

Alternative Models of Secondary Education and Articulation with Technical – Vocational Education: *Accreditation and Skills Certification Frameworks*

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Background

Three major issues:

- **Background and overview**
- Developing a national outlook for a nation of states in a Federal system
- The provision of VET at school level
- Strengths, challenges and policy issues for a national system

Comparisons between Australia and Brazil

- Area
- System of states
- Population
- Language and culture

Establishing Australia as a nation

- When
- How
- Why

National Education issues from the 1950s

- Universities languishing
- Rapid population growth
- Poor school facilities
- Non funding of private schools
- Low level of vocational skill
- No specific constitutional mechanism for national funding of education

National approaches to Federal funding

- Special purpose grants
- Cooperation among states to fulfil national goals

Some false starts and a success or two

- The Commission era
- Australian National Training Authority
- National strategy for vocational education
- National Council for Vocational Education Research Ltd
 - National Centre for Training Statistics*
- Skills Australia
- Companies, statutory authorities, committees, working parties

A Nation or a series of states

- Establishment of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG)
- Guidelines, frameworks, standards
- A national system of VET
 - +Rejection of national funding for shared funding (cf universities)
 - +States working together in committees on common competency based skills standards

Structure of schooling

- **Primary**
- Pre-school / Kindergarten: 4-5 year olds
- Kindergarten / Preparatory / Pre-Primary / Reception / Transition (ACT and NSW / QLD, TAS and VIC / WA / SA / NT): 5-6 year olds
- Year 1: 6-7 year olds
- Year 2: 7-8 year olds
- Year 3: 8-9 year olds
- Year 4: 9-10 year olds
- Year 5: 10-11 year olds
- Year 6: 11-12 year olds
- Year 7: 12-13 year olds (QLD, SA, WA)

Structure of schooling

- **Secondary**
- Year 7: 12-13 year olds (ACT, NSW, TAS, VIC)
(Middle School NT)
- Year 8: 13-14 year olds
- Year 9: 14-15 year olds
- Year 10: 15-16 year olds (High School NT)
- Year 11: 16-17 year olds
- Year 12: 17-19 year olds

The Middle School

- Middle school mandatory years 7-9 in NT
- More secondary schools are dividing secondary into middle school (Years 7-9 and sometimes year 6 and sometimes 8-10)
- POST Year 12
 - TAFE and VET
 - University

Examinations

- States currently individually responsible for the K-12 curriculum and its assessment
- All states have an externally assessed/moderated examination in Year 12 except for Queensland : internally examined, externally moderated
- Only NSW retains a School Certificate at Year 10

Current national school issues

- National K-12 curriculum
- National Assessment Program for Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN)
- Participation in TIMSS and PISA
- National competency based learning packages for VET
- Accrediting VET private providers
- Designing years 10-12 to be more relevant to work
- National professional standards for teachers
- Closing the gap for Indigenous Australians

COAG reinforced: the 2008 Reform Agenda

- COAG Reform Council
 - Monitoring progress of reform
- Implementation plans in the following areas:
 - The digital revolution and impact on schools
 - Universal access to early childhood programs for all 4 year olds
 - A national curriculum by 2010
 - Lift year 12 attainment rates
 - Promote study of Asian languages
 - Expand training places

Educational Goals for young Australians

- Goal 1: Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence
- Goal 2: All young Australians become successful learners, confident, creative individuals, and active informed citizens

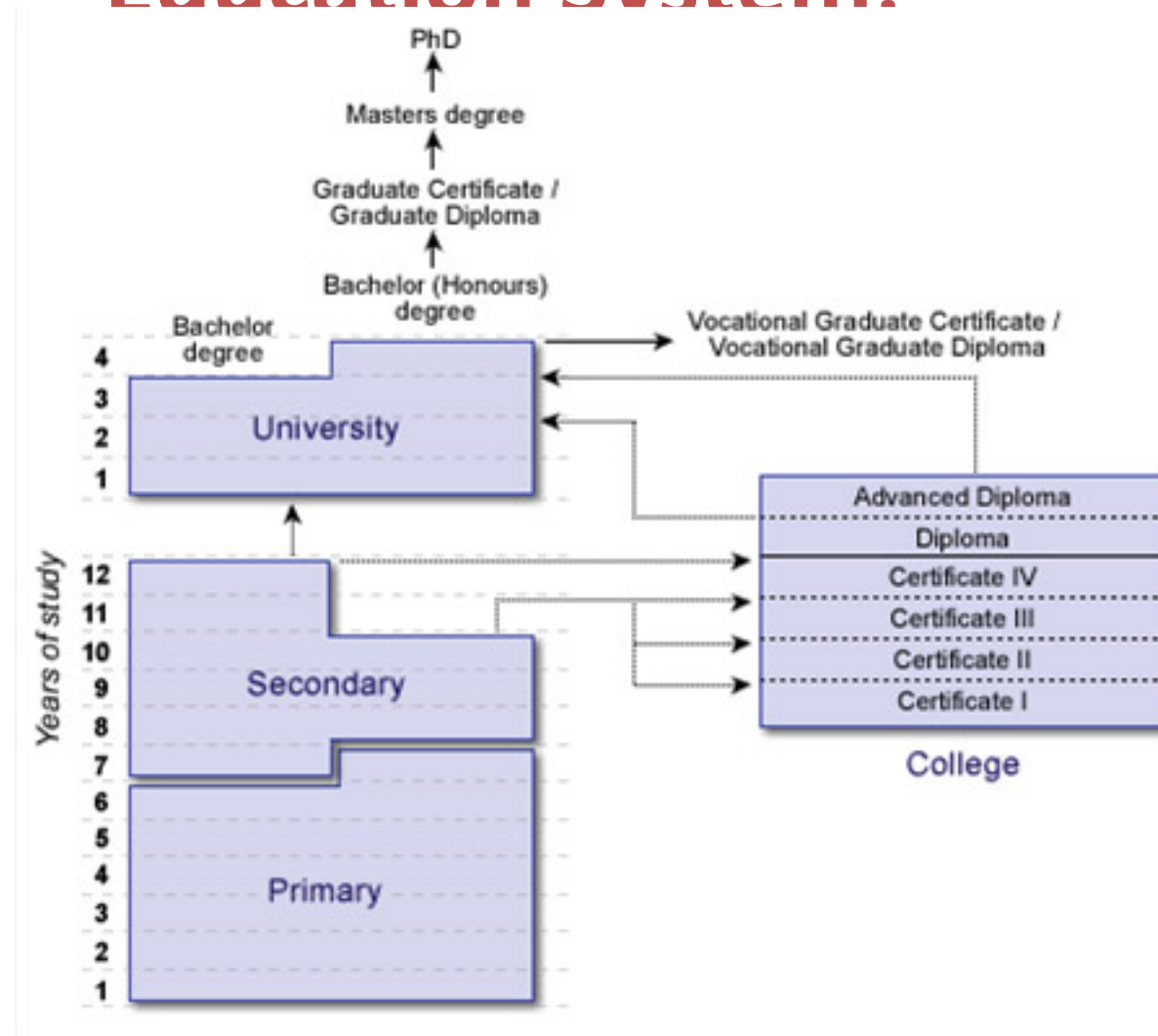
The challenge of implementing national goals in a Federal system

- Organisation of schooling
- Funding national bodies
- Geographic placement
- Distributing funds
- National accountability structures

Establishing a national curriculum

- Some history
- Establishing of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)
- *My School*
- The urge to compare
- The need for a statistical and research base

A structural diagram of the Australian Education System:



Performance of 15 year olds (PISA) Australia

- **Science Mean**

527 (OECD Average 500)

- **Reading Mean**

513 (OECD Average 492)

- **Maths Mean**

520 (OECD Average 498)

VET in a School: a specific example

- Preparing students for VET or for university
 - Years 8-12
 - 1060 students
 - 81 teaching staff
 - 29 non-teaching staff
 - 161 completed year 12
 - 129 awarded the state senior secondary certificate
 - 102 awarded a VET qualification

The VET Program

- Years 10-12
- Provided by school, another school, a TAFE provider, in the workplace
- VET certificates 1 and 2 with credit towards higher awards
- School based apprenticeships and traineeships
- VET courses at the school
 - Furnishing
 - Doorways to Construction
 - Multi-Media
 - Information Technology
 - Catering
 - Electronics
 - Business and Retail
 - Sport and Recreation

The VET Program

- Academic courses at the school
 - English
 - History
 - Geography
 - Languages
 - Specialist Maths
 - Applied Maths
 - Science
 - Physics
 - Chemistry
 - Biology
 - Accounting
 - Legal Studies
 - Psychology
 - Tourism
 - Dance
 - Music

2009 Year 9 results

	Henley HS	Sim SES	Nat Av
• Reading	581	585	580
• Writing	569	573	569
• Spelling	583	579	576
• Grammar	577	580	574
• Numeracy	581	593	589

VET in Australian Schools: some 2008 data

- 220 000 students
- 41% of students taking some VET courses
- 25.8% increase over 2007
- 71.9% increase in School based Apprenticeships
- 25 700 students in School based Apprenticeships

VET in Schools students compared with 15 to 19 year old VET students in other provider institutions and programs

	School-based apprentices and trainees	Other VET in Schools program students	Total VET in Schools students	VET students aged 15–19 years ³
AQF QUALIFICATIONS				
Certificate IV or higher	1.2	1.3	1.2	11.7
Certificate III	54.9	13.5	18.3	37.1
Certificate II	42.6	58.9	57.0	30.4
Certificate I	1.4	22.0	19.6	7.0
Other	0.0	4.4	3.8	13.8
MOST POPULAR VET TRAINING PACKAGES				
SIT – Tourism, hospitality and events	12.7	17.9	17.3	13.1
BSB – Business services	9.8	14.7	14.2	7.6
ICA – Information and communications technology	2.8	12.4	11.3	4.0
SIR – Retail services	24.9	2.6	5.2	6.5

Does VET in Schools matter?

- A VET certificate a better outcome than leaving before finishing school
- VET diplomas a positive impact
- Year 12 completion and Year 12 VET about equivalent
- Many students prefer VET

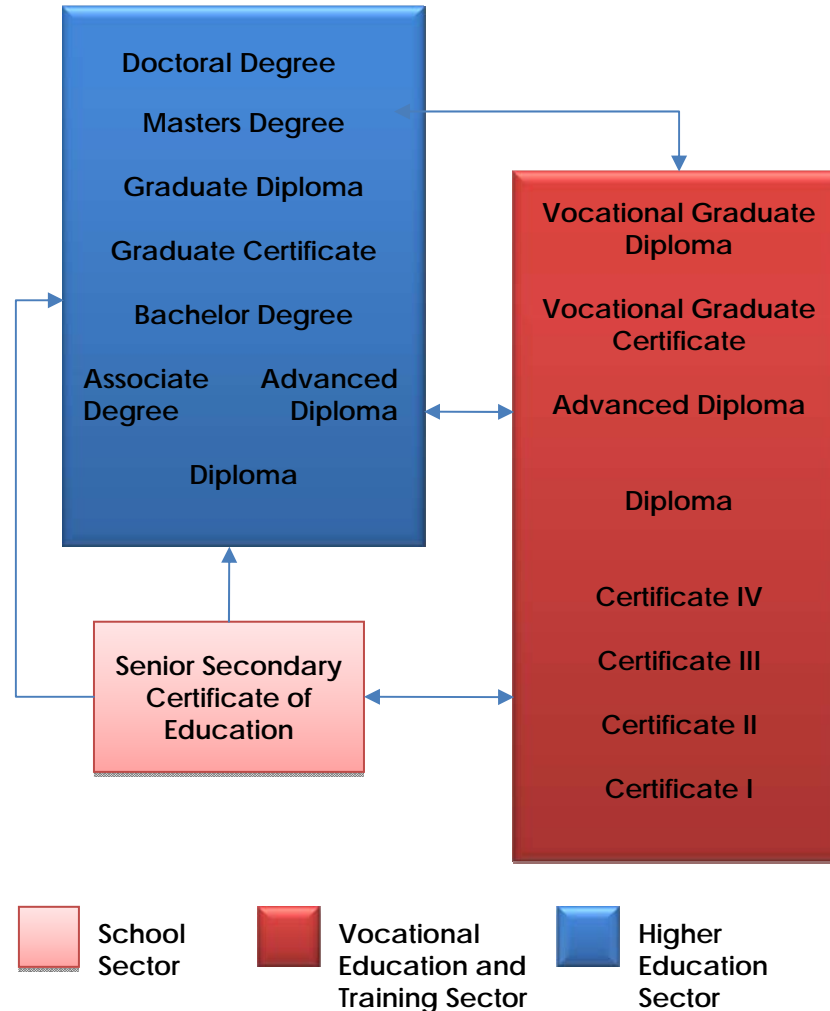
Australian Qualifications Framework

- Historical perspective
- 15 standard qualifications
- Flexibility in career planning
- National and international recognition

Recognition of Prior Learning

- Personal assessment of skills
- Institutional decision
- Credit for awards
- Credit for learning in the workplace

Australian Qualifications Framework



Advantages of AQF and RPL

- Vocational educational and training institutions and schools offer courses for the Secondary Certificate and VET Certificates 1 to 4
- Older students can study for a School Certificate
- Both universities and VET offer diplomas and advanced diplomas
- Universities and higher education institutions offer Certificate 1 to 4
- VET institutions in association with universities offer degrees, and graduate certificates and diplomas
- Three systems working as one

Strengths and Pending Challenges

- **At national level**
- State contribution to a national plan
- National approaches to:
 - Curriculum
 - Assessment
 - School reporting
 - Teacher accreditation and training
 - Development of close cooperation with employers and industry
 - Digital learning and curriculum materials
 - Research and data gathering
 - Political decision making and support
 - Need for ongoing evaluation and research
 - Developing a skills balance for the country
 - Implementing national goals for schooling and for VET

At National Level (Cont'd)

- Decisions about national approaches determined at the highest political levels
- Educational economists required to undertake appropriate research
- Macro and micro level research needed
- Agree on the appropriate balance between university and VET to meet skill needs
- The new role of the senior secondary school in meeting skills needs
- Implement the set of national goals for schooling and training to be consistent with national skills requirements

Issues at National level (Cont'd)

- Trainers teach and remain in the workforce
- More data on who teaches VET
- Qualifications Framework a binding force in the system

Strengths and Pending Challenges

- **At state level**
 - Mechanisms for making needs known nationally
 - Gaining a fair share of resources
 - Monitoring national or state benchmarks
 - Funds for special state needs
 - Alternative ways of responding to national issues
 - Cooperation between states
 - Employers and industry part of decision making
 - Funds for special needs

At State Level (Cont'd)

- Arrangements for consistency for assessing prior learning
- Make sure AQF makes allowances for state differences
- Bring employers and industry into decision making processes
- Identify people who would make good VET teachers and train them

Strengths and Pending Challenges

- **At the school level**
 - Retraining teachers
 - Obtaining work placements
 - Year 10 as a year for future planning
 - Personal learning plans
 - Understanding of the demands of work
 - More flexible school day
 - Digitally literate teachers
 - Work with parents
 - Avoid distinctions between VET and academic work
 - Work skill opportunities for students
 - Use of mentors
 - Monitoring student progress

At School Level (Cont'd)

- Retrain existing secondary teachers
- Obtain effective work placements
- Year 10 as a preparatory year
- Work with employers and parents
- Avoid artificial distinctions between VET and academic
- Use AQF to transfer from one skill area to another

Conclusion

- Sharing experiences in meeting the challenges of the state versus national responsibilities in education.
- Top down versus a bottom up exercise of power to bring about a national system
- national approaches coming from the application of good sense and resources in the right places.
- Think national act local for schools

To make these complex systems work, a little luck and a lot of goodwill and a deal of flexibility with a willingness to change when things do not turn out as expected is needed. May we through our efforts in the end generate world class education systems in both our countries.