by the College.

A senior academic manager at ACNM commented that the RPL system has to be "entirely trustworthy", in order not to compromise the reputation of the college, and to ensure that students do not later find themselves having to re-sit examinations. "There is some risk of falsification of claims. This is not usually a matter of fraud but rather of students

believing they are better than they are and wanting to reduce their course loads and the costs of their training. They rarely see RPL as a process of identifying gaps in knowledge”.

Like many private training providers, ACNM currently is designing new data collection systems which will allow them to track the RPL process and outcomes. No archived data relating to individual RPL assessments is available at present, although ACNM does have a ‘National Precedents List’ that provides details on the amount of RPL previously provided under a range of circumstances.

The senior manager reported that many students complain that they have to “back up a truck full of evidence” to get RPL, and so can find the system onerous. She suggested that this is “partly because they do not fully understand that RPL is another form of assessment”. Similarly, she asserted that lecturers also tend to find the RPL system onerous, as it is a form of assessment demanding more time and, often, double or triple handling. This also creates a burden for the administration, she stated. It also was alleged that other institutions do not always provide enough information to allow a sound assessment of knowledge and experience.

The manager saw the main potential benefits for students to be reduced costs and decreased duration of courses. She argued that RPL was of greatest benefit to older students – those who had accumulated significantly higher levels of experience and other forms of informal learning. She also felt that RPL was more likely to be of benefit in the trades rather than the professions where “assessment can be conducted more objectively in the workplace”.

### Hortus Australia

*Hortus Australia* is a Registered Training Organisation operating in all states and territories of Australia and arguably is the leading national provider of assessment services to rural industries. Hortus Australia has received a National Assessment Award for ‘exemplary assessment practices’.

*Hortus Australia* specialises in assessment and training for agriculture (including rural business management), amenity and production horticulture, land and natural resource management, administration, and workplace training and assessment. It also has some limited involvement with training for the seafood industry. The company is based in South Australia.

*Hortus Australia* actively markets the advantages of RPL, and ways of accessing it, through industry journals, presentations at industry conferences and workshops, and formal alliances with industry associations. In particular, it targets rural managers to ‘champion’ RPL with their staff, and to use it as a “mini skills audit”. People who contact *Hortus Australia* seeking RPL are sent a package containing all the required documentation and support information. On-going telephone support is provided to the applicant throughout the RPL application and evaluation, and a freecall number has been set up for this purpose.

Usually, the RPL assessment process culminates in a visit by a *Hortus* assessor to the candidate’s worksite so that the evidence presented in the portfolio can be evaluated in the context of the workplace. The interview/visit usually takes around 3 to 6 hours, and candidates are provided in advance with indicative questions that will establish the appropriate breadth and depth of underpinning knowledge. Where employees are involved, the workplace assessment usually takes place in the presence of the line manager who can “directly validate claims, act as an advocate for the candidate, and prompt the candidate if and when necessary”. Referees are contacted on specific issues, not to make general comments. They may also be sent a form to sign confirming the claims of the candidate. The focus of the whole process is what is expected by industry in industry and whether the candidate can demonstrate that they meet those expectations. Partly for this reason, no time limit is set on the candidate for the presentation of evidence for RPL.

*Hortus Australia* places an emphasis on the quality of the workplace in making a decision about the extent to which presented evidence is valid. For this reason, they ask wherever possible to be given a tour of the workplace during which time their assessors informally evaluate the quality of practices at the worksite, which in turn allows them to make a judgement about how confident they can be in the assertions being made by the candidate’s supervisors.

Most of the RPL applications that come to *Hortus Australia* are at the level of Certificate IV or above. The company believes that there are three major reasons for this: there is more personal and professional ‘gain’ for candidates at those levels; many people in the industry now already have qualifications at levels 2 and 3, particularly with the VET programmes now running in schools; and it is at the higher levels of the rural industries where workplace skills are most obviously exceeding the qualifications currently held.

RPL is directly overseen by the three Directors of *Hortus Australia* as evidence of the importance the company puts on the process. *Hortus Australia* has put in place a dedicated evaluation and feedback mechanism involving relevant stakeholders in order to assess and improve the quality of its RPL processes. Further, *Hortus Australia* has a formal process of probation and mentoring for staff who will be involved as RPL assessors.

## Retail Motor Industry - Victoria

In 2005, the *Fast Track Apprenticeship* pilot programme was developed to alleviate the skills shortages that currently exist in the Retail Motor Industry. The initiative was based on a partnership approach involving the Victorian Automobile Chamber of Commerce (VACC), the Centre for Workplace Communication and Culture (CWCC), and the Kangan Batman TAFE, as well as participating automotive manufacturers.

The initiative focused on mature aged workers, and was designed to pilot a new approach involving the sourcing of different types of people (e.g., skilled migrants, career changers) for the automotive industry and providing them with an opportunity to undertake a new type of training through a fast track approach. The FTA programme focused on the attainment of two qualifications in the automotive industry and how they could be delivered in a more intense and work orientated manner: the Certificate III in Automotive (Light Vehicle Mechanics) and the Certificate II in Automotive (Vehicle Servicing).

Through VACC's Auto Apprenticeship Programme, the recruitment processes used are designed to employ the right people for the specific position and subsequently match them with the right host employer. As part of the initial process, VACC conducted pre-selection testing of all applicants to ascertain their basic level of understanding in mechanical concepts, spatial recognition, numerical calculations, their level of understanding in safety instructions and also their attitudes towards safety. Applicants who demonstrated a reasonable level of achievement were invited to an interview.

The interview panel consisted of three members: a representative from Kangan Batman TAFE, the VACC Apprentice Field Manager, and a Service Manager from an automotive dealership. The TAFE representative asked questions relating to previous education (both formal and non-formal), preferred learning methods, willingness to commit to workloads. The Service Manager asked questions relating to work history and achievement, level of interest in the automotive industry, and the ability to adapt to different environments. The VACC Field Manager's questions related to behavioural styles, conceptual thinking and personal interests and attributes. The most suited applicants were then selected based on the agreement of all members of the panel.

VACC worked extensively with Kangan Batman TAFE to develop a process for identifying previous knowledge and skills gained through both formal and non-formal learning in order to provide advanced standing for the apprentices into their qualifications. RPL provided to apprentices related to both on-the-job and off-the-job competencies listed for the qualifications. Each apprentice was then helped to develop a Negotiated Training Plan that specifically related to their qualification without the duplication of competencies previously acquired, either formally or non-formally. As a result, the apprentices have been able to complete their qualifications in much quicker time than would otherwise have been the case.

Industry knowledge of its members, careful selection and matching, and intensive support to individuals ensured the use of RPL was highly successful in facilitating fast tracking arrangements for mature-aged workers.

## RPL Pathways at the University of New England

The University of New England (UNE) was the first Australian university established outside a capital city. Established in 1938, UNE is now Australia's longest continuous provider of distance education.

Trish has completed a Diploma in Business through the New England Institute of TAFE, and makes enquiries as to what advanced standing this might provide into a Bachelor of Business (BBus) at UNE. Her expectation is that she will be given some exemptions from university subjects on the basis of the formal study that she has completed with TAFE. In discussion with a UNE staff advisor, however, Trish finds that the experience and non-formal learning she has acquired through three years in a full-time management position with a local accountancy firm will also contribute significantly to advanced standing for her university qualification. Indeed, the combination of credit transfer and RPL result in Trish being granted 67 per cent credit towards her BBus qualification. Trish does not have to pay any fee for her RPL assessment at UNE.

Dave has completed an Advanced Diploma in Accounting through the Gordon Institute of TAFE in Victoria, and has been working for two years with an accounting firm in Armidale. Dave makes enquiries about university study through UNE, and is introduced to an academic advisor in the New England Business School who suggests a pathway leading to accreditation with the National Institute of Accountants (NIA). On the basis of both his completed TAFE qualification and documented work experience, Dave applies for Associate Membership of NIA which allows him to enrol directly into the Graduate Certificate in Professional Accounting at UNE, even though he has not completed a university undergraduate

qualification. The academic mentor explains to Dave that professional associations frequently value experience and non-formal learning as highly as formal learning, and actually believe that formal learning on its own is not sufficient for advanced standing into a university qualification. Dave has since completed his Graduate Certificate in Accounting and, using credit transfer, a Masters of Commerce, and now holds Professional Membership of the National Institute of Accountants (PNA).

James has held middle and senior level management positions in a national retail company for over a decade, and during that time has attended a significant number of formal and informal workshops conducted either by his company or by the Australian Institute of Management (AIM), of which he is a member. At 52 years of age, James would like to complete a Masters of Business Administration, but is concerned about how long it will take him to initially complete the Bachelor of Business which he believes is a necessary pre-requisite for entry to the Masters degree. James sends a comprehensive portfolio of his formal and informal education and professional experience, along with appropriate evidence, to the business school at UNE for advice. James is informed that, largely on the basis of his extensive professional experience and associated non-formal learning, he is able to gain direct entry to an MBA, although he must complete 16 rather than the standard 12 units for the course (the additional four units being added to ensure that James has all of the foundation knowledge necessary for success in the programme). James did not have to pay any fee for his RPL assessments because he enrolled in a course at UNE.

### The Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre (AIRC)

The Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre (AIRC) offers accredited training (Certificate II, IV and Advanced Diploma) in Indigenous Leadership. These courses are designed for Indigenous Australians who are active, through employment or voluntary participation, in Indigenous community organisations, government departments or corporations at local, regional, state and national levels.

The AIRC became an RTO in 2005 and has been refining its approach to accredited training (including RPL processes) to ensure that these meet the competency-based requirements of the system, while also maintaining a strong focus on Indigenous knowledge and culture, world view and ways of doing.

Participants in the AIRC courses come from all States and Territories, are aged from 19 years to people in their sixties, and have a range of backgrounds from work in remote communities to Australian government departments.

Entry to the AIRC leadership courses is on the basis of an application, in effect a demonstration of prior formal, non-formal and informal learning.

The current Certificate II application form asks applicants to show their leadership skills, knowledge and experience and a vision for Indigenous Australia. These are used as supporting evidence towards course units of competency. The Certificate IV application form is more comprehensive and two referee reports are required.

The Department of Education, Science and Training funded the AIRC to develop the Advanced Diploma in Indigenous Leadership. An RPL assessment kit was also developed and is used by the AIRC at the Advanced Diploma level, aligned to the ten units of competency. Participants are asked to provide testimonies from supervisors and peers in their workplace as well as a community representative, to show evidence of Indigenous leadership and skills being practised. This is supported by workplace documents, a résumé and an interview.

In all courses the group approach to learning is emphasised. This encourages participants to share their learning and identify the commonalities that exist among them, despite the fact that they often come from very varied backgrounds. Such group learning also accommodates the way in which traditional knowledge is often transferred<sup>54</sup>.

### Recognition of informal and non-formal learning in the South Australian Certificate of Secondary Education

The South Australian Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA) has had in place for a number of years provision in its South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) for the recognition of informal and non-formal learning that has happened outside schooling. Its curriculum framework statements outline the learning outcomes that are expected from courses and programmes.

The curriculum frameworks are used in the first instance as a benchmark. The recognition process can also involve the consideration of community based learning in the context of a more general framework of appropriate learning outcomes.

<sup>54</sup> See <http://www.indigenousleadership.org.au>

In 2002 the Board of the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia (SSABSA)<sup>55</sup> implemented a Recognition of Community Learning Policy (SSABSA 2006). This policy aims to recognise learning towards the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) that has occurred in community-devised accredited programmes and also learning that does not follow an organised programme of instruction. Students must apply to have their community developed programme counted towards the SACE by completing the necessary application form which asks them to identify the awards they have gained (first aid certificate, bronze award, etc.) and to attach documents which provide evidence of their achievement. Students who want to have their personal learning programme recognised towards the SACE must also provide evidence of their learning.

#### *Community Developed Programmes*

Organisations wishing to have their qualifications accepted for the SACE will work with SSABSA officers. These organisations are asked to provide curriculum documents, assessment prescriptions, syllabuses or guidelines, evidence of student performance at various levels, evidence of quality assurance mechanisms, discussions with community leaders. SSABSA will evaluate this information against the learning that is acquired in SSABSA accredited subjects.

#### *Personal Learning Programmes*

Students may provide evidence of personal learning programmes through a variety of ways. They may choose interviews, portfolios, witness statements. Although students are responsible for collecting the evidence to support their claim for recognition of personal learning they may obtain help from a teacher or mentor. Once the evidence has been collected the student will attend a meeting with SSABSA assessors. At this meeting the student will have to demonstrate knowledge and application and reflection and critical thinking. The following activities can be used for personal learning programmes.

- acting as the prime carer for an elderly person
- learning from an elder about Indigenous cultural activities
- planning and coordinating a series of community events
- managing the family household
- officiating at a series of sporting events

Students may use evidence from the following categories which are used as the framework for the reporting on the certificate of the learning recognised:

- volunteering (Meals on Wheels, caregivers, mentoring, peer support, SA Country Service, Royal Life Saving Society Australia, St John Ambulance Cadets)
- community development (Support – Refugees, Environmental – Trees for Life, Activism (- Amnesty, Youth Parliament, Community Arts, Cultural Learning)
- self-development (Scouts Australia, Guides Australia, Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Australian Airforce Cadets, Personal Skills)
- independent living (Community Access Skills)
- performance (Trinity College London, Australian Music Examinations Board, Drama performance, Dance performance, Music Performance, Public Speaking)
- sports skills and management (sports coaching, sports umpiring, sports performance, sports management)
- recreation skills and management (recreational pursuits [for example, chess] personal enrichment, event management)
- work skills and career development (learning in part-time work, workplace skills, workplace knowledge, workplace responsibility, career skill development, career planning).

#### *Issues for RPL*

SSABSA has identified a number of issues that relate to the incorporation of RPL for community based non-formal learning and qualifications in SACE. According to Keightley & Bauer (2003) the main issues deal with quality assurance. In part, they refer to maintaining both the integrity of the SACE qualification and the community-based credential, in addition to the original aims of the community-based programme. This means that any process supported by SSABSA must be 'rigorous, have credibility and be equitable (p7)'. It also means that the process undertaken to ensure that both types of credential have equivalent value must not 'devalue' either qualification. Other issues refer to the need to maintain the voluntary nature of the process, and to understand that there will be limitations on the capacity of community organisations (often staffed by volunteers) to collect all the evidence required to have the qualification accredited for inclusion into the SACE. There is also a need to acknowledge that not all students who participate in community-based non-formal learning programmes need or want to have this recognised for inclusion into the SACE.

Keeping in mind that there are many non-formal community-based programmes that do not use a formal learning and assessment structure, and are organised around 'participation and fun activities', rather than assessment processes, Keightley & Bauer (2003) indicate that there is a need to work out ways for determining the extent of the learning that has been acquired.

<sup>55</sup> SSABSA is charged with awarding the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)

**5.1 a) Shortening the formal education process and thus reducing direct costs of learning and opportunity costs for individuals.**

Several of the case studies above highlight the often significant shortening of the formal education process resulting from RPL. The Hunter Recognition Centre study, for example, noted that it is possible to gain RPL for 100 per cent of a training qualification, while the UNE study detailed a student who had received two-thirds of a higher education qualification through a combination of credit transfer and RPL. Similarly, the Fast Track programme used through the Retail Motor Industry in Victoria purposefully uses RPL to shorten (or “fast track”) the formal qualification process.

Teachers and administrators reported in a number of the case studies that RPL resulted in reduced direct costs of learning for students, and in delivery costs for training or higher education institutions. Similarly, students reported the significant opportunity gains attributable to the shortening of the formal education process through advanced standing gained by RPL (see, for example, the Hunter Recognition Centre case study).

**5.1 b) Increasing the visibility of non-formal and informal learning outcomes and thus enhancing potential benefits for future economic gains.**

All of the case studies provide strong evidence of increased visibility of non-formal and informal learning outcomes, certainly for students and at least frequently for employers. It is not possible through the case studies, however, to assert – other than intuitively – that this increased visibility has enhanced potential benefits for future economic gains. Rigorous longitudinal research would be required in order to comment with any confidence on the nature of that cause – effect relationship.

**5.1 c) Improving the allocation of human capital within organisations by matching the appropriate demands and supplies of skills and competencies.**

There are some indications in the case studies conducted of the Retail Motor Industry in Victoria and Hortus Australia that RPL may be contributing in part to improving the allocation of human capital within organisations, but the evidence is tenuous at best and no definitive statement can be made from the case studies in relation to this issue.

**5.1 d) Reducing skills shortages or skills mismatch by allowing more mobility within the labour market (occupational mobility).**

The case studies do not provide evidence that supports a comment one way or the other in relation to this issue.

**5.1 e) Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by the active use of the potential labour population (older workers, women, immigrants, unemployed youth, etc).**

The case studies do not provide sufficient information to allow comment in relation to labour force issues relating to immigrants or unemployed youth. The Life Experience Counts case study, however, provides evidence of a focus on assisting women to enter the workforce, and the Retail Motor Industry case study specifically targets older workers. Indeed, there is evidence in many of the case studies that RPL particularly supports the active involvement of older workers. None of

the case studies, however, can be used to support – or indeed to reject – the proposition that the active use of the potential labour population supports economic growth.

**5.1 f) *Ensuring labour force to support economic growth by improving productivity of the current labour force.***

The case studies do not provide direct evidence in relation to this issue.

## **Component 5.2: Educational benefits**

**5.2 a) *Reshaping the established concept of education from ‘terminal education’ to ‘lifelong learning’.***

A common theme across all nine case studies is that the recognition of non-formal and informal learning acts as a ‘catalyst’ for people to enter relevant and appropriate formal learning pathways, which may involve single or multiple – including nested – qualifications. The case studies do not, however, provide direct or sufficient evidence that improved access to formal qualifications translates into a commitment to lifelong learning.

**5.2.b) *Provide flexible personalised learning pathways.***

The case studies provide compelling evidence that RPL can facilitate flexible and personalised learning pathways. They provide evidence of a range of entry points to a range of qualifications that can then be pursued in a range of ways to achieve a variety of personalised outcomes.

**5.2 c) *Raising educational attainments levels by increasing the completion rates of secondary education qualifications.***

The case studies do not provide sufficient information to make this conclusion although students participating in the programme detailed in the case study of the South Australian Certificate of Education (p. 109) use RPL to complete the senior secondary qualification.

**5.2 d) *Increasing the tertiary participation rates of non-traditional learners.***

The case studies exemplify a range of people who may not otherwise have entered formal education at the tertiary level. By inference, therefore, the case studies would appear to support the proposition that RPL can contribute to increased tertiary participation rates. By their very nature, however, case studies rarely collect information that can be quantified or generalised, and so can not be used as more than anecdotal evidence that the proposition may be true.

**5.2 e) *Improving the teacher work force through more flexible entrance to teaching occupation.***

The case studies have not collected information relevant to this issue.

### **Component 5.3: Social benefits**

**5.3 a) *Building social institutions to arrange smoother transition from education to work and from work back to education; increasing socio-cultural equity and social cohesion by providing pathways for formally excluded disadvantaged groups to be included.***

The case studies do not provide sufficient information to allow comment on this issue.

**5.3 b) *Leading to the better societal values (e.g. promotion of democracy, intercultural understanding, better health, lower criminal rates, etc).***

The case studies do not provide information relevant to this issue.

**5.3 c) *Enhancing flexibility to allow more mobility within the education and training sector (e.g. between VET and HE and from FE to HE, etc).***

The case studies, and in particular the studies of the Hunter Recognition Centre and the University of New England, provide strong evidence of the capacity of RPL to enhance flexibility and mobility within and between education sectors, with RPL being used to facilitate access with advanced standing into higher level awards within the same sector (e.g. from Certificates to Diplomas within VET), or from awards in one sector into awards in another sector (e.g. from VET Diplomas into university degrees).

**5.3 d) *Building a stepping stone for prisoners to be re-integrated into a society.***

The case studies do not address this issue.

### **Component 5.4: Personal benefits**

**5.4 a) *Empowering individuals to have more control over where and when they learn.***

An underlying theme of all the case studies is empowering individuals with respect to their learning. Each of the case studies carries an inference of personal choice over where and when individuals learn. The Skilling Solutions Queensland case study, for example, is built around the use of support structures and people for the purpose of assisting individuals to make their own learning choices.

**5.4 b) *Developing the aspirations of those who have ‘dropped out’ to résumé learning and to complete a qualification.***

The first two case studies strongly support this proposition, with each providing a different approach to developing the confidence and self-esteem necessary for individuals who have ‘dropped out’ of formal learning pathways to resume learning and to pursue a qualification.

**5.4 c) *Reducing the stigma of qualifications associated with non-formal and informal learning.***

The case studies do not provide information relevant to this issue.

## Component 6 – Conclusions and challenges

This section presents the major conclusions, issues and challenges to emerge from the information presented in this document regarding the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in Australia. Because of the diverse geographic, economic and political nature of Australia, it is not always possible to generalise in the discussions attending each issue, although increasingly Australian education and training systems are establishing strong common ground in relation to their policies and processes.

The presentation below of the major issues, challenges and themes emerging from the information presented in this document is seen to provide an integrated response to the questions posed for Component 6, namely:

6. a) *Which national goals, if any, in your country, are ‘the recognition of non-formal and informal learning’ most closely associated with? Are these goals associated with lifelong learning agenda or something else? If something else, specify.*
6. b) *What strategies (short-term, mid-term and long-term) are needed to operationalise the ‘recognition of all types of learning outcomes – including formal, non-formal and informal learning’ in your country? What are the most challenging tasks for policy-makers in the due course?*
6. c) *Address important policy issues for your countries which have not been addressed in any of the previous Components.*
6. d) *Please describe how much the ‘Lifelong Learning for All’ strategies are implemented at post-compulsory education level in your country?*
6. e) *Please list some ‘factors’ which you think as unforeseeable and yet necessary conditions to realise the ‘Open Learning Society’ scenario, which gives value to formal, non-formal and informal learning.*

### Issues and challenges

The major issues and challenges regarding the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in Australia would appear to be:

#### **1. The recognition of non-formal and informal learning is a major policy initiative of all Australian governments, and is primarily seen as a catalyst for lifelong learning pathways**

In Australia, non-formal and informal learning is increasingly contributing to access – frequently with advanced standing – for people of all ages and backgrounds into formal programmes of training and study. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning is promoted strongly at both the system and institutional levels as providing valuable and valued knowledge and skills that can count towards formal qualifications in the VET and higher education sectors, and in particular, give access to formal qualifications for people who might not have otherwise made the attempt.

#### **2. There remains no nationally consistent definition for RPL in Australia**

While the AQF *National Principles and Operational Guidelines for RPL* do provide a definition for RPL, the federated structure and diversified nature of the education and training system in Australia means that the definitions can vary, sometimes subtly but also sometimes significantly, across States and between sectors, and sometimes within sectors. Universities, for example,

generally use RPL as an all-embracing term for advanced standing thereby including credit transfer, subject exemptions, work experience, and the recognition of non-formal and in-formal learning (see the *UNE* case study in Component 5). This is not the case in the VET sector. A major consequence of the lack of a consistent definition is that it has not been possible to establish a nationally comprehensive, consistent and internationally comparable quantitative database, and thereby benchmark performance and assess progress.

### **3. RPL can be a powerful process to assist student career planning**

The RPL process has been shown in Australia to be of major assistance in helping candidates understand where their employment strengths, weaknesses and interests lie, particularly if the process has included direct interaction with workplace supervisors and mentors. This can help people map not only appropriate careers, but also appropriate pathways for attaining their goals. This is well exemplified by the *Skilling Solutions* case study presented in Component 5.

### **4. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning can have a significant positive impact on learner confidence and motivation**

There is considerable evidence in Australia that the RPL process can provide a significant confidence boost to persons thinking about formal learning pathways. Through the RPL process, people often come to realise just how much they already know and can do, and can gain the confidence to enrol for a qualification or training programme that they otherwise might not have attempted, or at least would have approached with trepidation. The *Life Experience Counts* case study in Component 5 provides direct comments from individuals that emphasise this issue. Confidence is identified in the literature as a key element in motivating adult learners to achieve success in any learning programme.

### **5. RPL can be of assistance in the development of more learner-centred education or training programmes**

The process of documenting and recognising non-formal and informal learning can provide important information on what the candidate knows and can do in a form that reportedly can be of assistance to teachers, trainers and lecturers. Further, the RPL process can provide significant insights into how each candidate learns best, allowing the teaching-learning process to be matched with learning styles. These issues were elaborated in the *Hunter Recognition Centre* case study presented in Component 5.

### **6. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning can provide significant assistance to employers regarding the potential contribution of employees to the business, particularly in the context of addressing skills shortages**

Particularly where supervisors participate in the process, there is increasing evidence in Australia that RPL is an effective way of assisting employers to understand more comprehensively the actual accumulated knowledge, skills and experiences of their employees, so that in turn, the business can make maximum productive use of those employees. The case studies of *Hortus Australia* and the *Retail Motor Industry* discussed in Component 5 provide 'real life' insights into this issue.

### **7. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning provides a particular benefit to mature-aged people seeking to improve their employment prospects**

Anecdotal evidence suggests that, in Australia, mature-aged people are likely to be timid about and demonstrate resistance to accessing formal qualifications. This may be due to a range of reasons that relate to entrenched feelings of inadequacy and the possibility of failure. However, mature-aged people are invariably those who have accumulated the most comprehensive and powerful suite of skills and knowledge through non-formal and informal learning. As a consequence, mature-aged people are likely to be eligible for considerable advanced standing through the RPL process, which in turn can act as a very significant motivator for them to complete a programme of formal education or training and thus significantly improve their employment or promotion prospects. The

case studies presented in Component 5, particularly for the *Retail Motor Industry – Victoria* and the *University of New England*, highlight this benefit.

**8. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning can help counter the growing concern in Australia about maintaining our knowledge and skill base in the face of an ageing population**

As previously elaborated in this document, Australia has a rapidly ageing population, which in turn is putting increasing pressure on its capacity to maintain the necessary levels of knowledge and skill to remain competitive in the global economy. Recognising the considerable knowledge and skill of older workers that has been accumulated through a lifetime of non-formal and informal learning can provide a powerful base from which to develop new or higher level knowledge and skills for the country. The *Retail Motor Industry* and *Hortus Australia* case studies, presented in Component 5, provide good examples of this point.

**9. Persons seeking recognition of non-formal and informal learning frequently require considerable direct support throughout the process**

Evidence from across the country suggests that many people wishing to access formal education and training pathways through RPL lack the confidence to pursue the steps on their own, and need considerable assistance and encouragement throughout the process. Governments in all States have recognised this issue, and are taking steps to provide a strong and readily available support structure for people seeking RPL, particularly those who hold no formal post-school qualification. A number of innovative solutions are being trialled, such as *Skilling Solutions* and the institution-based recognition centres described earlier in this document.

**10. The RPL process, including the collection and presentation of supporting information, needs to be simpler and more streamlined**

Evidence from across all states and education sectors in Australia strongly suggests that complexity in the RPL process, as well as the appearance of complexity, are major disincentives for students seeking RPL, and may be a major contributor to the less than desired level of use of RPL in learning pathways in this country. Strong support for this perspective came, in particular, from the individuals interviewed during the collection of information for the case studies. It is often a daunting step for people to seek to improve their qualifications by enrolling in a programme of education and training, and this anxiety is likely to be amplified if they are confronted by a complex and time consuming process and by language that may be difficult to understand. Further, it appears unlikely that providers will be motivated to promote and implement RPL as a valued process for students if they find it difficult to interpret policies and documentation. The COAG agenda includes a set of initiatives to assist RTOs and assessment centres to offer quicker and simpler processes to recognise the existing skills of all people entering training by January 2007. The Australian Government is working with the States and Territories to ensure smooth implementation of these initiatives. State training systems across Australia have also acknowledged this important issue, and significant steps continue to be taken to make RPL policies and procedures clear, concise, jargon free and ‘user friendly’.

**11. The administrative costs, both in terms of money and time, associated with RPL are seen to be a significant disincentive for both candidates and providers**

State training systems, training and higher education providers across Australia readily acknowledge this issue, and have made significant steps in the last few years to streamline the processes and minimise the costs associated with RPL (see Component 2 for elaboration). All State training systems now subsidise RPL in State-funded training programmes, and many providers have instituted interactive computer-based or online processes for reducing the time and cost of RPL. Most universities have established ‘generic’ arrangements for frequently-used RPL pathways. Precedent databases increasingly have been established in both the training and higher education sectors to reduce the time and monetary cost of RPL applications (see, for example, the *ACNM* case study in Component 5).

An associated concern expressed by some providers, and supported to some extent by existing statistics, is that the cost of RPL mostly impacts on disadvantaged people whose access to education and training is being assisted through RPL. It would seem reasonable to argue that these are also the cohorts of people most affected in a negative sense by the level of complexity in the process. The data presented earlier in this report indicate that the rate of participation in RPL for at least some of the major equity groups is comparatively low, and it may be reasonable to link at least part of the reason for this to issues of cost and complexity of process. However, there is limited evidence to confirm this link.

***12. There is widespread concern in Australia about the difficulty many RPL candidates have in validating their non-formal and informal learning***

Many people do not consider keeping validated records of their non-formal and informal learning experiences because, at the time, the idea of undertaking a qualification, let alone providing evidence for RPL, was not a consideration. Similarly, many businesses do not keep detailed records of staff participation in a range of professional activities, formal or informal, particularly once the employee moves on to another job. Further, as businesses move to electronic record-keeping, paper files of all but the essential industrial relations and workplace conditions information are frequently discarded. This leaves candidates in the position of not being able to formally validate relevant experience, and assessors in the position of having to make significant assumptions when making RPL assessments. Also validation of non-formal and informal learning is important in supporting migrants to obtain information about their professional and life experiences in their country of origin. These issues are highlighted, for example, in the *Hunter Recognition Centre* case study in Component 5.

***13. Processes and procedures for appropriately collecting, storing and analysing data relating to the recognition of non-formal and informal learning remain a major issue and challenge in Australia***

There is no consistent process in Australia for recording subjects or awards achieved through RPL assessments on databases in either the VET or higher education sector. Further, there is no consistent process for accessing RPL data that allows rigorous analyses to be conducted and reported accurately at a national level. As a consequence, research into RPL processes and trends is largely based on case study or qualitative methodologies with limited capacity for generalisation and considerable margins for error. Collecting robust information on RPL that can effectively contribute to policy and practice in the area of RPL would require a high quality process for collecting, storing and analyzing relevant information. A number of Australian States are moving in this direction. As detailed earlier in the document, New South Wales for example has established the Student and Course Information System which addresses many of the RPL data issues for the public training system in that State.

***14. There is still considerable variability in Australia regarding the way in which RPL assessments are conducted within and across institutions, within and across states, and within and across sectors***

Notwithstanding the development in 2004 of the AQF National Principles and Guidelines for RPL (see Component 2), there still remains a wide variety of ways in which RPL assessments are undertaken across the country. Existing research suggests that much of the variation relates to the variety of understandings that teachers, lecturers and institutions have regarding the purpose of RPL, with many regarding it as 'just another form of assessment' while others view it as a process for confirming professional credibility and competency achieved through the workplace. This translates into considerable variation in the amount and nature of 'evidence' required for assessments. There is also a school of thought held in many parts of the country, and certainly expressed during the collection of information for the case studies, that subjects credited through RPL assessments are somehow achieved at a different 'standard', and should be differently recorded on formal academic transcripts. This raises the issue and challenge – yet to be

addressed in Australia – of how, at a system or national level, RPL assessments of non-formal and informal learning might be subjected to a process of moderation to ensure confidence in the comparability of the RPL process.

**15. *There is a limited number of methodologically rigorous research and evaluation in Australia into the impact of the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, and the factors that promote and inhibit that impact***

There have been some excellent research studies undertaken in Australia into RPL, but the number is limited and the questions still to be answered are numerous. In particular, there would seem to be a need for more rigorous quantitative analyses and modelling of statistics and trends, and qualitative longitudinal studies of the influence on the life paths of Australians of various ages, gender, and cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. In large part, the gaps in the research base are directly linked to the problems in data collection and recording, but alternatively, the nature of the databases must respond to the nature of the research and analysis to which they will be subjected. Meeting these challenges is important since effective policy development and implementation is so critically linked to the quality, relevance and comprehensiveness of the research and statistics available.

## **Conclusion: The key themes**

Nine major themes currently appear to underpin the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in Australia:

1. The recognition of non-formal and informal learning is a major policy initiative of all Australian governments, and is seen to be an important element in developing and sustaining the knowledge and skill base necessary for Australia's social and economic future.
2. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning is an integral and valued component of learning pathways in both the training and higher education sectors in Australia. In many instances, it acts as the catalyst for access by students to those pathways.
3. There is strong evidence that in the Australian context at least, there are significant advantages of RPL that lie in the use by students, teachers, trainers, lecturers and employers of the information gained through the process itself, not just in the advanced standing it may provide.
4. One of the major advantages attributable to the recognition non-formal and informal learning relates to the feeling of worth and self-confidence it can provide for the candidate – an understanding that their life experiences have provided them with important knowledge and skills that can be used to access employment, promotion or formal study.
5. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning in Australia could have particular benefits for mature-aged people.
6. A number of innovative initiatives are being trialled by Australian, State and Territory governments, VET and higher education providers for decreasing complexity and increasing support for people throughout the RPL process.
7. There is still considerable variability in Australia regarding the way in which RPL assessments are conducted within and across institutions, within and across States and Territories, and within and across sectors.

8. There is a need for more effective recording and storage of RPL data in Australia, and for more rigorous and focused research to guide policy development and implementation.
9. There is a need to develop a nationally consistent definition of RPL in Australia that would apply across all States and Territories, and education and training sectors, which would in turn facilitate the development of nationally consistent data.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: The integration of highly skilled workers

Current national migration policy is mainly focused on skilled temporary and permanent migration to meet labour market needs in areas of skill shortages, especially in regional Australia (Joint Standing Committee on Migration, 2006). The recognition of non-formal and informal learning through pre-migration and post-migration assessments of skills and experience are major mechanisms for helping migrants integrate into the Australian culture. They assist migrants to attain certificates and licences to enable them to practice in regulated trades or professions, and to find employment once they arrive in Australia. This is the case also for highly skilled humanitarian and refugee migrants. Nevertheless, anyone who wants to enrol in VET studies must be offered RPL. In the long run, however, it is employers who will decide the extent to which they will use the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in their recruitment and hiring practices. These decisions will have a major impact on the success of any strategies for integration.

#### ***A highly structured programme for skilled migration: The General Skilled Migration Programme***

Individuals who want to migrate to Australia from overseas must apply for a *General Skilled Migration* visa which requires them to undertake a pre-migration assessment of their skills and experience. They are required to nominate an eligible occupation and provide evidence that their skills and qualifications have been assessed by a relevant assessment authority associated with this occupation. Eligible occupations are identified in a 'Skilled Occupation List' [SOL] which includes about 450 occupations in four major groups: managers and administrators, professionals, associate professionals and trades people and related workers. The SOL indicates the maximum points available for each criteria and the assessing authorities<sup>56</sup> that are to be involved in the recognition of qualifications, skills and experience gained overseas in the trades, professions and associate or para-professions.<sup>57</sup> There are also certain occupations that require individuals to be registered or licensed before they can practise their trades or professions. These requirements are determined by different State and Territory or Federal government legislation. In regulated occupations (see 1.4g) this may mean taking extra assessments on arrival and or undertaking a period of work experience to familiarise themselves with the local work environment for their preferred occupations. Migrants wanting to work in professionals like accounting, law and architecture will need to spend time learning or gaining work experience in the local Australian environment for their fields if they want to gain employment in these occupations. In health-related professions, veterinary science and architecture they will have to undertake and pass an examination.

<sup>56</sup> They include Architects Accreditation Council, Australian Association of Social Workers, Australian Council of Physiotherapy, Australian Computer Society Australian Dental Council, Australian Institute of Management, Australian Institute of Medical Scientists, Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors, Australian Institute of Radiography, Australian Institute of Welfare and Community Workers, Australian Maritime Safety Authority, Australian Nursing Council, Australian and New Zealand Society of Nuclear Medicine Incorporated (Accreditation Board), Australasian Podiatry Society, Australian Pharmacy Examining Council Inc., Australian Psychological Society, Australian Veterinary Boards Council Inc., Civil Aviation Society, Council of Occupational Therapists Registration Board Inc. Certified Practising Accountants, Dietitians Association of Australia, Institute of Chartered Accountants of Australia, Institution of Engineers, Institution of Surveyors, National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters, National Institute of Accountants, National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition, Optometry Council of Australia and New Zealand, State Chiropractors/osteopaths Registration Boards, State Legal Authorities, Speech Pathology Association of Australia, Trades Recognition Australia, Vocational Education and Training Assessment Services.

<sup>57</sup> These 'assessing authorities' are accredited and monitored by the Department of Education, Science and Training.

The granting of a visa is dependent on an applicant gaining sufficient points to reach a pass mark identified for their particular visa group. This may change from time to time.<sup>58</sup> Skill, English language proficiency, work experience, and whether or not the occupation is listed as being a 'migrant occupation in demand' (MODL) will earn applicants the highest points. However, a visa is no guarantee of employment and once migrants arrive in Australia they can apply directly to employers for work and employers will make their own decisions about whether or not they will need to formally recognise the skills and qualifications of the people they employ. Some employers may also require evidence of membership of professional associations or unions, or ask for certain levels of qualification. These qualifications must also be formally assessed by Australian assessing authorities.

Individuals with Australian qualifications who are in Australia and want to apply for permanent residency also need to have their skills recognised. In 2005 there were 16 000 international students who converted their student visas to permanent visas. Students coming to Australia are also using the occupations listed on the MODL to inform the type of courses they should take (Joint Standing Committee on Migration 2006).

### ***Free support for skills recognition***

Migrants can access free assistance on recognition of professional and general qualifications from Occupational Qualification Units or their equivalents. These have been established in states and territories to provide free assistance to migrants on skills recognition. In the main they assess the comparability of overseas qualifications to Australian qualifications and issue migrants with a statement to say that their qualifications are equivalent to a certain level of Australian qualification. Although they generally only assess formal qualifications they may also provide migrants with information on a range of skills recognition issues, and information on where and how to access English language training, bridging training and orientation programmes. They may also provide employment related information, advocate and help migrants present information to assessors and assessing authorities. In the main information and advice is provided on an individualised basis. As such they perform an important referral service.

#### **Support for skills recognition**

In South Australia the Skills Recognition Support Services provides an integrated approach to integration of skilled migrants and their spouses. It comprises the Overseas Qualifications Service (OQS), Migrant Employment Consultancy Service (MECS) and Settlement Orientation Service in one location and acts as a one-stop shop for skilled migrants wanting to either get employment or enter further training. Migrants may attend general information sessions held regularly throughout the week and one-on-one consultations with officers from the different services. The OQS provides eligible migrants with formal statements to indicate that their qualifications are equivalent to a certain level of Australian qualification, and referral to appropriate professional, registration and licensing bodies, assessing authorities and employment-related programmes. (For those whose qualifications are not easy to map to Australian qualifications the OQS refers them to Australian Education International-National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (AEI-NOOSR)). The Migrant Employment Consultancy Services offers skilled migrants and their spouses (in defined general and regional skilled migrant visa categories) with advice and job search support<sup>59</sup>. The settlement orientation service (SOS) provides migrants with a range of useful local information. This includes information on health services, housing, transport, individual and family support, way of life in Australia (and especially South Australia), rights and obligations under the law<sup>60</sup>, education systems, money matters, and community organisations.

<sup>58</sup>If a candidate fails to reach the pass mark but scores enough points to reach a 'pool mark' then their application is kept for two years after assessment.

<sup>59</sup> including résumé and CV writing, accessing professional, para professional trades and business areas, relevant employment and networking contacts, job search, current labour market information and training advice

<sup>60</sup> including getting a driver's licence, police matters, legal rights in South Australia, and local, state and commonwealth governments

### ***Access to certificates, licences and registrations based on non-formal and informal learning in the trades***

Another strategy to help the integration of highly skilled workers is to provide opportunities for them to use their non-formal and informal learning to acquire required certificates and licenses to practise their trades. Assessments are conducted by Trades Recognition Australia (as the nominated assessing authority for traditional trades in the Skilled Migration Programme) and under the Tradesmen's Rights Regulation Act 1946<sup>61</sup> for Australian residents. It assesses only non-graduate and trade level occupations listed on either the Skilled Occupation List for skilled migrants and on the Trades Assessed List for Australian residents.

For migrants, it conducts an international skills assessment to determine whether the skills presented for assessment are suitable for the nominated occupation. Intending skilled migrants must have training and/or experience in an occupation assessed by TRA, or skills learned on the job or through a combination of formal training and on-the-job experience. They must either have an apprenticeship, a vocational traineeship or 6 years on-the-job experience in an occupation with the exception of an electrical occupation which requires at least 7 years. Those applicants with Australian qualifications must have had at least 900 hours of relevant and directly related work experience. They are currently also required to have their qualifications assessed by the relevant assessing authority.

In making an application for a TRA assessment candidates must provide proof of identity, proof of any training, apprenticeship or traineeship, industrial or occupational licensing or registration, proof of relevant work experience and contact details for TRA to confirm the claims and documents. Once a successful skills assessment has been completed it is used by the candidate to support an application for skilled migration. A successful assessment has no expiry date. However, if candidates want or need to have skills accredited, become registered or licensed in Australia they may be required to undertake further training, testing or assessment on their arrival according to the different requirements of State and Territory authorities and specific occupations.

The 'Australian Recognised Trade Certificate' (ARTC) is awarded on the satisfactory assessment of skills and experience. This certificate is mutually recognised in all other States and Territories and accepted by licensing bodies. The Queensland Department of Education, Training and the Arts' skill recognition unit will issue the 'Certificate of Recognition' (*issued to a person who has not completed an apprenticeship but developed the skills and knowledge for a trade, either in Australia or overseas, through employment and training in a trade related occupation or an occupation that allowed the applicant to develop trade related skills*) on the basis of RPL. Other States have equivalent processes for awarded Certificates of Recognition or are in the process of developing these. Associated with TRA are central and local trade committees (LTCs) comprising employer and employee representatives who finally approve the issuing of Australian recognised trade certificates for domestic workers.

### ***A system for involving employers in skilled migration processes: the Employer sponsored migration programme (EMS)***

Finding employment is a key integration of all migrant groups. Thus having employers involved in the sponsoring of workers for migration purposes has been experienced to be a successful strategy (Commonwealth of Australia, 2006b). Australian employers may sponsor migrants under

<sup>61</sup> The TRR covers engineers, boilermakers, blacksmiths, electricians, sheet metal workers and boot trades. It establishes a Central Trades Committee (comprising a ministerial representative, two employer and two employee representatives for each of the six trades, and a local trades committee (LTC) which comprise a similar membership. LTCs will consider requests for a tradesman's certificate.

the Employer Nomination Scheme (ENS), the Regional Sponsored Migration Scheme (RSMS) and Labour Agreements.

- The ENS scheme also requires applicants to have qualifications and skills assessed by nominated 'assessing authorities'. However, this is not required if the applicant has worked for the last two years in their nominated occupation and have spent the last year with their nominating employer. It is also not required if they are nominated for a senior executive job with more than AUD 165,000 (EUR 99,324) per annum. Mandatory licensing, registration or professional membership requirements still apply.
- The RSMS enables employers in regional Australia to sponsor workers from overseas if they cannot fill positions with local workers. Applicants must have relevant qualifications (at least at the AQF diploma level) and meet mandatory registration or licensing requirements.
- Labour Agreements between employers and the DIMA<sup>62</sup>, enable employers to recruit temporary or permanent overseas workers to fill local positions. The employer provides DIMA with the requirements of qualifications and skills required to fill the position. DIMA then assesses the visa application which includes assessment of English language skills and experience specified in the agreement.

Different levels of English are expected for the different schemes. For the RSMS applicants are generally required to have 'functional English' (at least 4.5 on the International English Language Testing System [IELTS]). However, this requirement is waived if the job does not require this level of language, and the employee can comply with Occupational Health and Safety requirements. This is also waived if employers have tried to get a worker with 'functional English' and have failed. It is also waived if the worker has been working in the occupation in Australia for at least one year prior to making a visa application, and has received English training during that period.

The Temporary Business (Long Stay) visa subclass 457 enables employers to sponsor overseas workers to fill nominated skilled positions in Australia for a period of up to four years. In 2005-06, these temporary skilled migrants were mainly medical and nursing professionals, particularly in regional Australia, and computing, business and information professionals. The mining and resources sector was a relatively significant user of temporary skilled migrants covering a range of occupations featuring engineering skills. In the last few years this sector has experienced dramatic growth due to trade with China in minerals and resources. These visa holders are not required to have their skills formally recognised unless they choose to convert the visa to permanent residency (possible after two years). It is at this point that the qualifications of these tradespersons are assessed by Trades Recognition Australia. Electricians, however, are required to satisfy State licensing requirements before commencing their employment.

Between 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005, there were 49 855 visas granted for the sub-class 457 visa. The top ten originating countries were United Kingdom accounting for the largest proportion of visa holders (26 per cent) followed by India (10 per cent), United States of America and South Africa (both 6 per cent), Japan, China and Ireland (all 4 per cent), Canada and Germany (both 3 per cent) and Philippines (2 per cent). The remainder were from a combination of different countries (DIMIA, 2006).

### ***Humanitarian and refugee programmes***

Although individuals hoping to enter Australia as primary applicants in the skilled migration scheme must have a pre-migration assessment of their qualifications, skills and experience, there is no requirement for their family members or those on family or humanitarian or refugee visas to have a pre-migration skills assessment. However, once these visa groups arrive in Australia and want to work in regulated professions or trades they will also have to undergo assessment of their

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<sup>62</sup> The Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMIA) is now called the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC)

qualifications and skills. This may provide difficulties for humanitarian entrants who may not been able to bring with them documentation of their qualifications, skills and work experience.

One of the keys to integration of humanitarian and refugee groups with low skills is also the ability to access employment. However, their initial integration rests on their ability to access enough income for survival. Humanitarian entrants do not have to wait the mandatory two-year waiting period to access most social security benefits, and are able to access services of the Job Network which helps job seekers look for work. Nevertheless, the employment outcomes of recent humanitarian entrants from African countries (generally from Sudan, Liberia and Sierra Leone) are lower than for other groups.

In Australia those who are granted permanent protection visas onshore, or refugees and humanitarian visas offshore, have the same rights as permanent residents. That is they have rights to work and can become an Australian citizen within two years of arrival. Those on temporary protection visas also have rights to work. Bridging visas are allocated to individuals who are applying for protection visas. These bridging visas may also provide individuals with rights to work. Whatever the background of individuals, experience has shown that English language proficiency and local work experience are major considerations of employers in deciding to take on workers born overseas.

Migrant Resource Centres established in all States and Territories to provide assistance (particularly to humanitarian and refugee visa groups) also provide work experience programmes. In New South Wales the Skillmax programme aims to help skilled migrants with job search skills and understand the culture of Australian workplaces.

## Appendix B: Transferable skills portfolio

### Transferable Skills Portfolio at Flinders University

The 'Transferable Skills Portfolio' has been developed by Iain Hay of Flinders University in South Australia, to implement elements of the university's 'Education and Research Policy 2000' which refers to the need for students to gain generic capabilities in addition to discipline-specific information. The 'transferable skills portfolio' has been developed to help students also demonstrate generic skills capabilities and experience acquired through formal and informal learning.

There are four main areas of transferable skills. These are: communication and presentations skills, teamwork and interpersonal skills, management or organising and planning skills, and intellectual and creative skills (such as problem-solving). In terms of informal learning students may include in their portfolios records of transferable skills gained in extra-curricula activities (for example, involvement in social clubs, community organisations, part-time or full-time work, volunteering). One useful way for gathering the information to include in such a portfolio is to maintain a 'personal topic diary'. Here students will record the different skills (across the four generic areas) they believe they have developed in each of the different activities.

The aim of the transferable skills portfolio is to provide students with an organised way for reflecting on and documenting their skills and experience. This can then be used to help them prepare résumés and job applications, and participate in job interviews for paid or unpaid work.

## Appendix C

### ***Microsoft Accreditations***

- The Microsoft Certified IT Professional (MCITP)
- The Microsoft Certified Professional Developer (MCPD)
- Microsoft Certified Architect Programme
- Microsoft Certified Desktop Support Technicians (MCDSTs)
- The Microsoft Certified Learning Consultant (MCLC)
- Microsoft Certified Systems Administrators (MCSAs)
- Microsoft Certified Systems Engineers (MCSEs)
- Microsoft Certified Database Administrators (MCDBAs)
- Microsoft Certified Trainers (MCTs)
- Microsoft Certified Application Developers (MCADs)
- Microsoft Certified Solution Developers (MCSDs)
- Microsoft Office Specialists (Office Specialists)

### ***Project Management Institute certifications***

- the Project Management Professional (PMP®)
- the Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM®)
- the Organizational Project Management Maturity Model (OPM3®)
- OPM3® ProductSuite

### ***IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) certifications***

- ITIL Foundation Certificate
- ITIL Practitioner's Certificate
- ITIL Manager's Certificate or Masters Certificate

### ***CISCO accreditations***

- Cisco Sales Experts (CSE)
- Cisco Certified Associates (CCNA CCDA)
- Cisco Certified Professionals (CCNP, CCDP, CCIP)
- Cisco Certified Experts (CCIE)

### ***Other vendor accreditations for ICT***

- SAP
- Oracle
- Siebel
- Prince 2
- Sun (Java/J2EE)
- Security (CISSP)

## Appendix D: Learning Regions

### Learning regions

#### *Hume Global Learning Village*

Hume is one of the north western suburbs of Melbourne. Its major industries include Melbourne International Airport, freight, engineering, automotive manufacturing, steel, plastics, electronics, communications and tourism. Hume also has lower levels of employment and education and training than the Melbourne metropolitan area. In a bid to improve economic and social wellbeing of individuals and the community as a whole the Hume City Council in 2003 established the Hume Global Learning Village (HGLV). In 2005 a Social Justice Charter was drawn up. The Hume City Council is committed to implementing the Charter and to promoting respect for all Hume citizens, community participation and well-being and reducing the causes of disadvantage.

The HGLV comprises a network of organisations interesting in furthering educational opportunities for people who live in Hume. This includes making available buildings and meeting places for learning activities to take place. For example Hume Global Learning Centre building houses a library, computer training rooms, meeting rooms, and facilities for internet access and a café. Visy Cares Learning Centre houses a learning shop, internet cafe meeting and training rooms, an occasional care centre (providing child care services) and a maternal and child health centre.

#### *The Gippsland Education Precinct*

This is an initiative of the Victorian Government. It aims to address low educational and employment outcomes for young people in the Gippsland region, low levels of youth engagement with education or the workforce, and low levels of transition from school to tertiary education, training and employment. It also aims to reduce the proportion of secondary school age students who move out of the area to access secondary education. It is located on the campus of a university (Monash University). It brings together a number of learning and education and training, and employment providers including Monash University, Gippsland TAFE (the public provider of VET in the area), Kurnai College (year 11 and 12 students) and Gippsland Group Training (employs apprentices and trainees and hosts these out to employers). Students will have access to state of the art Information and Communication Technologies.

A single facility means that it is easier to link year 11 and 12 students to programmes at Monash, Gippsland Group Training and GippsTAFE. Students who study at the precinct may get direct entry into Monash University courses if they meet specified pre-requisites, high achievers may accelerate through the different levels of education, and international students may participate in bridging programmes to enable them to move into programmes of their choice.

The precinct also offers vocational programmes for those who are not in the secondary school system, and a Certificate of Professional Studies for students who are currently in employment and do not have the educational background to move into tertiary studies. In addition students have access to career planning assistance, access to computers, online learning programmes and other student services. Teachers also have access to professional development which includes assistance with ICT.

#### *The Gwydir Learning Region*

The Gwydir Shire Council in north-west New South Wales has worked with local schools, TAFE and New England University, and adult and community education (ACE) to create the Gwydir Learning Region (GLR). The GLR is based on partnerships between educators, council employers and local communities. It covers an area of 9121.7 kilometres and has a population of almost 6000 people. The shire includes a number of primary schools, Bingara Central School (catering for kindergarten to year 10) and Warialda High School. There are three ACE providers (from Bingara, Yallaroi, and Barraba) but no physical campuses of TAFE or University.

The GLR is located in an area characterised by low educational and economic situations of residents. There are lower levels of post-school education, income, and internet usage than in the rest of the State. Residents also have lower access to government health services, and public transport. The creation and development of the GLR has been identified as the way to redress the effects of this isolation and economic disadvantage. It aims to use customised learning as a way to improve opportunities for economic progression and social environments (especially of aged and isolated residents). The GLR provides access to customised learning for all members of community (including older residents) who want to learn.

A recent evaluation of the effectiveness of the GLR reported that it had had a positive influence on retention of children of compulsory age in school, the involvement of adults in TAFE or ACE programmes, and engagement of council workers in a variety of training programmes. Students who completed year 12 at Warialda High School moved on to further study or into employment. Stakeholders believed that the success of the GLR was due to shared values, the effective operation of partnerships between stakeholders, and the commitment to providing a 'user-centric' approach to learning.

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## List of Acronyms

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACE	Adult and community education
AEI	Australian Education International
AICTEC	Australian Information and Communication Technology Committee
ALA	Adult Learning Australia
AMEP	Adult Migrant English Programme
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework
AQFAB	Australian Qualifications Framework Advisory Board
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
AUQA	Australian Universities Quality Agency
AVCC	The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee ( <i>to be called Universities Australia on 30 June 2007</i> )
CEAV	Corrections Education Association Victoria
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
DFEEST	Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology
DIMA	Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (It is now called the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC))
FaCSIA	Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
GSM	General Skilled Migration
HE	Higher Education
ICT	Information and communications technology
ICDL	International Computer Driving Licence
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
ISC	Industry Skills Councils
LIMF	Learner Identity Management Framework
LLNP	Language, Literacy and Numeracy Programme
MCEETYA	Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
MCVTE	Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education
MODL	Migration Occupations in Demand List
NCVER	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
NISC	National Industry Skills Committee
NOOSR	National Office for Overseas Skills Recognition
NQC	National Quality Council
NSF	National Skills Framework
RCC	Recognition of Current Competencies
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RTO	Registered Training Organisation

TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TRA	Trades Recognition Australia
VETASSESS	Vocational Education Training and Assessment Services
VQA	Victorian Qualifications Authority <i>[soon to be subsumed in a new body, the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA)]</i>
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VTE	Vocational and Technical Education
WELL	Workplace English Language and Literacy (Programme)

## ANNEX 1.

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## **Section 1.01 1. Introduction**

1. Australia has limited data available to complete the tables in Annex 1 and 2 of the Australian Country Background Report (CBR). The data that is available for the tables has been supplied by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).
2. There is inconsistency in the definitions on RPL in Australia which presents some limitations in collecting and reporting data on a nationally consistent and comparable basis. The concept of recognition of non-formal and informal learning, as defined by the OECD for this activity, is not collected by the ABS. The ABS follows the European Commission's Classification for Learning Activities' definitions for non-formal and informal learning, so for instance vendor qualifications are captured by the ABS as non-formal learning. The ABS has provided data for concepts which are similar or fulfil part of the OECD definition. These differences are footnoted for each table.
3. NCVER data was compiled from the NCVER National VET Provider Collections, 1996-2005, and the NCVER Student Outcomes Surveys 2001-2005. The NCVER Data is for the government funded Vocational and Technical Education (VTE) component only and only back to 1996. NCVER National VET Provider Collections provide statistical information about the vocational education and training (VET) sector within Australia. The data collected comprises information about VET programmes and providers, including level and field of education, student characteristics, and level of activity, apprentices and trainees, their characteristics and programme information.
4. NCVER Student Outcomes Survey (SOS) is an annual survey of students who have successfully completed vocational education and training (VET) in Australia. It has been conducted by the NCVER since 1997. The survey is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Science and Training and gathers information on students, including their employment situation, their reasons for undertaking their training, the relevance of the training to their employment, their level of satisfaction, any further study aspirations (graduates only), reasons for not undertaking further training (module completers only). Prior to 1999 this survey was known as the Graduate Destination Survey. As the survey is undertaken as a sample rather than a census, responses are weighted to population benchmarks. An effect of weighting data is that proportions are based on the population rather than on the number of responses.
5. The data for Tables W12, W16, W35, W39, W41 and FP2 was compiled from the ABS Survey of Education and Training (SET), 2005. SET is a four-yearly household-based survey and the scope and content of the survey varies slightly from collection to collection. Data was collected for all persons and focuses on level and field of educational attainment; participation in education and training; work history, including occupation and industry; current study; completed qualifications; details of training courses completed; training outcomes; access to education and training and employer support; access to education and training; unmet demand, and home access to a computer and the internet.
  - SET 2005 – This survey collected information from people aged 15+ years. Those aged 70+ years received only a subset of the questions from the survey. Unless otherwise footnoted, data provided to the OECD from this survey is for the population 15+ years.
  - SET 2001 – This survey collected information from people aged 15-64 years
  - SET 1993 - SET 1997 – This survey collected information from people aged 15-64 years

## **Section 1.02 2. Explanatory notes on the data sets and tables**

The tables have been named according to the instructions in the OECD *Guidelines for Country Participation* using the following names: w##xxxxy.xls or w##xxxxy.doc, where w is for the whole population, ## is the table number, xxx is the country code and yy refers to the year concerned; f##xxxxy.xls for female and m##xxxxy.xls for male. The source of the data has been provided for each table and additional notes have been provided where relevant. Where appropriate the table titles have been altered slightly to reflect the comparative data. Where there is no data available this has been clearly stated under the table title.

The tables have been provided to the OECD in a separate Excel file and migrated to Annex 1 and 2 of the CBR.

## **Section 1.03 3. Tables for the whole population**

### **3.1. Financial resources invested in recognition of non formal and informal learning**

<b>Table W1 – Total expenditure on recognition of non formal and informal learning by source of funds– Year yyyy</b>
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No data available

<b>Table W2 – Total public expenditure on recognition of non formal and informal learning – Year yyyy</b>
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No data available

<b>Table W3 – Public expenditure on recognition of non formal and informal learning as a percentage of total public educational expenditure – Year yyyy</b>
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No data available

<b>Table W4 – Destination of public spending on recognition of non formal and informal learning – Year yyyy</b>
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No data available

<b>Table W5 – Public expenditure on recognition of non formal and informal learning by level of government – Year yyyy</b>
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No data available

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No data available

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No data available

### 3.2. Expenditure per participant in any process for recognition of non formal and informal learning

**Table W8 – Expenditure per participant in the recognition process by level of education – Year yyyy**

No data available

**Table W9 –Expenditure per participant in the recognition process by the aggregated level of learning – Year yyyy**

No data available

**Table W10 – Expenditure per participant in the recognition process by domain of recognition – Year yyyy**

No data available

**Table W11 – Expenditure per participant in the recognition process by labour force status – Year yyyy**

No data available

### 3.3. Characteristics of participants in the recognition process of non formal and informal learning

**Table W12 – Population and groups size, from 1996 to 2005**

Year	Frequency of individuals outside the initial education and training formal system #	Frequency of individuals between 16 and 64 years of age	Frequency of individuals below 16	Frequency of individuals above 64	Total Population	Frequency of individual employed	Frequency of individual unemployed	Frequency of individuals out of labour force##
2005	12687807	13147427	271814	2468017	15887258	9882536	500258	5504464
2001	12170951	12610913	259672	n/a	12870585	9202487	650569	3017528
1997	9738057	10130573	264647	n/a	10395220	8283373	746315	1365532
1993	11063000	11075831	15085	n/a	11090917	7667211	897116	2526590

*Source:* ABS Survey of Education and Training.

#### Notes to Table W12:

#The data provided by the ABS is for people "not at school"

##The data provided by the ABS is for people "not in the labour force"

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the age group (population size)</b>
16	405	
17	867	
18	2493	
19	2639	
20	2273	
21	1895	
22	1681	
23	1471	
24	1326	
25	1224	
26	1149	
27	1096	
28	1118	
29	1140	
30	1032	
31	1039	
32	1085	
33	1133	
34	1097	
35	993	
36	997	
37	1007	
38	971	
39	888	
40	959	
41	985	
42	1043	
43	1031	
44	911	
45	978	
46	910	
47	853	
48	775	
49	698	
50	700	
51	638	
52	587	
53	565	
54	479	
55	420	
56	398	
57	318	
58	317	
59	203	
60	184	
61	136	
62	86	
63	73	
64	46	
65	33	
66	33	
67	14	
68	22	
69	5	
70	9	
71	7	
72	7	
73	4	
74	0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>45446</b>	<b>F2</b>

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005

**Table W13 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by age – Year 2001**

Age	Frequency of participants	Frequency in the age group (population size)
16	316	
17	918	
18	2629	
19	2917	
20	2818	
21	2400	
22	2127	
23	1898	
24	1789	
25	1664	
26	1603	
27	1619	
28	1507	
29	1595	
30	1588	
31	1487	
32	1465	
33	1353	
34	1253	
35	1340	
36	1313	
37	1328	
38	1383	
39	1333	
40	1343	
41	1294	
42	1225	
43	1155	
44	1088	
45	1049	
46	974	
47	869	
48	872	
49	773	
50	646	
51	657	
52	559	
53	505	
54	494	
55	352	
56	294	
57	271	
58	202	
59	142	
60	114	
61	103	
62	82	
63	76	
64	49	
65	51	
66	31	
67	24	
68	21	
69	20	
70	17	
71	15	
72	5	
73	9	
74	7	
<b>Total</b>	<b>55031</b>	<b>F2</b>

Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001

Table W13 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by age – Year 1996		
Age	Frequency of participants	Frequency in the age group (population size)
16	112	
17	364	
18	1510	
19	1836	
20	1761	
21	1805	
22	1603	
23	1473	
24	1427	
25	1358	
26	1200	
27	1166	
28	1061	
29	1070	
30	979	
31	1015	
32	1020	
33	1146	
34	1014	
35	980	
36	985	
37	886	
38	839	
39	812	
40	725	
41	767	
42	690	
43	686	
44	610	
45	546	
46	524	
47	479	
48	446	
49	424	
50	317	
51	252	
52	239	
53	166	
54	158	
55	136	
56	103	
57	79	
58	83	
59	65	
60	37	
61	41	
62	34	
63	19	
64	9	
65	20	
66	9	
67	10	
68	9	
69	5	
70	3	
71	7	
72	4	
73	1	
74	4	
<b>Total</b>	<b>35129</b>	<b>F2</b>

Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996

<b>Table W14 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by type of subject – Year 2005</b>		
<b>Type of learning outcomes recognised</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Module/Unit of Competency Field of Education *</b>	235750	100
Natural and Physical Sciences	6164	3
Information Technology	8151	3
Engineering and Related Technologies	36306	15
Architecture and Building	11621	5
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	6867	3
Health	22054	9
Education	10832	5
Management and Commerce	56907	24
Society and Culture	27338	12
Creative Arts	6488	3
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	12882	5
Mixed Field Programmes	30140	13
Unknown	0	0
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005</i>		

\* Discipline group was used prior to 2002 before being superseded by module/unit of competency field of education.

<b>Table W14 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by type of subject – Year 2001</b>		
<b>Type of learning outcomes recognised</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Discipline group *</b>	266525	100
Humanities	16472	6
Social studies	3967	1
Education	7246	3
Sciences	5206	2
Mathematics, Computing	34153	13
Visual/performing arts	3287	1
Engineering, processing	30476	11
Health sciences	39608	15
Administration, business, economics, law	64385	24
Built environment	9120	3
Agriculture, renewable resources	8923	3
Hospitality, tourism & personal services	16963	6
Social, educational & employment skills	26711	10
Unknown	8	
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001</i>		

\* Discipline group has been superseded by module/unit of competency field of education as of 2002

Type of learning outcomes recognised	Frequency	%
<b>Discipline group *</b>	<b>135642</b>	<b>100</b>
Humanities	15734	12
Social studies	2223	2
Education	324	0
Sciences	4128	3
Mathematics, Computing	23202	17
Visual/performing arts	1900	1
Engineering, processing	24379	18
Health sciences	11771	9
Administration, business, economics, law	25521	19
Built environment	3869	3
Agriculture, renewable resources	2937	2
Hospitality, tourism & personal services	8742	6
Social, educational & employment skills	10912	8
Unknown	0	0

*Source:* NCVER National VET Provider Collection 1996

\* Discipline group has been superseded by module/unit of competency field of education as of 2002



No data available

Reason	Frequency	%
<b>Education Related Reasons</b>	<b>13954</b>	
To get into another course of study	13954	3.10%
<b>Job Related Reasons</b>	<b>369100</b>	
To get a job	94273	21%
To get a better job or promotion	100956	22.50%
Was a requirement of job	47047	10.50%
Wanted extra skills for job	56303	12.60%
To start own business	19179	4.30%
To develop existing business	7401	1.70%
To try for a different career	43941	9.80%
<b>Personal Reasons</b>	<b>57849</b>	
For interest or personal reasons	57849	12.90%
<b>Other Reasons</b>	<b>7215</b>	
Other reason	7215	1.60%
<b>Total</b>	<b>448,118</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source:* ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005

**Table W17 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by labour force status – Year 2005**

Labour force status	Frequency of participants	Frequency in the LF group (16-64 outside ET)	Frequency in the LF group (16-64)	Frequency in the LF group (0-100)	
Employed (total)	27582	27775			
-- Part time	17294	17278			
-- Full time	8597	8580			
--Self employed	1311	1293			
-- Employer	380	380			
--Unpaid family worker	245	244			
Unemployed	4528	4520			
Not in the Labour Force	2023	2001			
Not stated	11068	11016			
<b>Total</b>	<b>45446</b>	<b>45312</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>	

Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005

**Table W17 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by labour force status – Year 2001**

Labour force status	Frequency of participants	Frequency in the LF group (16-64 outside ET)	Frequency in the LF group (16-64)	Frequency in the LF group (0-100)	
Employed (total)	32417	32374			
-- Full time	20448	20436			
-- Part time	9674	9659			
-- Self employed	1575	1565			
-- Employer	383	381			
-- Unpaid family worker	337	333			
Unemployed	6721	6712			
Not in the Labour Force	3270	3179			
Not stated	12623	12566			
<b>Total</b>	<b>55031</b>	<b>54831</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>	

Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001

<b>Table W17 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by labour force status – Year 1996</b>					
<b>Labour force status</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the LF group (16-64 outside ET)</b>	<b>Frequency in the LF group (16-64)</b>	<b>Frequency in the LF group (0-100)</b>	
Employed (total)	20158	20145			
-- Full time	14149	14146			
-- Part time	4760	4754			
-- Self employed	1038	1034			
-- Employer	98	98			
-- Unpaid family worker	113	113			
Unemployed	5046	5043			
Not in the Labour Force	2458	2435			
Not stated	7467	7434			
<b>Total</b>	<b>35129</b>	<b>35057</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>	

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996*

<b>Table W18 – Distribution of employed participants in the recognition process by occupational status – Year yyyy</b>
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No data available

<b>Table W19 – Distribution of employed participants in the recognition process by industry – Year yyyy</b>
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No data available

<b>Table W20 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by educational attainment – Year 2005</b>					
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (0-100)</b>	
ISCED 0	0	0			
ISCED 1	0	0			
ISCED 2	6329	6312			
ISCED 3	18193	18169			
ISCED 4	3098	3094			
ISCED 5	7648	7612			
ISCED 6	0	0			
ISCED 7	0	0			
Unknown ISCED level	10167	10115			
Did not attend school	11	10			
<b>Total</b>	<b>45446</b>	<b>45312</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>	

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005*

<b>Table W20 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by educational attainment – Year 2001</b>				
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (0-100)</b>
ISCED 0	0	0		
ISCED 1	0	0		
ISCED 2	5484	5456		
ISCED 3	27084	27055		
ISCED 4	1942	1934		
ISCED 5	7984	7951		
ISCED 6	0	0		
ISCED 7	0	0		
Unknown ISCED level	12537	12435		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55031</b>	<b>54831</b>		
ISCED 0	0	0	F2	F3

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001*

<b>Table W20 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by educational attainment – Year 1996</b>				
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (0-100)</b>
ISCED 0	0	0		
ISCED 1	0	0		
ISCED 2	2558	2557		
ISCED 3	16029	16011		
ISCED 4	2420	2414		
ISCED 5	7106	7093		
ISCED 6	0	0		
ISCED 7	0	0		
Unknown ISCED level	7016	6982		
<b>Total</b>	<b>35129</b>	<b>35057</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996*

**Table W21 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by aggregated educational attainment – Year 2005**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (0-100)</b>
ISCED 0-2	6329	6312		
ISCED 3	18193	18169		
ISCED 4	3098	3094		
ISCED 5-7	7648	7612		
Unknown ISCED level	10167	10115		
Did not attend school	11	10		
<b>Total</b>	<b>45446</b>	<b>45312</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005*

**Table W21 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by aggregated educational attainment – Year 2001**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (0-100)</b>
ISCED 0-2	5484	5456		
ISCED 3	27084	27055		
ISCED 4	1942	1934		
ISCED 5-7	7984	7951		
Unknown ISCED level	12537	12435		
<b>Total</b>	<b>55031</b>	<b>54831</b>		

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001*

**Table W21 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by aggregated educational attainment – Year 1996**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64)</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (0-100)</b>
ISCED 0-2	2558	2557		
ISCED 3	16029	16011		
ISCED 4	2420	2414		
ISCED 5-7	7106	7093		
Unknown ISCED level	7016	6982		
<b>Total</b>	<b>35129</b>	<b>35057</b>	<b>F2</b>	<b>F3</b>

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996*

**Table W22 – Distribution of participants in the recognition process by place of birth – Year yyyy**

No data available

**Table W23 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by aggregated place of birth – Year 2005**

Place of Birth	Frequency of participants	Frequency in the group (16-64 outside ET)	Frequency in the group (16-64)	Frequency in the group (0-100)	
Australia	30269	30200			
Outside Australia	15177	15112			
Unknown	0	0			
<b>Total</b>	<b>45446</b>	<b>45312</b>	<i>F2</i>	<i>F3</i>	

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005*

**Table W23 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by aggregated place of birth – Year 2001**

Place of Birth	Frequency of participants	Frequency in the group (16-64 outside ET)	Frequency in the group (16-64)	Frequency in the group (0-100)	
Australia	34909	34809			
Outside Australia	20122	20022			
Unknown	0	0			
<b>Total</b>	<b>55031</b>	<b>54831</b>	<i>F2</i>	<i>F3</i>	

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001*

**Table W23 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by aggregated place of birth – Year 1996**

Place of Birth	Frequency of participants	Frequency in the group (16-64 outside ET)	Frequency in the group (16-64)	Frequency in the group (0-100)	
Australia	21409	21376			
Outside Australia	13649	13611			
Unknown	71	70			
<b>Total</b>	<b>35129</b>	<b>35057</b>	<i>F2</i>	<i>F3</i>	

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996*

**Table W24 – Distribution of participants in the recognition process by duration of recognition process – Year yyyy**

No data available

**Table W25 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by region of residence – Year 2005**

Region	Frequency of participants	Frequency in the region (16-64 outside ET)	Frequency in the region (16-64)	Total population of the region (0-100)	
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	1140	1139			
<i>New South Wales</i>	22613	22540			
<i>Northern Territory</i>	830	825			
<i>Queensland</i>	6713	6694			
<i>South Australia</i>	3646	3639			
<i>Tasmania</i>	873	872			
<i>Victoria</i>	7467	7446			
<i>Western Australia</i>	2164	2157			
<b>Total</b>	<b>45446</b>	<b>45312</b>	<i>F2</i>	<i>F3</i>	

Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005

**Table W25 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by region of residence – Year 2001**

Region	Frequency of participants	Frequency in the region (16-64 outside ET)	Frequency in the region (16-64)	Total population of the region (0-100)	
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	2507	2507			
<i>New South Wales</i>	28756	28688			
<i>Northern Territory</i>	1029	1028			
<i>Queensland</i>	4172	4164			
<i>South Australia</i>	6577	6477			
<i>Tasmania</i>	498	498			
<i>Victoria</i>	9107	9092			
<i>Western Australia</i>	2385	2377			
<b>Total</b>	<b>55031</b>	<b>54831</b>	<i>F2</i>	<i>F3</i>	

Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001

<b>Table W25 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education participants in the recognition process by region of residence – Year 1996</b>					
<b>Region</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the region (16-64 outside ET)</b>	<b>Frequency in the region (16-64)</b>	<b>Total population of the region (0-100)</b>	
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	2360	2358			
<i>New South Wales</i>	20085	20042			
<i>Northern Territory</i>	151	151			
<i>Queensland</i>	395	392			
<i>South Australia</i>	4398	4390			
<i>Tasmania</i>	739	739			
<i>Victoria</i>	6777	6761			
<i>Western Australia</i>	224	224			
<b>Total</b>	<b>35129</b>	<b>35057</b>	<i>F2</i>	<i>F3</i>	

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996*

**Table W26a – Participation and non participation in the recognition process – Year yyyy**

No data available

**Table W26b – Reasons for not participating in the recognition process – Year yyyy**

No data available

### **3.4 Outcomes, for individuals, of participation in the recognition process**

**Table W27 – Distribution of participants in the recognition process by level of attainment after the recognition process – Year yyyy**

No data available

<b>Table W28a – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education graduates* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2005 (weighted)</b>						
<b>After: Before:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unem- plo- yed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
Employed	56100	2890	2090	160	280	61530
Unemployed	4930	4060	810	90	40	9920
Not in the labour force	5050	1470	4420	40	70	11040
Not employed (not further defined)	280	160	120	90	30	680
Not stated	500	90	40	20	1750	2390
<b>Total</b>	<b>66870</b>	<b>8670</b>	<b>7470</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>2150</b>	<b>85560</b>
<i>Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2005</i>						
* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2005 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.						
** A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2005 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.						

<b>Table W28b – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education module completers** in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2005 (weighted)</b>						
<b>After: Before:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unem- plo- yed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
Employed	16520	1490	990	130	160	19290
Unemployed	1980	2220	840	70	20	5130
Not in the labour force	1550	810	2830	20	80	5280
Not employed (not further defined)	70	60	60	110	0	290
Not stated	150	50	40	10	790	1040
<b>Total</b>	<b>20270</b>	<b>4610</b>	<b>4750</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>1050</b>	<b>31020</b>
<i>Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2005</i>						
* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2005 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.						
** A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2005 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.						

**Table W28a – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education graduates\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2003 (weighted)**

After: Before:	Employed	Unemployed	Not in the labour force	Not employed (not further defined)	Not stated	Total
Employed	54580	3260	2210	530	130	60710
Unemployed	4100	4320	960	370	20	9770
Not in the labour force	4060	1990	3840	270	30	10190
Not employed (not further defined)	410	240	210	420	30	1310
Not stated	40	20	30	0	20	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>63190</b>	<b>9830</b>	<b>7250</b>	<b>1590</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>82100</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2003*

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2003 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2003 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table W28b – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education module completers\*\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2003 (weighted)**

After: Before:	Employed	Unemployed	Not in the labour force	Not employed (not further defined)	Not stated	Total
Employed	17140	1790	1120	340	30	20420
Unemployed	1720	2130	520	90	10	4460
Not in the labour force	1100	770	2030	200	50	4160
Not employed (not further defined)	280	120	160	360	20	930
Not stated	20	0	20	10	60	110
<b>Total</b>	<b>20260</b>	<b>4810</b>	<b>3840</b>	<b>1000</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>30080</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2003*

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2003 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2003 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table W28a – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education graduates\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2001 (weighted)**

After: Before:	Employed	Unemployed	Not in the labour force	Not employed (not further defined)	Not stated	Total
Employed	39480	2250	2020	100	140	43980
Unemployed	3390	2540	1240	80	40	7300
Not in the labour force	2900	1210	2810	90	40	7050
Not employed (not further defined)	850	270	430	30	20	1590
Not stated	80	70	50	10	90	290
<b>Total</b>	<b>46690</b>	<b>6340</b>	<b>6550</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>320</b>	<b>60210</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2001*

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2001 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2001 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table W28b – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education module completers\*\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2001 (weighted)**

After: Before:	Employed	Unemployed	Not in the labour force	Not employed (not further defined)	Not stated	Total
Employed	17890	1490	1170	120	140	20800
Unemployed	1180	1480	550	70	20	3310
Not in the labour force	860	600	1700	160	30	3350
Not employed (not further defined)	340	150	360	10	0	860
Not stated	80	10	30	20	100	230
<b>Total</b>	<b>20350</b>	<b>3730</b>	<b>3810</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>290</b>	<b>28550</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2001*

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2001 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2001 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table W29 – Distribution of participants in the recognition process by labour force status before learning and 12 months after the end of this process – Year yyyy**

No data available

### 3.5. Enterprises and Employers

**Table W30 – Distribution of employed participants in the recognition of non-formal learning and informal learning by size of the establishment they are working in – Year yyyy**

No data available

### 3.6. Recognition providers

**W31 – Characteristics of recognition providers, delivering a formal recognition (qualification, certificate, credits, etc.) for formal non-formal and informal learning outcomes – Year yyyy**

No data available

### 3.7. Educational institutions

**Table W32 — Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education students who received recognition by size and level of educational institutions – Year 2005**

<b>Educational Establishment</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>	<b>Frequency of participants at tertiary level</b>	<b>Frequency of participants at upper secondary level</b>	<b>Frequency of participants at secondary level</b>	<b>Frequency of participants at primary level</b>	<b>Frequency in the group (0-100)</b>
0-500	12929					
500-1000	7397					
1000-5000	25237					
5000-10000	0					
10000 and more	0					
<b>Total</b>	<b>45563</b>	<i>Total (tertiary)</i>	<i>Total (upper-secondary)</i>	<i>Total (secondary)</i>	<i>Total (primary)</i>	<i>Total employed (0-100)</i>

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005*

**Table W32 — Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education students who received recognition by size and level of educational institutions – Year 2003**

<b>Educational Establishment</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>	<b>Frequency of participants at tertiary level</b>	<b>Frequency of participants at upper secondary level</b>	<b>Frequency of participants at secondary level</b>	<b>Frequency of participants at primary level</b>	<b>Frequency in the group (0-100)</b>
0-500	13186					
500-1000	10687					
1000-5000	32580					
5000-10000	0					
10000 and more	0					
<b>Total</b>	<b>56453</b>	<i>Total (tertiary)</i>	<i>Total (upper-secondary)</i>	<i>Total (secondary)</i>	<i>Total (primary)</i>	<i>Total employed (0-100)</i>

*Source: NCVER National VET Provider Collection 2003*

**Table W33 – Distribution of students that have changed field of study during the year – Year yyyy**

No data available

**W34 –Characteristics of recognition provided by education institutions– Year yyyy**

No data available

### 3.8. Mobility and transition

<b>Table W35 – Distribution of students that have changed education institution during the year – Year 2005</b>		
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of institution-mobile students #</b>	<b>Frequency of students in the age group ##</b>
16	6706	52826
17	14242	63455
18	24657	139226
19	32288	161174
20	27602	149575
21	32992	142169
22	40987	111635
23	27013	93620
24	16606	82826
25	13789	58948
26	11264	60696
27	9733	56127
28	6138	42136
29	7920	49983
30	6817	37704
31 to 35	37802	203860
36 to 40	34911	147713
Total	351467	1653674

*Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005*

# The data is for people who are currently enrolled but not enrolled in the same non-school qualification as in the previous year

## The data is for people currently enrolled in a non-school qualification

<b>Table W36 – Distribution of students that have changed field of study during the year – Year yyyy</b>
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No data available

**Table W37 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education students (newly graduates or drop-out students) in the recognition process that have found a job – Year 2005 (weighted)**

Age	Frequency of newly graduate students (graduates*)	Frequency of newly graduate* students who found a job after course	Frequency of students who have dropped out during the course (module completers*)	Frequency of drop-out students (module completers**) who found a job after course	
16 - 20	19760	3710	7880	1400	
21 - 25	19020	2680	5120	620	
26 - 30	9500	680	3330	200	
31-35	7900	710	2840	130	
36-40	8030	770	2850	280	
<b>Total</b>	<b>64210</b>	<b>8550</b>	<b>22020</b>	<b>2640</b>	

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2005*

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2005 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2005 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table W37 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education students (newly graduates or drop-out students) in the recognition process that have found a job – Year 2003 (weighted)**

Age	Frequency of newly graduate students (graduates*)	Frequency of newly graduate* students who found a job after course	Frequency of students who have dropped out during the course (module completers**)	Frequency of drop-out students (module completers**) who found a job after course	
16 - 20	15220	2800	6400	940	
21 - 25	17850	2140	5340	730	
26 - 30	9210	620	3600	200	
31-35	8810	800	2960	250	
36-40	8710	780	2890	350	
<b>Total</b>	<b>59800</b>	<b>7150</b>	<b>21190</b>	<b>2460</b>	

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2003*

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2003 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2003 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table W37 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education students (newly graduates or drop-out students) in the recognition process that have found a job – Year 2001 (weighted)**

Age	Frequency of newly graduate students (graduates*)	Frequency of newly graduate* students who found a job after course	Frequency of students who have dropped out during the course (module completers* *)	Frequency of drop-out students (module completers**) who found a job after course	
16 - 20	11050	2330	5150	710	
21 - 25	12120	1670	4040	470	
26 - 30	6580	630	3150	260	
31-35	6520	490	2890	180	
36-40	7440	730	3670	290	
<b>Total</b>	<b>43720</b>	<b>5840</b>	<b>18910</b>	<b>1910</b>	

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2001*

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2001 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2001 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table W38 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education geographically mobile students during the year – Year 2005**

Age	Frequency of domestic students who went aboard to study or to work (please specify the countries of destination, even aggregated)	Frequency of domestic students who used the recognition system to find a job or to study in a foreign country (please specify the countries of destination even aggregated )	Frequency of domestic students who used the recognition system and actually found a job or registered in a study programme in a foreign country (please specify the countries of destination even aggregated)	Frequency of geographically-mobile foreign students into your country	Frequency of foreign students who used the recognition system	Frequency of foreign students who used the recognition system and actually found a job or registered into a study programme in your country	Frequency of students in the age group
16					0		
17					3		
18					8		
19					25		
20					43		
21					60		
22					47		
23					54		
24					57		
25					41		
26					49		
27					33		
28					36		
29					29		
30					21		
31-35					78		
36-40					26		
<b>Total</b>					<b>610</b>		

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005*

**Table W38 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education geographically mobile students during the year – Year 2001**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of domestic students who went aboard to study or to work (please specify the countries of destination, even aggregated)</b>	<b>Frequency of domestic students who used the recognition system to find a job or to study in a foreign country (please specify the countries of destination even aggregated )</b>	<b>Frequency of domestic students who used the recognition system and actually found a job or registered in a study programme in a foreign country (please specify the countries of destination even aggregated)</b>	<b>Frequency of geographically-mobile foreign students into your country</b>	<b>Frequency of foreign students who used the recognition system</b>	<b>Frequency of foreign students who used the recognition system and actually found a job or registered into a study programme in your country</b>	<b>Frequency of students in the age group</b>
16					0		
17					3		
18					25		
19					62		
20					85		
21					97		
22					120		
23					112		
24					86		
25					81		
26					70		
27					47		
28					51		
29					34		
30					34		
31-35					74		
36-40					34		
<b>Total</b>					<b>1015</b>		

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001*

**Table W38 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education geographically mobile students during the year – Year 1996**

Age	Frequency of domestic students who went aboard to study or to work (please specify the countries of destination, even aggregated)	Frequency of domestic students who used the recognition system to find a job or to study in a foreign country (please specify the countries of destination even aggregated )	Frequency of domestic students who used the recognition system and actually found a job or registered in a study programme in a foreign country (please specify the countries of destination even aggregated)	Frequency of geographically-mobile foreign students into your country	Frequency of foreign students who used the recognition system	Frequency of foreign students who used the recognition system and actually found a job or registered into a study programme in your country	Frequency of students in the age group
16					0		
17					1		
18					13		
19					27		
20					47		
21					37		
22					44		
23					39		
24					56		
25					30		
26					29		
27					33		
28					10		
29					12		
30					14		
31-35					29		
36-40					14		
<b>Total</b>					<b>435</b>		

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996*

**Table W39 – Distribution of employed people that have changed job during the year – Year 2005**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of mobile employed people #</b>	<b>Frequency of employed people in the age group</b>		
16 to 19	269237	618370		
20 to 24	490655	1061489		
25 to 29	324071	1046310		
30 to 34	247020	1159558		
35 to 39	199310	1127043		
40 to 44	190708	1229034		
45 to 49	166613	1226639		
50 to 54	122266	966517		
55 to 59	84606	776461		
60 to 64	26052	397284		
Total	2120539	9608705		

Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005

# The data is for those that have had two or more jobs in the last 12 months.

**Table W40 –Distribution of employed people that have gone back to full-time formal study by using the recognition of non-formal and informal learning during the year – Year yyyy**

No data available

**Table W41 –Distribution of employed people that have undertook part-time formal study while working by using the recognition of non-formal and informal learning during the year – Year 2005**

Age	Frequency of those employed that have undertaken formal study while working #	Frequency of those employed that have undertaken formal study while working by using the recognition of non-formal and informal learning ##	Frequency of employed in the age group	
16 to 17 ###	41397	2393	253797	
18	36797	2582	170852	
19	49152	7052	193721	
20	35082	8553	201314	
21	41392	11209	211834	
22	35386	6633	217998	
23	35897	9235	216992	
24	33014	10594	213351	
25	32247	12441	208574	
26	31119	13265	196572	
27	26857	5943	215897	
28	23007	4706	208865	
29	35577	9027	216403	
30	21277	5546	212982	
31 to 35	138684	45340	1173641	
36 to 40	97111	23395	1096501	
Total	713997	177915	5209294	

Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005

# The data is of those that are employed and enrolled to study for a non-school qualification

## The data is of those that are employed, enrolled to study for a non-school qualification and have a recognition of prior learning

### Categories have been combined due to confidentiality reasons

**Table W42 – Distribution of unemployed people that have found a job by using the recognition of non-formal and informal learning during the year – Year yyyy**

No data available

**Table W43 – Distribution of active people that have changed region or country during the year – Year yyyy**

No data available

### 3.9. Broad types of non formal programmes that lead to recognition

**Table W44 – Broad types of non formal programmes that are being recognised – Year yyyy**

No data available

## 4. Tables for the female group

### 4.1. Characteristics of female participants

<b>Table F13 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by age – Year 2005</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>
16	198
17	431
18	1365
19	1363
20	1125
21	951
22	842
23	729
24	677
25	625
26	573
27	537
28	538
29	591
30	496
31	530
32	523
33	554
34	550
35	476
36	513
37	523
38	525
39	440
40	526
41	551
42	580
43	600
44	487
45	562
46	539
47	487
48	436
49	421
50	393
51	365
52	368
53	311
54	264
55	199
56	210
57	166
58	174
59	88

<b>Table F13 continued</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>
60	89
61	56
62	32
63	27
64	20
65	14
66	14
67	8
68	8
69	1
70	2
71	2
72	2
73	2
74	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>23679</b>
<i>Source:</i> NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005	
Base is all government funded students with at least one enrolment in a subject having Recognised Prior Learning successfully granted.	

**Table F13 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by age – Year 2001**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>
16	126
17	391
18	1341
19	1413
20	1386
21	1078
22	1002
23	898
24	925
25	854
26	775
27	794
28	723
29	785
30	746
31	712
32	715
33	660
34	637
35	697
36	660
37	716
38	719
39	726
40	745
41	726
42	715
43	690
44	635
45	588
46	563
47	509
48	543
49	454
50	372
51	390
52	336
53	276
54	292
55	194
56	162
57	135
58	99
59	67
60	58

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<b>Table F13 Continued</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>
61	51
62	35
63	35
64	24
65	33
66	16
67	6
68	9
69	8
70	13
71	8
72	3
73	7
74	4
Total	28280
<i>Source:</i> NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001	

**Table F13 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by age – Year 1996**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>
16	60
17	178
18	849
19	973
20	865
21	839
22	804
23	710
24	673
25	643
26	568
27	531
28	496
29	463
30	425
31	460
32	440
33	488
34	454
35	468
36	481
37	436
38	438
39	412
40	392
41	398
42	363
43	369
44	306
45	313
46	294
47	250
48	255
49	238
50	166
51	134
52	122
53	82
54	80
55	56
56	44
57	35
58	36
59	26
60	11

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>
61	14
62	13
63	7
64	4
65	11
66	3
67	4
68	3
69	3
70	2
71	2
72	0
73	1
74	1
<b>Total</b>	<i>17192</i>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996</i>	

<b>Table F14 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by type of subject – Year 2005</b>		
<b>Type of learning outcomes recognised</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Module/Unit of Competency Field of Education *</b>	106859	100
Natural and Physical Sciences	1820	2
Information Technology	2068	2
Engineering and Related Technologies	3357	3
Architecture and Building	470	0
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	1748	2
Health	11604	11
Education	6377	6
Management and Commerce	31946	30
Society and Culture	20432	19
Creative Arts	3459	3
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	7864	7
Mixed Field Programmes	15714	15
Unknown	0	0
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005</i>		

\* Discipline group was used prior to 2002 before being superseded by module/unit of competency field of education

<b>Table F14 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by type of subject – Year 2001</b>		
<b>Type of learning outcomes recognised</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Discipline group *</b>	129499	100
Humanities	8739	7
Social studies	3030	2
Education	3291	3
Sciences	2086	2
Mathematics, Computing	15116	12
Visual/performing arts	2262	2
Engineering, processing	2258	2
Health sciences	24155	19
Administration, business, economics, law	40652	31
Built environment	628	0
Agriculture, renewable resources	2356	2
Hospitality, tourism & personal services	9505	7
Social, educational & employment skills	15413	12
Unknown	8	0
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001</i>		

Note:

\* Discipline group has been superseded by module/unit of competency field of education as of 2002

Base is all government funded students with at least one enrolment in a subject having Recognised Prior Learning successfully granted.

**Table F14 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by type of subject – Year 1996**

Type of learning outcomes recognised	Frequency	%
<b>Discipline group *</b>	59783	100
Humanities	8091	14
Social studies	1616	3
Education	202	0
Sciences	1529	3
Mathematics, Computing	10543	18
Visual/performing arts	1290	2
Engineering, processing	1707	3
Health sciences	7687	13
Administration, business, economics, law	14665	25
Built environment	309	1
Agriculture, renewable resources	1034	2
Hospitality, tourism & personal services	4276	7
Social, educational & employment skills	6834	11
Unknown	0	0

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996

Note:

\* Discipline group has been superseded by module/unit of competency field of education as of 2002

**F16 - Distribution of participants in the recognition process by reason for undertaking recognition process - 2005#**

Reasons	Frequency	%
<b>Education Related Reasons</b>	<b>7575</b>	
To get into another course of study	7575	3%
<b>Job Related Reasons</b>	<b>200903</b>	
To get a job	52833	22%
To get a better job or promotion	56034	23.30%
Was a requirement of job	21481	8.90%
Wanted extra skills for job	37637	15.60%
To start own business	7876	3.30%
To develop existing business	1766	0.70%
To try for a different career	23276	9.70%
<b>Personal Reasons</b>	<b>57849</b>	
For interest or personal reasons	29299	12.20%
<b>Other Reasons</b>	<b>7215</b>	
Other reason	3050	1.30%
<b>Total</b>	<b>240827</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source:* ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005

# The data provided by the ABS is the main reason for current year non-school study for a qualification for those who had received a recognition of prior learning.

**Table F17 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by labour force status – Year 2005**

Labour force status	Frequency of female participants	Frequency in the LF group (16-64 outside ET)
Employed (total)	14305	14287
-- Full time	7310	7304
-- Part time	6190	6183
-- Self employed	517	512
-- Employer	106	106
-- Unpaid family worker	182	182
Unemployed	2653	2650
Not in the Labour Force	1299	1289
Not stated	5422	5400
<b>Total</b>	<b>23679</b>	<b>23626</b>

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005

**Table F17 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by labour force status – Year 2001**

Labour force status	Frequency of female participants	Frequency in the LF group (16-64 outside ET)
Employed (total)	16502	16485
-- Full time	8622	8617
-- Part time	6824	6817
-- Self employed	653	652
-- Employer	144	143
-- Unpaid family worker	259	256
Unemployed	3659	3654
Not in the Labour Force	2016	1959
Not stated	6103	6075
<b>Total</b>	<b>28280</b>	<b>28173</b>

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001

**Table F17 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by labour force status – Year 1996**

Labour force status	Frequency of female participants	Frequency in the LF group (16-64 outside ET)
Employed (total)	9559	9559
-- Full time	5617	5617
-- Part time	3403	3403
-- Self employed	396	396
-- Employer	43	43
-- Unpaid family worker	100	100
Unemployed	2812	2811
Not in the Labour Force	1554	1543
Not stated	3267	3249
<b>Total</b>	<b>17192</b>	<b>17162</b>

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996

**Table F20 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by educational attainment – Year 2005**

Educational Attainment	Frequency of female participants	Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)
ISCED 0	0	0
ISCED 1	0	0
ISCED 2	3358	3352
ISCED 3	9410	9401
ISCED 4	1679	1679
ISCED 5	4308	4292
ISCED 6	0	0
ISCED 7	0	0
Unknown ISCED level	4920	4899
Did not attend school	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>23679</b>	<b>23626</b>

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005

<b>Table F20 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by educational attainment – Year 2001</b>		
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
ISCED 0	0	0
ISCED 1	0	0
ISCED 2	2814	2794
ISCED 3	14157	14142
ISCED 4	829	828
ISCED 5	4463	4451
ISCED 6	0	0
ISCED 7	0	0
Unknown ISCED level	6017	5958
<b>Total</b>	<b>28280</b>	<b>28173</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001</i>		

<b>Table F20 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by educational attainment – Year 1996</b>		
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
ISCED 0	0	0
ISCED 1	0	0
ISCED 2	1489	1489
ISCED 3	7979	7974
ISCED 4	1132	1129
ISCED 5	3611	3606
ISCED 6	0	0
ISCED 7	0	0
Unknown ISCED level	2981	2964
<b>Total</b>	<b>17192</b>	<b>17162</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996</i>		

**Table F21 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by aggregated educational attainment – Year 2005**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
ISCED 0-2	3358	3352
ISCED 3	9410	9401
ISCED 4	1679	1679
ISCED 5-7	4308	4292
Unknown	4920	4899
Did not attend school	4	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>23679</b>	<b>23626</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005</i>		

**Table F21 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by aggregated educational attainment – Year 2001**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
ISCED 0-2	2814	2794
ISCED 3	14157	14142
ISCED 4	829	828
ISCED 5-7	4463	4451
Unknown ISCED level	6017	5958
<b>Total</b>	<b>28280</b>	<b>28173</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001</i>		

**Table F21 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by aggregated educational attainment – Year 1996**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
ISCED 0-2	1489	1489
ISCED 3	7979	7974
ISCED 4	1132	1129
ISCED 5-7	3611	3606
Unknown ISCED level	2981	2964
<b>Total</b>	<b>17192</b>	<b>17162</b>
<i>Source:</i> NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996		

**Table F23 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by aggregated country of birth – Year 2005**

<b>Place of Birth</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
Australia	16004	15976
Outside Australia	7675	7650
Unknown	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>23679</b>	<b>23626</b>
<i>Source:</i> NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005		

**Table F23 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by aggregated country of birth – Year 2001**

<b>Place of Birth</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
Australia	18091	18034
Outside Australia	10189	10139
Unknown	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>28280</b>	<b>28173</b>
<i>Source:</i> NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001		

**Table F23 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by aggregated country of birth – Year 1996**

Place of Birth	Frequency of female participants	Frequency in the group (16-64 outside ET)
Australia	10941	10927
Outside Australia	6213	6198
Unknown	38	37
<b>Total</b>	<b>17192</b>	<b>17162</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996</i>		

**Table F25 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by state/territory – Year 2005**

State/Territory	Frequency of female participants	Frequency in the region (16-64 outside ET)
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	688	687
<i>New South Wales</i>	11849	11823
<i>Northern Territory</i>	501	498
<i>Queensland</i>	3157	3150
<i>South Australia</i>	2179	2177
<i>Tasmania</i>	360	359
<i>Victoria</i>	4047	4035
<i>Western Australia</i>	898	897
<b>Total</b>	<b>23679</b>	<b>23626</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005</i>		

**Table F25 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by state/territory – Year 2001**

<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the region (16-64 outside ET)</b>
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	1461	1461
<i>New South Wales</i>	14790	14768
<i>Northern Territory</i>	556	555
<i>Queensland</i>	1838	1833
<i>South Australia</i>	3637	3568
<i>Tasmania</i>	228	228
<i>Victoria</i>	4607	4601
<i>Western Australia</i>	1163	1159
<b>Total</b>	<b>28280</b>	<b>28173</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001</i>		

**Table F25 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female participants in the recognition process by state/territory – Year 1996**

<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the region (16-64 outside ET)</b>
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	1244	1242
<i>New South Wales</i>	9439	9420
<i>Northern Territory</i>	64	64
<i>Queensland</i>	159	159
<i>South Australia</i>	2121	2120
<i>Tasmania</i>	403	403
<i>Victoria</i>	3639	3631
<i>Western Australia</i>	123	123
<b>Total</b>	<b>17192</b>	<b>17162</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996</i>		

**Table F28a – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female graduates\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2005 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further info)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	27350	1380	1230	40	130	30130
Unemployed	2430	2320	550	80	30	5410
Not in the labour force	2440	870	2750	40	70	6160
Not employed (no further info)	130	70	70	50	20	340
Not stated	230	70	40	20	950	1300
<b>Total</b>	<b>32580</b>	<b>4710</b>	<b>4640</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>1200</b>	<b>43340</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2005*

**Table F28b – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female module completers\*\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2005 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (no further info)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	7670	650	590	120	60	9080
Unemployed	930	990	540	0	0	2460
Not in the labour force	790	600	1610	0	80	3080
Not employed (no further info)	10	20	30	70	0	130
Not stated	80	40	40	10	430	600
<b>Total</b>	<b>9470</b>	<b>2290</b>	<b>2810</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>570</b>	<b>15350</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2005*

**Notes:**

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2005 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2005 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table F28a – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female graduates\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2003 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	27120	1600	1390	270	60	30440
Unemployed	1790	2210	520	160	10	4700
Not in the labour force	2230	1340	2500	140	20	6240
Not employed (not further defined)	190	100	140	200	20	650
Not stated	10	10	30	0	10	70
<b>Total</b>	<b>31330</b>	<b>5270</b>	<b>4590</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>42090</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2003*

**Table F28b – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female module completers\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2003 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	7380	850	710	160	20	9120
Unemployed	720	840	370	70	10	2010
Not in the labour force	500	560	1240	70	30	2400
Not employed (not further defined)	120	30	80	150	10	390
Not stated	20	0	10	10	40	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>8740</b>	<b>2290</b>	<b>2410</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>14000</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2003*

**Notes:**

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2003 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2003 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table F28a – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female graduates\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2001 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	19280	1160	1240	40	60	21790
Unemployed	1640	1350	580	60	20	3650
Not in the labour force	1680	860	1920	60	20	4540
Not employed (not further defined)	450	140	280	10	10	880
Not stated	30	40	30	0	30	140
<b>Total</b>	<b>23070</b>	<b>3560</b>	<b>4060</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>31000</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2001*

**Table F28b – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female module completers\*\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2001 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	7590	620	700	50	50	9010
Unemployed	540	550	300	10	10	1410
Not in the labour force	450	370	1080	90	20	2010
Not employed (not further defined)	180	30	280	10	0	510
Not stated	30	0	10	10	30	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>8790</b>	<b>1570</b>	<b>2380</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>13030</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2001*

Notes:

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2001 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2001 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table F32 — Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female students who received recognition by size and level of educational institutions – Year 2005**

<b>Educational establishment</b>	<b>Frequency of female participants</b>
0-500	6581
500-1000	4067
1000-5000	13086
5000-10000	0
10000 and more	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>23734</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005</i>	

**Table F32 — Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female students who received recognition by size and level of educational institutions – Year 2003**

<b>Educational Establishment</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>
0-500	7530
500-1000	5784
1000-5000	17202
5000-10000	0
10000 and more	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>30516</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2003</i>	

<b>F35 - Distribution of students that have changed education institution during the year - 2005</b>		
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of institution-mobile students #</b>	<b>Frequency of students ##</b>
<b>16</b>	3099	27894
<b>17</b>	9590	29598
<b>18</b>	15674	71972
<b>19</b>	21032	80941
<b>20</b>	16703	75917
<b>21</b>	18062	71008
<b>22</b>	19011	55649
<b>23</b>	16263	47375
<b>24</b>	6361	40494
<b>25</b>	6950	30295
<b>26</b>	5647	26854
<b>27</b>	6810	32282
<b>28</b>	2630	19129
<b>29</b>	5423	26422
<b>30</b>	3515	19080
<b>31 to 35</b>	16622	109195
<b>36 to 40</b>	20153	84607
<b>Total</b>	193545	848714
<i>Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005</i>		

# The data is for people who are currently enrolled but not enrolled in the same non-school qualification as in the previous year

## The data is for people currently enrolled in a non-school qualification

**Table F37 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female students (newly graduates or drop-out students) in the recognition process that have found a job – Year 2005 (weighted)**

Age	Frequency of newly graduate students (graduates*)	Frequency of newly graduate* students who found a job after course	Frequency of students who have dropped out during the course (module completers**)	Frequency of drop-out students 9module completers**) who found a job after course
16-20	10770	1750	3800	470
21-25	8400	910	2380	190
26-30	4760	340	1870	170
31-35	4050	460	1290	70
36-40	4140	530	1450	180
<b>Total</b>	<b>32110</b>	<b>3990</b>	<b>10780</b>	<b>1080</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2005*

Notes:

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2005 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2005 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

<b>Table F37 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education female students (newly graduates or drop-out students) in the recognition process that have found a job – Year 2003 (weighted)</b>				
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of newly graduate students (graduates*)</b>	<b>Frequency of newly graduate* students who found a job after course</b>	<b>Frequency of students who have dropped out during the course (module completers**)</b>	<b>Frequency of drop-out students (module completers**) who found a job after course</b>
16 - 20	7510	1130	2690	300
21 - 25	7780	650	2450	270
26 - 30	4790	380	1640	70
31-35	4610	540	1450	140
36-40	4690	540	1380	190
<b>Total</b>	<b>29380</b>	<b>3230</b>	<b>9610</b>	<b>970</b>
<i>Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2003</i>				

## Notes:

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2003 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2003 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of newly graduate students (graduates*)</b>	<b>Frequency of newly graduate* students who found a job after course</b>	<b>Frequency of students who have dropped out during the course (module completers**)</b>	<b>Frequency of drop-out students (module completers**)who found a job after course</b>
16 - 20	5560	960	2190	280
21 - 25	5430	640	1690	160
26 - 30	3490	380	1540	100
31-35	3240	350	1460	110
36-40	4020	560	1800	220
<b>Total</b>	<b>21750</b>	<b>2880</b>	<b>8670</b>	<b>860</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2001*

Notes:

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2001 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2001 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of foreign female students who used the recognition system</b>
16	0
17	0
18	2
19	7
20	9
21	17
22	17
23	19
24	21
25	19
26	20
27	15
28	11
29	12
30	9
31-35	37
36-40	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>229</b>

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005*

**Table F38 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education geographically mobile female students during the year – Year 2001**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of foreign female students who used the recognition system</b>
16	0
17	0
18	7
19	26
20	28
21	31
22	44
23	40
24	24
25	24
26	24
27	20
28	20
29	15
30	7
31-35	37
36-40	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>357</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001</i>	

**Table F38 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education geographically mobile female students during the year – Year 1996**

Age	Frequency of foreign female students who used the recognition system
16	0
17	1
18	5
19	9
20	24
21	18
22	18
23	13
24	21
25	11
26	13
27	14
28	4
29	6
30	3
31-35	10
36-40	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>

*Source: NCVER National VET Provider Collection 1996*

**F39 Distribution of employed people that have changed jobs during the year - 2005**

Age	Frequency of mobile employed people#	Frequency of employed people
16 to 19	138738	306707
20 to 24	269738	515518
25 to 29	149611	454296
30 to 34	101384	496618
35 to 39	101723	490129
40 to 44	104048	550235
45 to 49	89,081	569806
50 to 54	66909	447157
55 to 59	38937	340849
60 to 64	7518	141057
<b>Total</b>	<b>1067688</b>	<b>4312373</b>

*Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005*

# The data is for those that have had two or more jobs in the last 12 months

<b>F41 Distribution of employed people that have undertaken part-time formal study while working by using the recognition of non-formal and informal learning during the year - 2005</b>			
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of those employed that have undertaken formal study while working#</b>	<b>Frequency of those employed that have undertaken formal study while working by using the recognition of non-formal and informal learning##</b>	<b>Frequency of employed in age group</b>
16 - 17 ###	20194	2393	133038
18	15563	725	82694
19	19849	3528	90976
20	12914	3247	97562
21	16824	6651	103233
22	12239	1873	109667
23	21327	7549	98665
24	16804	4997	106391
25	17647	7015	103889
26	14890	6456	82389
27	12424	1947	84187
28	9247	1360	93392
29	16858	2534	90440
30	8830	2480	98965
31 to 35	64701	26102	502448
36 to 40	46690	9649	472974
<b>Total</b>	<b>327001</b>	<b>88506</b>	<b>2350908</b>

*Source:* ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005

# The data is of those that are employed and enrolled to study for a non-school qualification part-time

## The data is of those that are employed, enrolled to study for a non-school qualification part-time and have a recognition of prior learning

### Categories have been combined due to confidentiality reasons

**Section 1.04 5. Tables for the male group**

**5.1. Characteristics of male participants**

<b>Table M13 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by age – Year 2005</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>
16	207
17	436
18	1128
19	1276
20	1148
21	943
22	839
23	742
24	649
25	597
26	575
27	558
28	580
29	549
30	536
31	509
32	562
33	578
34	546
35	516
36	484
37	484
38	446
39	447
40	433
41	434
42	463
43	430
44	424
45	416
46	371
47	366
48	338
49	276
50	307
51	273
52	219
53	254
54	215
55	220
56	188
57	152
58	142

<b>Table M13 Continued</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>
59	115
60	95
61	80
62	53
63	46
64	26
65	19
66	19
67	6
68	14
69	4
70	7
71	5
72	5
73	2
74	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>21752</b>
<i>Source:</i> NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005	

**Table M13 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by age – Year 2001**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>
16	190
17	527
18	1287
19	1504
20	1430
21	1322
22	1125
23	999
24	863
25	810
26	828
27	825
28	784
29	810
30	841
31	775
32	749
33	693
34	616
35	641
36	652
37	611
38	664
39	606
40	598
41	568
42	509
43	465
44	453
45	461
46	410
47	359
48	329
49	318
50	274
51	266
52	223
53	229
54	202
55	158
56	132
57	136
58	103
59	75
60	56
61	52

<b>Table M13 Continued</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>
62	47
63	41
64	25
65	18
66	15
67	18
68	12
69	12
70	4
71	7
72	2
73	2
74	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>26734</b>
<u>Source:</u> NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001	

**Table M13 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by age – Year 1996**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>
16	52
17	186
18	661
19	863
20	896
21	966
22	799
23	763
24	754
25	715
26	632
27	635
28	565
29	607
30	554
31	555
32	580
33	658
34	560
35	512
36	504
37	450
38	401
39	400
40	333
41	369
42	327
43	317
44	304
45	233
46	230
47	229
48	191
49	186
50	151
51	116
52	117
53	84
54	78
55	80
56	59
57	44
58	47
59	39
60	26

<b>Table M13 Continued</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>
61	27
62	21
63	12
64	5
65	9
66	6
67	6
68	6
69	2
70	1
71	5
72	4
73	0
74	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>17935</b>
<i>Source:</i> NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996	

**Table M14 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by type of subject – Year 2005**

Type of learning outcomes recognised	Frequency	%
<b>Module/Unit of Competency Field of Education *</b>	128732	100
Natural and Physical Sciences	4341	3
Information Technology	6082	5
Engineering and Related Technologies	32931	26
Architecture and Building	11115	9
Agriculture, Environmental and Related Studies	5119	4
Health	10436	8
Education	4446	3
Management and Commerce	24932	19
Society and Culture	6896	5
Creative Arts	3025	2
Food, Hospitality and Personal Services	5016	4
Mixed Field Programmes	14393	11
Unknown	0	0

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005

Note:

\* Discipline group was used prior to 2002 before being superseded by module/unit of competency field of education

Base is all government funded students with at least one enrolment in a subject having Recognised Prior Learning successfully granted.

<b>Table M14 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by type of subject – Year 2001</b>		
<b>Type of learning outcomes recognised</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Discipline group *</b>	<i>136905</i>	<i>100</i>
Humanities	7732	6
Social studies	937	1
Education	3949	3
Sciences	3120	2
Mathematics, Computing	19035	14
Visual/performing arts	1024	1
Engineering, processing	28207	21
Health sciences	15435	11
Administration, business, economics, law	23699	17
Built environment	8491	6
Agriculture, renewable resources	6562	5
Hospitality, tourism & personal services	7455	5
Social, educational & employment skills	11259	8
Unknown	0	0
<i>Source: NCVER National VET Provider Collection 2001</i>		

Note:

\* Discipline group has been superseded by module/unit of competency field of education as of 2002

Base is all government funded students with at least one enrolment in a subject having Recognised Prior Learning successfully granted.

**Table M14 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by type of subject – Year 1996**

Type of learning outcomes recognised	Frequency	%
<b>Discipline group *</b>	75855	100
Humanities	7643	10
Social studies	607	1
Education	122	0
Sciences	2599	3
Mathematics, Computing	12659	17
Visual/performing arts	610	1
Engineering, processing	22672	30
Health sciences	4084	5
Administration, business, economics, law	10856	14
Built environment	3558	5
Agriculture, renewable resources	1901	3
Hospitality, tourism & personal services	4466	6
Social, educational & employment skills	4078	5
Unknown	0	0

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996

Note:

\* Discipline group has been superseded by module/unit of competency field of education as of 2002

Base is all government funded enrolments by students aged 16-74 in a subject having Recognised Prior Learning successfully granted.

<b>Reasons</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Education Related Reasons</b>		<b>6379</b>	
	To get into another course of study	6379	3%
<b>Job Related Reasons</b>		<b>168197</b>	
	To get a job	41440	20%
	To get a better job or promotion	44922	21.70%
	Was a requirement of job	25566	12.30%
	Wanted extra skills for job	18667	9.00%
	To start own business	11303	5.50%
	To develop existing business	5634	2.70%
	To try for a different career	20665	10.00%
<b>Personal Reasons</b>		<b>28550</b>	
	For interest or personal reasons	28550	13.80%
<b>Other Reasons</b>		<b>4165</b>	
	Other reason	4165	2.00%
<b>Total</b>		<b>207290</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source:* ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005

#The data provided by the ABS is the main reason for current year non-school study for a qualification for those who had received a recognition of prior learning.

**Table M17 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by labour force status – Year 2005**

Labour force status	Frequency of female participants	Frequency in the LF group (16-64 outside ET)
Employed (total)	13517	13483
-- Part time	9979	9969
-- Full time	2407	2397
-- Self employed	794	781
-- Employer	274	274
-- Unpaid family worker	63	62
Unemployed	1873	1868
Not in the Labour Force	724	712
Not stated	5638	5608
<b>Total</b>	<b>21752</b>	<b>21671</b>

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005

**Table M17 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by labour force status – Year 2001**

Labour force status	Frequency of female participants	Frequency in the LF group (16-64 outside ET)
Employed (total)	15909	15883
-- Full time	11822	11815
-- Part time	2848	2840
-- Self employed	922	913
-- Employer	239	238
-- Unpaid family worker	78	77
Unemployed	3061	3057
Not in the Labour Force	1254	1220
Not stated	6510	6481
<b>Total</b>	<b>26734</b>	<b>26641</b>

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001

**Table M17 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by labour force status – Year 1996**

Labour force status	Frequency of male participants	Frequency in the LF group (16-64 outside ET)
Employed (total)	10598	10585
-- Full time	8532	8529
-- Part time	1357	1351
-- Self employed	641	637
-- Employer	55	55
-- Unpaid family worker	13	13
Unemployed	2234	2232
Not in the Labour Force	904	892
Not stated	4199	4184
<b>Total</b>	<b>17935</b>	<b>17893</b>
<i>Source:</i> NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996		

**Table M20 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by educational attainment – Year 2005**

Educational Attainment	Frequency of male participants	Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)
ISCED 0	0	0
ISCED 1	0	0
ISCED 2	2970	2959
ISCED 3	8781	8766
ISCED 4	1418	1414
ISCED 5	3337	3317
ISCED 6	0	0
ISCED 7	0	0
Unknown ISCED level	5239	5208
Did not attend school	7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>21752</b>	<b>21671</b>
<i>Source:</i> NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005		

<b>Table M20 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by educational attainment – Year 2001</b>		
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
ISCED 0	0	0
ISCED 1	0	0
ISCED 2	2670	2662
ISCED 3	12921	12907
ISCED 4	1112	1105
ISCED 5	3521	3500
ISCED 6	0	0
ISCED 7	0	0
Unknown ISCED level	6510	6467
<b>Total</b>	<b>26734</b>	<b>26641</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001</i>		

<b>Table M20 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by educational attainment – Year 1996</b>		
<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
ISCED 0	0	0
ISCED 1	0	0
ISCED 2	1069	1068
ISCED 3	8050	8037
ISCED 4	1288	1285
ISCED 5	3495	3487
ISCED 6	0	0
ISCED 7	0	0
Unknown ISCED level	4033	4016
<b>Total</b>	<b>17935</b>	<b>17893</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996</i>		

**Table M21 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by aggregated educational attainment – Year 2005**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
ISCED 0-2	2970	2959
ISCED 3	8781	8766
ISCED 4	1418	1414
ISCED 5-7	3337	3317
Unknown ISCED level	5239	5208
Did not attend school	7	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>21752</b>	<b>21671</b>

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005

**Table M21 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by aggregated educational attainment – Year 2001**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
ISCED 0-2	2670	2662
ISCED 3	12921	12907
ISCED 4	1112	1105
ISCED 5-7	3521	3500
Unknown ISCED level	6510	6467
<b>Total</b>	<b>26734</b>	<b>26641</b>

*Source:* NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001

**Table M21 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by aggregated educational attainment – Year 1996**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the ISCED group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
ISCED 0-2	1069	1068
ISCED 3	8050	8037
ISCED 4	1288	1285
ISCED 5-7	3495	3487
Unknown ISCED level	4033	4016
<b>Total</b>	<b>17935</b>	<b>17893</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996</i>		

**Table M23 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by aggregated country of birth – Year 2005**

<b>Place of Birth</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
Australia	14260	14219
Outside Australia	7492	7452
Unknown	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>21752</b>	<b>21671</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005</i>		

**Table M23 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by aggregated country of birth – Year 2001**

<b>Place of Birth</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the group (16-64 outside ET)</b>
Australia	16810	16767
Outside Australia	9924	9874
Unknown	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>26734</b>	<b>26641</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001</i>		

**Table M23 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by aggregated country of birth – Year 1996**

Place of Birth	Frequency of male participants	Frequency in the group (16-64 outside ET)
Australia	10468	10449
Outside Australia	7434	7411
Unknown	33	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>17935</b>	<b>17893</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996</i>		

**Table M25 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by state/territory – Year 2005**

State/Territory	Frequency of male participants	Frequency in the region (16-64 outside ET)
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	452	452
<i>New South Wales</i>	10761	10714
<i>Northern Territory</i>	329	327
<i>Queensland</i>	3550	3538
<i>South Australia</i>	1466	1461
<i>Tasmania</i>	512	512
<i>Victoria</i>	3416	3407
<i>Western Australia</i>	1266	1260
<b>Total</b>	<b>21752</b>	<b>21671</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005</i>		

**Table M25 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by state/territory – Year 2001**

State/Territory	Frequency of male participants	Frequency in the region (16-64 outside ET)
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	1046	1046
<i>New South Wales</i>	13965	13919
<i>Northern Territory</i>	472	472
<i>Queensland</i>	2330	2327
<i>South Australia</i>	2939	2908
<i>Tasmania</i>	268	268
<i>Victoria</i>	4493	4484
<i>Western Australia</i>	1221	1217
<b>Total</b>	<b>26734</b>	<b>26641</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001</i>		

**Table M25 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education male participants in the recognition process by state/territory – Year 1996**

<b>State/Territory</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>	<b>Frequency in the region (16-64 outside ET)</b>
<i>Australian Capital Territory</i>	1116	1116
<i>New South Wales</i>	10646	10622
<i>Northern Territory</i>	87	87
<i>Queensland</i>	235	232
<i>South Australia</i>	2277	2270
<i>Tasmania</i>	336	336
<i>Victoria</i>	3138	3130
<i>Western Australia</i>	100	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>17935</b>	<b>17893</b>

*Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996*

**Table M28a – Distribution of male government-funded vocational and technical education graduates\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2005 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	28750	1510	860	120	150	31400
Unemployed	2500	1740	260	10	10	4520
Not in the labour force	2610	600	1670	0	0	4880
Not employed (not further defined)	150	90	50	50	0	340
Not stated	280	20	0	0	800	1090
<b>Total</b>	<b>34290</b>	<b>3960</b>	<b>2830</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>960</b>	<b>42220</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2005*

**Table M28b – Distribution of male government-funded vocational and technical education module completers\*\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2005 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	8860	840	410	10	100	10210
Unemployed	1050	1230	290	70	20	2670
Not in the labour force	760	210	1210	20	0	2200
Not employed (not further defined)	60	40	30	30	0	160
Not stated	80	10	0	0	360	440
<b>Total</b>	<b>10800</b>	<b>2330</b>	<b>1940</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>480</b>	<b>15670</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2005*

**Notes:**

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2005 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2005 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table M28a – Distribution of male government-funded vocational and technical education graduates\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2003 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	27470	1650	820	260	80	30270
Unemployed	2300	2110	430	210	10	5070
Not in the labour force	1830	650	1340	130	0	3950
Not employed (not further defined)	230	140	70	220	10	660
Not stated	30	10	0	0	10	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>31860</b>	<b>4570</b>	<b>2660</b>	<b>810</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>40010</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2003*

**Table M28b – Distribution of male government-funded vocational and technical education module completers\*\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2003 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	9770	940	420	170	10	11310
Unemployed	990	1290	140	10	0	2440
Not in the labour force	600	210	790	140	20	1760
Not employed (not further defined)	160	80	70	210	10	540
Not stated	10	0	0	10	10	30
<b>Total</b>	<b>11530</b>	<b>2520</b>	<b>1430</b>	<b>540</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>16080</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2003*

**Notes:**

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2003 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2003 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table M28a – Distribution of male government-funded vocational and technical education graduates\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2001 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	20190	1090	770	50	70	22180
Unemployed	1750	1180	660	30	20	3650
Not in the labour force	1220	350	890	30	20	2510
Not employed (not further defined)	400	130	140	20	20	710
Not stated	50	30	20	0	60	150
<b>Total</b>	<b>23610</b>	<b>2780</b>	<b>2490</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>29200</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2001*

**Table M28b – Distribution of male government-funded vocational and technical education module completers\*\* in the recognition process by labour force status before the recognition process and 6 months after the end of this process – Year 2001 (weighted)**

<b>After:</b>	<b>Employed</b>	<b>Unemployed</b>	<b>Not in the labour force</b>	<b>Not employed (not further defined)</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Before:</b>						
Employed	10300	870	470	70	80	11790
Unemployed	640	930	240	60	20	1900
Not in the labour force	410	230	620	70	10	1340
Not employed (not further defined)	160	110	80	10	0	360
Not stated	50	10	10	0	60	130
<b>Total</b>	<b>11560</b>	<b>2160</b>	<b>1420</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>15520</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2001*

**Notes:**

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2001 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2001 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

<b>Table M32 — Distribution of male government-funded vocational and technical education students who received recognition by size and level of educational institutions – Year 2005</b>	
<b>Educational Establishment</b>	<b>Frequency of male participants</b>
0-500	6333
500-1000	3330
1000-5000	12151
5000-10000	0
10000 and more	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>21814</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005</i>	

<b>Table M32 — Distribution of male government-funded vocational and technical education students who received recognition by size and level of educational institutions – Year 2003</b>	
<b>Educational Establishment</b>	<b>Frequency of participants</b>
0-500	5639
500-1000	4903
1000-5000	15378
5000-10000	0
10000 and more	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>25920</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2003</i>	

<b>M35 - Distribution of students that have changed education institution during the year - 2005</b>		
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of institution-mobile students #</b>	<b>Frequency of students ##</b>
16	3607	24931
17	4653	33857
18	8983	67254
19	11257	80233
20	10899	73658
21	14931	71162
22	21976	55986
23	10750	46245
24	10245	42332
25	6838	28653
26	5617	33842
27	2923	23844
28	3508	23007
29	2497	23561
30	3301	18624
31 to 35	21180	94665
36 to 40	14757	63106
<b>Total</b>	<b>157921</b>	<b>804960</b>
<i>Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005</i>		

# The data is for people who are currently enrolled but not enrolled in the same non-school qualification as in the previous year

## The data is for people currently enrolled in a non-school qualification

<b>Table M37 – Distribution of male government-funded vocational and technical education students (newly graduates or drop-out students) in the recognition process that have found a job – Year 2005 (weighted)</b>				
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of newly graduate students (graduates*)</b>	<b>Frequency of newly graduate* students who found a job after course</b>	<b>Frequency of students who have dropped out during the course (module completers**)</b>	<b>Frequency of drop-out students (module completers**) who found a job after course</b>
16 - 20	9000	1960	4080	930
21-25	10620	1770	2740	430
26 - 30	4740	330	1460	30
31-35	3850	260	1540	60
36-40	3890	240	1410	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>32090</b>	<b>4560</b>	<b>11240</b>	<b>1560</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2005*

Notes:

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2005 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2005 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of newly graduate students (graduates*)</b>	<b>Frequency of newly graduate* students who found a job after course</b>	<b>Frequency of students who have dropped out during the course (module completers**)</b>	<b>Frequency of drop-out students (module completers**) who found a job after course</b>
16 - 20	7720	1670	3710	640
21 - 25	10070	1490	2880	460
26 - 30	4420	240	1960	130
31-35	4210	260	1520	110
36-40	4010	250	1510	160
<b>Total</b>	<b>30420</b>	<b>3920</b>	<b>11580</b>	<b>1490</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2003*

## Notes:

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2003 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2003 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table M37 – Distribution of male government-funded vocational and technical education students (newly graduates or drop-out students) in the recognition process that have found a job – Year 2001 (weighted)**

Age	Frequency of newly graduate students (graduates*)	Frequency of newly graduate* students who found a job after course	Frequency of students who have dropped out during the course (module completers**)	Frequency of drop-out students (module completers**) who found a job after course
16 - 20	5490	1380	2970	430
21 - 25	6700	1030	2360	310
26 - 30	3090	250	1600	160
31-35	3280	140	1440	70
36-40	3420	170	1870	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>21970</b>	<b>2960</b>	<b>10240</b>	<b>1050</b>

*Source: NCVET Student Outcomes Survey 2001*

Notes:

\* A graduate is a past student who completed a publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) course in 2001 and graduated with a qualification. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

\*\* A module completer is a past student who is not a graduate and completed only part of a publicly funded VET course in 2001 without gaining a qualification and then left the vocational education and training system. Past students participating in recreational, leisure or self-enrichment courses and past students who did not have an Australian address were excluded from the survey.

**Table M38 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education geographically mobile male students during the year – Year 2005**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of foreign male students who used the recognition system</b>
16	0
17	3
18	6
19	18
20	34
21	43
22	30
23	35
24	36
25	22
26	29
27	18
28	25
29	17
30	12
31-35	41
36-40	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>381</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2005</i>	

**Table M38 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education geographically mobile male students during the year – Year 2001**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of foreign male students who used the recognition system</b>
16	0
17	3
18	18
19	36
20	57
21	66
22	76
23	72
24	62
25	57
26	46
27	27
28	31
29	19
30	27
31-35	37
36-40	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>658</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 2001</i>	

<b>Table M38 – Distribution of government-funded vocational and technical education geographically mobile male students during the year – Year 1996</b>	
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of foreign male students who used the recognition system</b>
16	0
17	0
18	8
19	18
20	23
21	19
22	26
23	26
24	35
25	19
26	16
27	19
28	6
29	6
30	11
31-35	19
36-40	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>258</b>
<i>Source: NCVET National VET Provider Collection 1996</i>	

<b>M39 Distribution of employed people that have changed jobs during the year - 2005</b>		
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of mobile employed people #</b>	<b>Frequency of employed people</b>
16 to 19	130499	311663
20 to 24	220917	545971
25 to 29	174460	592014
30 to 34	145636	662939
35 to 39	97586	636913
40 to 44	86660	678799
45 to 49	77532	656833
50 to 54	55356	519360
55 to 59	45669	435612
60 to 64	18534	256227
<b>Total</b>	<b>1052851</b>	<b>5296331</b>
<i>Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005</i>		

# The data is for those that have had two or more jobs in the last 12 months

<b>M41 Distribution of employed people that have undertaken part-time formal study while working by using the recognition of non-formal and informal learning during the year - 2005</b>			
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency of those employed that have undertaken formal study while working #</b>	<b>Frequency of those employed that have undertaken formal study while working by using the recognition of non-formal and informal learning ##</b>	<b>Frequency of employed in age group</b>
16 to 17 ###	21204	0	120760
18	21234	1857	88158
19	29303	3524	102745
20	22168	5306	103751
21	24568	4558	108601
22	23147	4760	108331
23	14570	1686	118327
24	16210	5597	106960
25	14601	5426	104685
26	16229	6808	114183
27	14433	3996	131710
28	13761	3346	115473
29	18719	6493	125963
30	12447	3066	114018
31 to 35	73982	19238	671193
36 to 40	50421	13746	623527
<b>Total</b>	<b>386997</b>	<b>89409</b>	<b>2858386</b>

*Source:* ABS Survey of Education and Training, 2005

# The data is of those that are employed and enrolled to study for a non-school qualification part-time

## The data is of those that are employed, enrolled to study for a non-school qualification part-time and have a recognition of prior learning

### Categories have been combined due to confidentiality reasons

**6.1. Estimated proportion (%) of provision of formal and non-formal learning programmes at post-secondary education and training**

**Table FP1 – Proportion of provision of formal and non-formal learning programmes**

No data available

**6.2. Estimated proportion (%) of participation in formal and non-formal learning**

**Table FP2 – Proportion of participation in formal and non-formal learning programmes**

(i)	(ii) 10 years ago	(iii) 5 years ago #	(iv) Now #	(v) 5 years from now	(vi) 10 years from now
(vii) Participation in formal learning programmes ##	(viii)	1877089	2060379	(ix)	(x)
(xi) Participation in non-formal learning programmes ###	(xii)	4780969	5314441	(xiii)	(xiv)
(xv)	(xvi) 100%	(xvii) 100%	(xviii) 100%	(xix) 100%	(xx) 100%
<b>(xxi) Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training</b>					
Footnote: # The data for '5 years ago' is from SET 2001 and the data for 'now' is from SET 2005					
## The data is for people enrolled to study for a non-school qualification					
### The data is for people that have undertaken a training course					
Note: The data collected in SET, for formal learning programmes and non-formal learning programmes are not mutually exclusive. Therefore the percentages do not add up to 100%.					

**6.3. Estimated proportion (%) of recognition of formal and non-formal learning**

**Table FP3 – Proportion of recognition of learning outcomes from formal and non-formal/informal learning opportunities**

No data available

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**ANNEX 2****TABLES FOR SUPPLEMENTARY DATA – EDUCATION AT A GLANCE****Table of Contents****1. Explanatory notes****2. Tables to update****2.1. Tables from Education at a Glance (2005)**

- 2.1.a – Participation in formal and/or non-formal education and training by educational attainment and gender
- 2.1.b – Participation in formal and/or non-formal and/or informal education and training, by educational attainment and gender
- 2.1.c - Participation of the labour force in non-formal job-related continuing education and training, by level of educational attainment
- 2.1.d - Participation in non-formal job-related continuing education and training, by employment status
- 2.1.e - Participation in non-formal job-related continuing education and training for the labour force, by age and gender
- 2.1.f - Participation in non-formal job-related continuing education and training, for the employed, by level of education attainment and industry
- 2.1.g - Participation in non-formal job-related continuing education and training for the employed, by occupation group

**2.2. Tables from Education at a Glance (2006, forthcoming)**

- 2.2.a – Participant rate and expected number of hours in non-formal job-related education and training by level of educational attainment
- 2.2.b – Expected number of hours in non-formal job-related education and training for all levels of educational attainment, by gender
- 2.2.c – Expected number of hours in non-formal job-related education and training, by level of educational attainment

### **Section 1.05 1. Explanatory notes**

Australia is not listed in the OECD Education at a Glance 2005 and 2006 tables but has provided some comparable data as requested. The data for the tables was compiled from the ABS Survey of Education and Training (SET), 2005.

Australia is unable to provide the last three tables (Table 2.2.a, 2.2.b and 2.2.c) as the ABS Survey of Education and Training (SET) does not collect "expected" data. The data is in ('000) for Tables 2.1.f and 2.1.g as we do not define industry classification by "Resource industries", "Goods producing industries", "Lower-tier services", "Upper-tier services" and "Unknown", or occupation classification by "High-skilled white collar", "Low-skilled white collar", "High-skilled blue collar" and "Low-skilled blue collar".

## Section 1.06 2. Tables to update

2.1a Training undertaken and level of previous year study by Level of highest non-school qualification (ISCED) for 16-64 year olds					
	Lower secondary	Upper secondary/post-secondary non-tertiary	Tertiary	Other (ISCED 0/1)	Total
<b>Males</b>					
Attended a training course					
Studied in 2004	64.8	244.9	332.5	5.8	648.0
Did not study in 2004	420.6	870.3	753.8	109.6	2154.3
Did not attend a training course					
Studied in 2004	110.8	292.0	173.2	14.4	590.4
Did not study in 2004	922.7	1282.0	549.2	419.9	3173.8
% of males in formal and/or non-formal education and training	39	52	70	24	52
<b>Females</b>					
Attended a training course					
Studied in 2004	95.6	283.4	404.4	13.1	796.5
Did not study in 2004	365.6	466.8	747.2	64.6	1644.2
Did not attend a training course					
Studied in 2004	140.5	315.8	264.2	32.5	753.0
Did not study in 2004	1341.1	912.2	652.8	481.1	3387.3
% of females in formal and/or non-formal education and training	31	54	68	19	49
<b>Persons</b>					
Attended a training course					
Studied in 2004	160.4	528.3	736.9	19.0	1444.5
Did not study in 2004	786.2	1337.1	1501.0	174.2	3798.5
Did not attend a training course					
Studied in 2004	251.3	607.9	437.4	46.9	1343.4
Did not study in 2004	2263.8	2194.2	1202.0	901.0	6561.0
% of persons in formal and/or non-formal education and training	35	53	69	21	50
<i>Source:</i> ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005					

**2.1c Training undertaken and Labour force status by Level of highest non-school qualification (ISCED) for 25-64 year olds**

	Lower secondary	Upper secondary/post-secondary non-tertiary	Tertiary	Other (ISCED 0/1)	Total
<b>Males</b>					
	('000 persons)				
Attended a training course					
In the labour force	365.9	867.2	1012.4	90.1	2335.6
Not in the labour force	8.9	19.2	13.5	4.3	46.0
Total	374.8	886.4	1025.9	94.5	2381.6
Did not attend a training course					
In the labour force	548.2	963.1	532.5	204.2	2248.0
Not in the labour force	161.0	231.6	121.4	160.4	674.4
Total	709.1	1194.7	653.9	364.6	2922.4
Total					
In the labour force	914.0	1830.3	1544.9	294.4	4583.6
Not in the labour force	169.9	250.8	135.0	164.7	720.4
Total	1084.0	2081.1	1679.8	459.1	5304.0
% of males in the labour force in non-formal education and training	34	42	60	20	44
	Hours				
Mean number of hours per participant in the labour force	56	125	79	21	70
<b>Females</b>					
	('000 persons)				
Attended a training course					
In the labour force	352.7	483.0	993.6	60.7	1889.9
Not in the labour force	27.0	29.1	47.0	5.2	108.3
Total	379.6	512.1	1040.6	65.9	1998.2
Did not attend a training course					
In the labour force	594.5	506.2	502.7	157.4	1760.7
Not in the labour force	615.0	356.8	320.8	314.4	1607.0
Total	1209.5	863.0	823.5	471.8	3367.7
Total					
In the labour force	947.1	989.2	1496.2	218.1	3650.7
Not in the labour force	642.0	385.9	367.8	319.6	1715.3
Total	1589.1	1375.1	1864.0	537.7	5366.0
% of females in the labour force in non-formal education and training	22	35	53	11	35
	Hours				
Mean number of hours per participant in the labour force	62	116	69	18	66

	Lower secondary	Upper secondary/post-secondary non-tertiary	Tertiary	Other (ISCED 0/1)	Total
<b>Persons</b>					
	('000 persons)				
Attended a training course					
In the labour force	718.6	1350.2	2006.0	150.8	4225.5
Not in the labour force	35.9	48.3	60.6	9.5	154.3
Total	754.5	1398.5	2066.5	160.4	4379.8
Did not attend a training course					
In the labour force	1142.6	1469.3	1035.1	361.7	4008.7
Not in the labour force	776.0	588.4	442.2	474.8	2281.4
Total	1918.6	2057.7	1477.4	836.4	6290.1
Total					
In the labour force	1861.2	2819.4	3041.1	512.5	8234.2
Not in the labour force	811.9	636.7	502.8	484.3	2435.7
Total	2673.1	3456.2	3543.9	996.8	10669.9
% of persons in the labour force in non-formal education and training	27	39	57	15	40
	Hours				
Mean number of hours per participant in the labour force	60	124	74	20	70
<i>Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005</i>					

**2.1d Training undertaken and Labour force status by Level of highest non-school qualification (ISCED) for 24-64 year olds**

	Employed	Unemployed	In Labour Force	Not in Labour Force	Total
<b>Males</b>					
	('000 persons)				
Attended a training course	2336.1	50.0	2386.1	48.8	2434.9
Did not attend a training course	2209.5	104.5	2314.0	691.2	3005.2
Total	4545.7	154.5	4700.1	740.0	5440.1
% of males in non-formal education and training by employment status	51	32	51	7	45
	Hours				
Mean number of hours per participant in the labour force	26	50	27	42	27
<b>Females</b>					
	('000 persons)				
Attended a training course	1902.4	48.8	1951.2	109.4	2060.7
Did not attend a training course	1694.1	117.5	1811.6	1635.3	3446.9
Total	3596.5	166.3	3762.9	1744.7	5507.6
% of females in non-formal education and training by employment status	53	29	52	6	37
	Hours				
Mean number of hours per participant in the labour force	22	88	24	32	24
<b>Persons</b>					
	('000 persons)				
Attended a training course	4238.5	98.8	4337.3	158.2	4495.6
Did not attend a training course	3903.7	222.0	4125.6	2326.5	6452.1
Total	8142.2	320.8	8463.0	2484.7	10947.7
% of persons in non-formal education and training by employment status	52	31	51	6	41
	Hours				
Mean number of hours per participant in the labour force	24	71	25	35	25

Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005

<b>2.1e Training undertaken by age for persons in the labour force for 25-64 year olds</b>					
<b>Males</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>25-64</b>
	('000 persons)				
Attended a training course	716.6	704.4	621.4	293.2	2335.9
Did not attend a training course	584.7	655.1	588.3	419.8	2248.0
Total	1301.3	1359.5	1209.7	713.0	4583.6
% of males in the labour force in non-formal education and training	55	52	51	41	51
<b>Females</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>25-64</b>
	('000 persons)				
Attended a training course	551.6	555.9	567.6	214.8	1889.9
Did not attend a training course	462.0	533.1	485.7	280.0	1760.7
Total	1013.6	1089.0	1053.3	494.8	3650.7
% of females in the labour force in non-formal education and training	54	51	54	43	52
<b>Persons</b>	<b>25-34</b>	<b>35-44</b>	<b>45-54</b>	<b>55-64</b>	<b>25-64</b>
	('000 persons)				
Attended a training course	1268.2	1260.3	1189.0	508.0	4225.5
Did not attend a training course	1046.7	1188.2	1074.0	699.8	4008.7
Total	2314.9	2448.5	2263.0	1207.8	8234.2
% of persons in the labour force in non-formal education and training	55	51	53	42	51
<i>Source: Survey of Education and Training 2005</i>					

<b>2.1f Training undertaken and Industry of current job or business by Level of highest non-school qualification ISCED for 25 to 64 year olds</b>					
	<b>Lower secondary</b>	<b>Upper secondary /post-secondary non-tertiary</b>	<b>Tertiary</b>	<b>Other (ISCED 0/1)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Males</b>					
	('000 persons)				
<i>Training course</i>					
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	23.4	23.2	15.2	7.3	69.0
Mining	15.8	34.8	14.5	3.1	68.2
Manufacturing	59.9	150.7	80.3	14.4	305.3
Electricity, gas and water supply	5.7	21.8	16.2	3.1	46.9
Construction	40.7	153.9	38.9	16.6	250.1
Wholesale trade	26.0	49.6	33.7	5.3	114.7
Retail trade	32.8	77.0	31.4	3.8	145.1
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	5.3	22.5	14.1	2.6	44.5
Transport and storage	36.8	62.0	33.9	11.9	144.6
Communication services	5.7	24.4	28.8	3.0	62.0
Finance and insurance	12.4	22.8	72.7	0.0	107.9
Property and business services	24.6	67.6	212.0	2.5	306.6
Government administration and defence	24.5	56.6	106.6	5.3	192.9
Education	1.7	12.7	129.1	1.2	144.7
Health and community services	8.8	27.4	113.4	3.2	152.7
Cultural and recreational services	4.9	16.5	17.8	1.1	40.3
Personal and other services	20.1	30.5	40.6	1.9	93.0
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>374.8</b>	<b>886.4</b>	<b>1025.9</b>	<b>94.5</b>	<b>2381.6</b>
<i>No training course</i>					
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	40.4	33.0	9.5	22.2	105.1
Mining	7.1	11.0	5.2	1.9	25.3
Manufacturing	88.0	184.4	60.4	30.1	362.9
Electricity, gas and water supply	1.3	4.3	4.0	0.4	10.0
Construction	84.4	183.8	27.2	28.2	323.6
Wholesale trade	42.0	63.9	36.5	23.5	165.9
Retail trade	75.6	138.3	38.9	20.6	273.4
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	13.0	47.5	16.1	4.3	80.8
Transport and storage	56.1	54.0	26.6	25.9	162.6
Communication services	13.8	15.9	16.7	2.8	49.2
Finance and insurance	6.4	9.9	27.2	1.5	45.0
Property and business services	38.6	82.2	124.9	5.9	251.6
Government administration and defence	9.3	14.4	23.1	3.3	50.1
Education	4.8	12.1	37.8	2.5	57.3
Health and community services	6.9	16.3	23.7	3.5	50.4
Cultural and recreational services	12.2	31.8	15.6	3.9	63.4
Personal and other services	17.4	31.2	19.4	5.5	73.5
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>709.1</b>	<b>1194.7</b>	<b>653.9</b>	<b>364.6</b>	<b>2922.4</b>
<i>Total</i>					
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	63.8	56.3	24.6	29.5	174.1
Mining	22.9	45.8	19.7	5.0	93.5
Manufacturing	147.9	335.1	140.7	44.5	668.2
Electricity, gas and water supply	7.0	26.1	20.2	3.6	56.9

<b>2.1f continued</b>					
Construction	125.1	337.7	66.1	44.8	573.7
Wholesale trade	68.0	113.5	70.2	28.8	280.5
Retail trade	108.5	215.3	70.3	24.4	418.5
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	18.3	70.0	30.2	6.8	125.4
Transport and storage	92.9	116.0	60.5	37.8	307.2
Communication services	19.6	40.4	45.5	5.8	111.2
Finance and insurance	18.9	32.6	99.9	1.5	152.9
Property and business services	63.2	149.8	336.8	8.4	558.2
Government administration and defence	33.8	71.0	129.7	8.5	243.0
Education	6.5	24.9	166.9	3.6	201.9
Health and community services	15.7	43.7	137.1	6.7	203.1
Cultural and recreational services	17.0	48.3	33.4	5.0	103.8
Personal and other services	37.4	61.7	60.0	7.4	166.5
Total(a)	1084.0	2081.1	1679.8	459.1	5304.0

**2.1f continued**

	Lower secondary	Upper secondary/post-secondary non-tertiary	Tertiary	Other (ISCED 0/1)	Total
<b>Females</b>					
	('000 persons)				
<i>Training course</i>					
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	4.5	6.2	7.8	0.2	18.6
Mining	1.2	2.6	4.4	0.0	8.2
Manufacturing	20.1	19.3	31.4	6.4	77.2
Electricity, gas and water supply	1.7	3.5	5.0	0.0	10.1
Construction	6.6	7.8	8.1	1.7	24.3
Wholesale trade	9.0	9.7	9.6	1.0	29.3
Retail trade	64.8	56.2	37.5	12.5	171.0
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	12.2	18.4	9.1	3.5	43.3
Transport and storage	13.1	14.9	17.2	1.9	47.2
Communication services	6.1	8.3	7.3	0.4	22.1
Finance and insurance	26.8	43.6	43.8	1.4	115.6
Property and business services	35.8	54.8	97.0	5.2	192.8
Government administration and defence	32.4	39.5	93.8	3.3	168.9
Education	27.7	49.7	272.2	2.1	351.7
Health and community services	57.3	98.3	275.6	16.4	447.5
Cultural and recreational services	10.0	15.9	27.9	1.5	55.3
Personal and other services	9.2	24.8	26.9	0.0	60.9
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>379.6</b>	<b>512.1</b>	<b>1040.6</b>	<b>65.9</b>	<b>1998.2</b>
<i>No training course</i>					
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	26.5	16.7	13.4	6.7	63.4
Mining	2.6	2.0	0.9	0.2	5.6
Manufacturing	74.0	44.5	27.3	20.8	166.6
Electricity, gas and water supply	1.9	0.7	1.3	0.0	3.8
Construction	29.6	24.6	16.6	6.5	77.2
Wholesale trade	29.4	26.4	10.8	5.0	71.7
Retail trade	119.7	95.8	47.6	28.6	291.7
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	46.4	31.0	15.0	19.5	111.9
Transport and storage	20.7	15.6	10.7	6.8	53.7
Communication services	10.5	7.2	6.0	0.8	24.5
Finance and insurance	13.2	17.9	26.8	1.3	59.2
Property and business services	62.9	58.4	80.3	15.3	216.9
Government administration and defence	15.7	15.2	15.4	1.4	47.7
Education	22.5	20.4	73.0	5.6	121.5
Health and community services	54.9	48.8	95.9	15.5	215.0
Cultural and recreational services	12.2	11.0	10.6	1.6	35.5
Personal and other services	15.9	34.0	23.1	7.4	80.4
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>1209.5</b>	<b>863.0</b>	<b>823.5</b>	<b>471.8</b>	<b>3367.7</b>
<i>Total</i>					
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	31.0	22.9	21.2	6.9	82.1
Mining	3.7	4.6	5.3	0.2	13.8
Manufacturing	94.1	63.7	58.7	27.2	243.7
Electricity, gas and water supply	3.6	4.1	6.3	0.0	14.0
Construction	36.2	32.4	24.6	8.2	101.5

<b>2.1f continued</b>					
Wholesale trade	38.4	36.2	20.4	6.0	100.9
Retail trade	184.5	152.0	85.1	41.1	462.6
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	58.7	49.5	24.1	23.0	155.2
Transport and storage	33.8	30.5	27.9	8.7	100.9
Communication services	16.7	15.5	13.3	1.2	46.6
Finance and insurance	40.1	61.6	70.5	2.6	174.8
Property and business services	98.7	113.2	177.3	20.4	409.6
Government administration and defence	48.0	54.7	109.2	4.7	216.6
Education	50.2	70.1	345.2	7.7	473.2
Health and community services	112.1	147.0	371.5	31.9	662.6
Cultural and recreational services	22.3	26.9	38.5	3.1	90.8
Personal and other services	25.1	58.8	50.0	7.4	141.2
Total(a)	1589.1	1375.1	1864.0	537.7	5366.0

**2.1f continued**

	Lower secondary	Upper secondary/post-secondary non-tertiary	Tertiary	Other (ISCED 0/1)	Total
<b>Persons</b>					
	('000 persons)				
<i>Training course</i>					
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	27.8	29.4	22.9	7.5	87.7
Mining	17.0	37.3	18.9	3.1	76.4
Manufacturing	80.0	170.0	111.8	20.7	382.5
Electricity, gas and water supply	7.4	25.3	21.2	3.1	57.0
Construction	47.3	161.7	47.0	18.3	274.4
Wholesale trade	35.0	59.4	43.3	6.3	143.9
Retail trade	97.6	133.2	68.9	16.4	316.1
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	17.5	41.0	23.3	6.1	87.9
Transport and storage	50.0	76.9	51.1	13.8	191.8
Communication services	11.9	32.7	36.2	3.4	84.1
Finance and insurance	39.3	66.4	116.4	1.4	223.5
Property and business services	60.4	122.4	309.0	7.7	499.4
Government administration and defence	56.9	96.0	200.4	8.5	361.9
Education	29.4	62.4	401.3	3.3	496.3
Health and community services	66.1	125.7	389.0	19.6	600.3
Cultural and recreational services	14.9	32.4	45.7	2.6	95.7
Personal and other services	29.3	55.3	67.5	1.9	153.9
Total(a)	754.5	1398.5	2066.5	160.4	4379.8
<i>No training course</i>					
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	66.9	49.8	22.9	28.9	168.5
Mining	9.7	13.0	6.1	2.0	30.9
Manufacturing	162.0	228.8	87.7	51.0	529.4
Electricity, gas and water supply	3.2	4.9	5.3	0.4	13.8
Construction	114.0	208.4	43.7	34.7	400.8
Wholesale trade	71.3	90.3	47.3	28.5	237.5
Retail trade	195.3	234.1	86.5	49.1	565.1
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	59.4	78.5	31.1	23.8	192.8
Transport and storage	76.7	69.6	37.3	32.7	216.3
Communication services	24.3	23.1	22.7	3.6	73.7
Finance and insurance	19.7	27.8	54.0	2.8	104.2
Property and business services	101.5	140.6	205.2	21.1	468.4
Government administration and defence	25.0	29.6	38.5	4.7	97.8
Education	27.4	32.5	110.8	8.0	178.8
Health and community services	61.8	65.1	119.6	19.1	265.5
Cultural and recreational services	24.4	42.8	26.2	5.5	98.9
Personal and other services	33.2	65.2	42.5	12.9	153.8
Total(a)	1918.6	2057.7	1477.4	836.4	6290.1
<b>Total</b>					
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	94.8	79.2	45.8	36.4	256.2
Mining	26.7	50.4	25.0	5.2	107.2
Manufacturing	242.0	398.8	199.4	71.7	911.9
Electricity, gas and water supply	10.6	30.2	26.5	3.6	70.8
Construction	161.4	370.1	90.7	53.0	675.2
Wholesale trade	106.4	149.7	90.6	34.8	381.4
<b>2.1f continued</b>					

Retail trade	292.9	367.2	155.4	65.5	881.1
Accommodation, cafes and restaurants	77.0	119.5	54.3	29.8	280.6
Transport and storage	126.7	146.5	88.4	46.5	408.1
Communication services	36.2	55.8	58.8	7.0	157.8
Finance and insurance	58.9	94.2	170.4	4.2	327.7
Property and business services	161.9	263.0	514.2	28.8	967.8
Government administration and defence	81.8	125.6	238.9	13.3	459.6
Education	56.7	94.9	512.2	11.3	675.1
Health and community services	127.8	190.7	508.6	38.6	865.7
Cultural and recreational services	39.3	75.2	71.9	8.2	194.6
Personal and other services	62.5	120.5	110.0	14.8	307.8
Total(a)	2673.1	3456.2	3543.9	996.8	10669.9
(a) Includes unemployed persons					
<i>Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005</i>					

<b>2.1g Training undertaken and Occupation in current job or business by Level of highest non-school qualification ISCED for 25 to 64 year olds</b>					
	<b>Lower secondary</b>	<b>Upper secondary/post-secondary non-tertiary</b>	<b>Tertiary</b>	<b>Other (ISCED 0/1)</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Males</b>					
	('000 persons)				
Attended a training course					
Managers and Administrators	37.0	104.2	157.8	7.1	306.2
Professionals	14.2	71.2	505.4	2.9	593.6
Associate Professionals	43.2	155.8	166.6	3.6	369.1
Tradespersons and Related Workers	46.0	249.9	43.3	7.9	347.1
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	1.8	5.4	6.9	0.8	14.9
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	49.1	89.7	64.8	4.7	208.3
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	101.1	93.3	23.7	36.9	255.0
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	18.7	32.7	19.7	6.6	77.7
Labourers and Related Workers	37.7	49.3	8.8	15.7	111.5
Total(a)	374.8	886.4	1025.9	94.5	2381.6
Did not attend a training course					
Managers and Administrators	55.0	104.4	69.8	13.8	243.0
Professionals	22.1	49.3	207.6	5.3	284.2
Associate Professionals	55.2	125.4	84.1	11.0	275.7
Tradespersons and Related Workers	90.3	341.4	29.8	30.4	491.9
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	5.7	5.2	6.9	0.0	17.7
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	42.6	69.1	39.9	10.6	162.2
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	123.0	111.6	29.2	64.3	328.2
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	32.2	39.6	26.6	7.4	105.7
Labourers and Related Workers	89.5	87.6	18.8	41.2	237.1
Total(a)	709.1	1194.7	653.9	364.6	2922.4
Total					
Managers and Administrators	92.0	208.6	227.6	20.9	549.2
Professionals	36.3	120.5	713.0	8.1	877.9
Associate Professionals	98.4	281.2	250.6	14.6	644.8
Tradespersons and Related Workers	136.3	591.3	73.1	38.2	839.0
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	7.4	10.6	13.8	0.8	32.6
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	91.7	158.8	104.7	15.3	370.5
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	224.1	204.9	53.0	101.2	583.2
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	50.9	72.2	46.3	14.0	183.4
Labourers and Related Workers	127.2	136.8	27.6	56.9	348.6
Total(a)	1084.0	2081.1	1679.8	459.1	5304.0

## 2.1g continued

	Lower seconda ry	Upper secondary/p ost- secondary non-tertiary	Tertiary	Other (ISCED 0/1)	Total
<b>Females</b>					
	('000 persons)				
Training course					
Managers and Administrators	19.4	22.9	86.8	0.7	129.8
Professionals	20.6	48.3	587.4	1.6	657.9
Associate Professionals	43.9	86.8	106.6	3.7	240.9
Tradespersons and Related Workers	2.4	18.6	4.8	1.3	27.1
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	32.6	46.8	24.9	4.0	108.2
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	135.0	188.0	130.1	22.4	475.6
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	15.4	6.8	3.2	3.9	29.3
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	43.7	42.3	24.9	8.7	119.7
Labourers and Related Workers	25.2	11.9	5.4	11.1	53.6
Total(a)	379.6	512.1	1040.6	65.9	1998.2
No training course					
Managers and Administrators	20.4	19.9	37.2	6.6	84.2
Professionals	20.1	26.9	197.2	0.8	245.0
Associate Professionals	69.4	72.8	56.6	15.5	214.3
Tradespersons and Related Workers	17.5	39.3	7.1	6.2	70.2
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	74.1	62.6	37.6	7.6	181.9
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	144.4	136.0	89.0	18.8	388.2
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	25.7	10.2	7.1	12.4	55.4
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	97.7	60.2	31.6	27.4	216.9
Labourers and Related Workers	87.8	42.3	11.0	47.8	188.8
Total(a)	1209.5	863.0	823.5	471.8	3367.7
Total					
Managers and Administrators	39.8	42.8	124.1	7.3	214.0
Professionals	40.7	75.2	784.6	2.4	902.9
Associate Professionals	113.3	159.6	163.1	19.2	455.2
Tradespersons and Related Workers	19.9	57.9	11.9	7.5	97.3
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	106.7	109.4	62.5	11.5	290.1
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	279.4	324.0	219.1	41.2	863.7
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	41.1	17.0	10.3	16.3	84.7
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	141.4	102.5	56.5	36.2	336.5
Labourers and Related Workers	113.0	54.1	16.4	58.9	242.4
Total(a)	1589.1	1375.1	1864.0	537.7	5366.0

**2.1g continued**

<b>Persons</b>	<b>Lower secondary</b>	<b>Upper secondary/post-secondary non-tertiary</b>	<b>Tertiary</b>	<b>Other (ISCED 0/1)</b>	<b>Total</b>
	('000 persons)				
Training course					
Managers and Administrators	56.4	127.1	244.6	7.8	436.0
Professionals	34.7	119.5	1,092.8	4.5	1251.5
Associate Professionals	87.1	242.6	273.1	7.3	610.1
Tradespersons and Related Workers	48.4	268.5	48.1	9.2	374.2
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	34.4	52.1	31.9	4.7	123.1
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	184.1	277.7	194.9	27.0	683.8
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	116.4	100.1	26.9	40.8	284.3
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	62.4	75.0	44.6	15.4	197.4
Labourers and Related Workers	62.9	61.2	14.3	26.8	165.1
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>754.5</b>	<b>1398.5</b>	<b>2066.5</b>	<b>160.4</b>	<b>4379.8</b>
No training course					
Managers and Administrators	75.4	124.3	107.1	20.4	327.2
Professionals	42.2	76.2	404.8	6.1	529.3
Associate Professionals	124.7	198.2	140.7	26.5	490.0
Tradespersons and Related Workers	107.9	380.7	37.0	36.6	562.1
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	79.8	67.8	44.5	7.6	199.6
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	187.0	205.1	128.9	29.4	550.4
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	148.7	121.8	36.4	76.7	383.6
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	129.9	99.7	58.2	34.8	322.5
Labourers and Related Workers	177.3	129.8	29.8	89.0	425.9
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>1918.6</b>	<b>2057.7</b>	<b>1477.4</b>	<b>836.4</b>	<b>6290.1</b>
<b>Total</b>					
Managers and Administrators	131.9	251.4	351.7	28.3	763.2
Professionals	77.0	195.7	1497.6	10.5	1780.8
Associate Professionals	211.8	440.7	413.8	33.8	1100.0
Tradespersons and Related Workers	156.2	649.2	85.1	45.8	936.3
Advanced Clerical and Service Workers	114.2	119.9	76.3	12.3	322.7
Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	371.1	482.8	323.9	56.4	1234.2
Intermediate Production and Transport Workers	265.2	222.0	63.3	117.5	667.9
Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers	192.3	174.7	102.8	50.1	519.9
Labourers and Related Workers	240.1	191.0	44.1	115.8	591.0
<b>Total(a)</b>	<b>2673.1</b>	<b>3456.2</b>	<b>3543.9</b>	<b>996.8</b>	<b>10669.9</b>
<b>(a) Includes unemployed persons</b>					
<i>Source: ABS Survey of Education and Training 2005</i>					