

# ACDEVEG

## Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group

### Submission to Interim report no. 5: 5-year Productivity Inquiry: from learning to growth

October 2022

The Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group (ACDEVEG) represents universities offering higher education qualifications in VET teaching. It advises the ACDE Board, represents ACDE on Vocational Education and Training (VET) matters, and maintains high-quality educational practices in VET teacher-education programs. Such programs are normally undertaken part-time by already-employed VET teachers and trainers. ACDEVEG also provides advice to external stakeholders on VET teacher quality and development, nationally and internationally.

Interim Report no. 5 covers all sectors of education, but as we are writing only about vocational education and training (VET), we focus on Part 4: 'Boosting learning outcomes for tertiary students'.

While Part 4 focuses on high-quality teaching, it refers only minimally to teaching in the VET sector. There is broad and deep coverage of university teaching, but not of VET teaching. For example, suggestions are made for improving teaching in universities, referring to overseas examples, but nothing similar suggested for VET, although much information is readily available here and overseas.

There are requests for information about quality of teaching in higher education (request 4.2, p 93 and request 4.1, p 95) but no similar questions about VET teaching.

The minimal discussion of VET is focused on NCVER's employer survey of VET (which has only limited information on teaching) and on a critique of competency-based training. Teachers are not mentioned at all, only the curriculum. There seems to be no awareness on the part of the authors about current Commonwealth work on VET curriculum and industry advice arrangements, and on the VET workforce. These are part of the government's ongoing Skills Reform activity <https://www.skillsreform.gov.au/>

The one question posed about VET (information request 4.3, p 99) does not specifically relate to teachers and teaching in the same way. The questions also exhibit a lack of awareness of the current plans to move from the current competency-based curriculum framework (see Skills Reform Industry Engagement and Qualifications Reform streams of work).

Taking question 4.3, nevertheless, at face value, we provide a brief explanation of the role of VET teachers in response to the points listed

- Risks and benefits: VET teachers have become deskilled due both to a twenty-year reliance on the current CBT system, and to the declining levels of pedagogical (VET teaching) qualifications in the VET workforce since the year 2000. Those without higher level pedagogical qualifications would need development and confidence-building. The benefits would be the opportunity for VET teachers to deploy fully their content knowledge and skills, and pedagogical expertise, in delivering training, as occurs in other countries
- Does the second dot point refer to workforce skills or teacher skills? If teacher skills, there would be a range of extra skills which teachers could develop and display if they used a more flexible delivery framework. We have new research evidence about digital skills of VET teachers, if that would be useful.

- The third dot point is about curriculum not teaching, and it already under review by the Commonwealth Government.
- The fourth dot point: A highly-qualified workforce is the best way to maintain quality of training. To deliver more flexibility and to develop higher-order skills in learners, teachers need to be qualified beyond a Certificate IV or Diploma level.

ACDEVEG has made several submissions to the Productivity Commission since 2011. These contain much relevant background information that has not been utilised in this current report. Some submissions can be seen at ACDEVEG's web site <https://www.acde.edu.au/networks-and-partnerships/acde-vocational-group/> or are available on request. It seems odd that ACDEVEG was not consulted when the interim report was being prepared

ACDEVEG representatives did in fact request a meeting with Productivity Commission members in early August about the VET teaching workforce, but a meeting was refused. We are happy to assist now with a meeting, and/or with information about the VET teaching workforce, career structures, and qualifications. We can refer staff to relevant national international publications and reports (e.g. by OECD).

Professor Erica Smith, Dr Daryl South and Professor Marg Malloch, on behalf of ACDEVEG  
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