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Brief submissions received by 30/09/2020

No.	Comment	
1	<p>INFORMATION REQUEST 3 "whether the objectives and policy directions for the VET sector set out in the NASWD are suitable for the future and why" (p. 8) The paper sets out the objective for VET as: "A VET system that delivers a productive and highly skilled workforce and which enables all working age Australians to develop the skills and qualifications needed to participate effectively in the labour market and contribute to Australia's economic future; and supports the achievement of increased rates of workforce participation. (COAG 2012b, para. 18)" I suggest there is more emphasis needed on entry level skills for VET students at secondary school. The objectives of VET could be broadened, by removing "highly", "all working age". INFORMATION REQUEST 5 "How well does the NASWD describe the roles and responsibilities of governments in skills and workforce development? Could this be improved?" (P. 11) INFORMATION REQUEST 7 "Does the current division of joint and jurisdiction-specific policy approaches ..." (p. 17) INFORMATION REQUEST 8 "... are there ways to improve VET service quality and responsiveness ..." (p. 19) I suggest the NASWD is fundamentally flawed, as it omits the important role of non-government educational organizations in VET and the technological change which has happened. Most post-secondary education, both in the VET and university sector, is now delivered online, not in a classroom, and is ripe for "disruption" by new entrants. This is similar to the way government transport regulators ignored the effect of online ride share companies, until after they had entered the market and "disrupted" the taxi industry, then having to react and retrospectively regulate. Much the same is happening with online learning disrupting the education industry. The Australian state and federal government can spend years coming to an agreement which will be irrelevant by the time it is adopted. From: <a href="https://blog.highereducationwhisperer.com/2019/12/review-of-national-agreement-for-skills.html?fbclid=IwAR0_GloU9U1qYXkhT55s6Tvtmlywz7rACb5NlxoCh5Qowv1FKtzzbc_-DdQ">https://blog.highereducationwhisperer.com/2019/12/review-of-national-agreement-for-skills.html?fbclid=IwAR0_GloU9U1qYXkhT55s6Tvtmlywz7rACb5NlxoCh5Qowv1FKtzzbc_-DdQ</a></p>	6/12/2019
2	<p>Having read the Commissions issues paper, I see a glaring omission from the paper. When considering what VET providers are to be included in this review it needs to be pointed out that there are four (4) provider groups. Public, Private, Community and Enterprise. Enterprise RTOs are embedded within the organisation, mostly sharing the same ABN as the parent. ERTOS are the purest form of VET as they are industry and training to skill shortages of their enterprise. They train their own employees in the skills and knowledge required to meet business objectives. In the main ERTOS are not illegible to gain government funding unless it id the provision of apprenticeships or traineeships. This, in its self cause an in-balance in the competitiveness of the VET market.</p>	16/12/2019
3	<p>There are some somewhat sketchy or at least questionable practices going on in terms of how providers operate re payment, quality and assessment. I don't think it's fair to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• require students to pay in full, upfront, in advance, before orientation and the semester start;</li><li>• not have a census cut-off date, nor enable a refund; or</li><li>• avoid explaining the terms and conditions (like a relatively new 'there is no refund', refund policy) in the registration process, instead, to have them in a separate document you have to find online. Certificates are issued; however, only ever using Pass/Fail, where you get a few goes at Pass and Fails are rare, may be fraught. It's likely there are vested interests</li></ul>	10/06/2020

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from some of the parties in 'just getting it through', e.g.: • get some student numbers, grab money, click 'Pass', print certificate. • do what'll get the 'Pass' at home, with the help of someone else, maybe go to class (but they don't require it, and the 'choice' of who actually 'teaches' may be left up to the individual teachers), put certificate on CV to take to interview. • employers may sort of take pot luck as to the actual/true skill level they get.

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4	Hello, in introducing the review a comment is made that VET is both an alternative to higher education and a pathway to it. My comment is VET can also be a useful path for university educated people to gain workforce skills. As such there is a third option - a pathway from University into work. In addition university educated people who are employed may access VET to upskill, particularly with rapid changes to technology and jobs.	18/06/2020
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5	I believe that the commentary on page 14 of the Interim Report with regards to career information from careers advisers is inaccurate. I am a trained Careers adviser with 10 years experience in the role and have attended many professional development events with colleagues of similar experience. The viewpoint expressed here is not representative of the role as I have experienced it. As Careers Advisers, we work with students across a range of abilities, assisting them to navigate the best pathways to their desired career, giving consideration to their strengths and abilities. I work with all stakeholders to disseminate the most accurate and current information to students. I also receive an incredible amount of information from all sources that I need to amalgamate and share with our students. In my role I work closely with the VET coordinator to assess student aptitude for VET courses. My students are given information on pathways to university via TAFE and are encouraged to use these pathways to succeed in their ambitions. Students are given the full suite of options for their subject selection process and we have a large number of students completing at least one VET course as part of the HSC. Many of the students not looking for an ATAR choose more than one VET course and leave school with a number of certificates and a wide range of work experiences. VET allows us to work within the new guidelines of the 17 years leaving age, supporting students who are considering more than just university. The greatest obstacle to the provision of Careers advice is the reality of underfunding the position. In a part time role it is difficult to give all students the time they need. I think that all schools would benefit from a trained full time careers adviser that can assist and guide students from the early years of high school. Websites and booklets do not replace strong and well informed guidance. Additionally, TAFE and schools need to work more closely to align students to the appropriate courses and form a better school /TAFE relationship to increase the chances of success. As Careers advisers we face the often difficult task of getting students to the point where they understand their own skills and abilities as they face the reality of constant commentary on 'needing' a university degree. Statistics on the difficulty faced by many university graduates in finding employment in their field of study need to be published transparently so that students can make choices based on the reality of current labour markets. We are all in the same business here, that is helping young people move towards success in their chosen fields, so we should be working together towards this utilising all available resources and expertise to get there.	24/06/2020
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6	It is disappointing to note the commentary on page 14 of the Interim Report with regards to career information and guidance and VET delivery in schools. Previous reviews are mentioned, without being referenced, suggesting that Careers Advisers do not have experience in VET. I feel this viewpoint is very narrow and uninformed. Careers Advisers have always been focussed on working with students to match	24/06/2020
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their learning with their skills and abilities. We work with the student, and their parents/carers, to the best of our ability, to find opportunities for students to start on an appropriate career pathway. A lot of Careers Advisers in schools are also the VET Co-ordinator or work with the VET teaching team to enable students to undertake learning in subjects best suited to their skills and abilities. Provision of VET options as part of the HSC is to support learning, decision making and experiences of our young people. It is part of the HSC, not the purpose of the HSC, and not all students will follow through to an industry occupation. Some students may take up to three non-related vocational courses as part of their HSC studies so therefore can't follow the industry pathway for every subject taken. VET in schools supports students to remain at school to meet the government mandated school leaving age of 17. Criteria applied by education systems influences the level of career advice in schools. When a Careers Adviser is in a part-time position in a school, there is not always sufficient time to follow through with students effectively on their career pathway choices

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| 7 | Problems of post-school education, workplace skilling and work productivity cannot be effectively addressed if the post-school education system (including VET) and businesses/employers continue to evade what are clearly their responsibilities in these matters. As the Report notes on page 14 "NASWD recognised that VET should be an integrated part of a wider post-school education system" and that NASWD also recognised that "various factors have worked against this goal". Now clearly "this goal" is "that VET (be) an integrated part of a wider post-school education system", so why, then, do the following paragraphs focus on the school education system? These paragraphs infer that it is what happens and is done, or more accurately not done, in schools that are the "various factors (that) have worked against" achieving "this goal". Thus, I am concerned at the "questionable" nature of the Reports comments on page 14 regarding the "(un)reliability and (lack of) usefulness of career information and advice (especially for school students)", including school advisers having "little experience of VET, favour universities (etc)". These comments are not supported by evidence but only a reference to "Previous reviews" and "Participants". Who were the "participants"? From what is said, it would appear that schools and school careers advisers were not "participants". Thus, post-school educators and businesses/employers, need to recognise, acknowledge and accept that the responsibility to "integrate" the post-school education system, including/incorporating VET, and the need to address/resolve the issue of workplace skilling and work productivity rests squarely with them, and that the school education system and school advisers need to be supported appropriately to ensure that they exercise their responsibility well to provide school students with quality general and broad-based world of work and career information and advice, including about the post-school world of education and work. | 24/06/2020 |
| 8 | One of the many Careers Adviser roles is to inform the students of all the options/pathways available for them to succeed in their transition from school to tertiary/work aspirations. It isn't our place to plug a business, the student makes the decisions based on what they require/need/values/beliefs.  | 24/06/2020 |
| 9 | I feel that there is a major disconnect between the Interim Report and the reality of VET delivery in schools. I feel this viewpoint is very narrow and uninformed. The provision of VET options as part of the HSC is to support the learning, decision making, and experiences of our young people. Some students may take up to three non-related vocational courses as part of their HSC studies allowing them to build skills sets and choose a career path in the industry of their choice. VET in schools supports students to remain at school to meet the government-mandated school leaving age of 17. The VET trainers in schools remain   | 25/06/2020 |

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industry current, undertake and regular training upgrades double the compliance due to NESA and ASQA.

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10 I am floored by the commentary on page 14 of the Interim Report with regards to career information and guidance and VET delivery in schools. Previous reviews are mentioned, without being referenced, suggesting that Careers Advisers do not have experience in VET. I feel this viewpoint is incorrect and misleading, with reference to Career Advisers in NSW. Of any staff in the school system they are most vocal about the need for a curriculum which includes school VET. They often manage VET delivery in their schools with a mix of on and off-site learning to industry standards. Careers Advisers have always been focussed on working with students to match their learning with their skills and abilities. We work with industry to support the student and their parents/carers to find opportunities for students to transition into an appropriate career pathway. VET and E-VET (externally delivered VET with TAFE and other providers) forms an integral part of the HSC is to support learning, decision making and experiences of our young people. While not all students will follow through to an industry occupation they do gain confidence, work readiness and often their first credential. VET in schools supports students to remain at school to meet the government-mandated school leaving age of 17. The measure of success of VET can only be done through conversations with employers- ITABS often have a vested interest in their own specific qualification. Consult NCVET research for VET Satisfaction data. IN NSW at the moment there are a few programs in their infancy that promote VET in schools with a Head teacher Careers (across 4 or 5 schools) aimed at promoting VET pathways and career options. This is in its first year and showing good results. It's a grab for money from the treasurer. It is opposite to the recommendations and press releases this week about the NSW Curriculum review. Criteria applied by education systems influences the level of career advice in schools. When a Careers Adviser is in a part-time position in a school, there is not always sufficient time to follow through with students effectively on their career pathway choices.

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11 In response to Productivity Commission Interim Report, E Newsletter 23 June 2020 I am very disappointed with the generalisations made against schools and Careers Advisers not promoting VET and promoting University as a pathway more. We have just over 100 Year 11 and 12 students and yet we have consistently around 20 or more School Based Apprentices and Trainees. We have many students choose Hospitality, Construction, Business Services, Primary Industries, IT-Metals at school as well as students doing TVET courses such as Early Childhood Education and Care, Animal Studies, Automotive, Beauty and Hair. The school funded the school mini-bus, a driver and teacher to take students to and from town every fortnight for one of the TVET courses as it was not delivered locally. Students would not be choosing these options if they were not aware of these opportunities via careers lessons, careers counselling, subject selection interviews and subject selection days and evenings. To do the SBATs such as hairdressing or electro-technology our students need to travel 3.5 hours to a town and find accommodation every block of face to face delivery. For the Nursing SBTs students have to travel 2 hours for their face to face workshops. This additional time away from school adds additional burden and stress on students as they have to catch up on more missed work from school than students who do not have to travel to the TAFE campus. On a personal note my brother did an apprenticeship as a mechanic and eventually bought the business from his employer and became the NRMA dealer. I often use his story as an example of a success story of VET pathway. He now owns and runs a workshop as well as a town's Garage (his humble beginnings). It may appear that Careers Advisers promote university more as the universities send out a lot of news, information about courses, workshops, open days

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etc that we have to get out to the students. However Careers Advisers take each individual students interests, strengths and desired pathways into account when providing them with careers advice and information. At career expos employers of small business find it difficult to attend while universities have designated school liaison officers and funding for these events. The VET sector is often represented by Training NSW, TAFE, Apprenticeship Support and government organisations. Universities send representatives to schools to talk to students while employers often do not have the time or staff to do this. An issue is students who do not enjoy school often choose VET subjects for the practical components but they often do not keep up with assessments overall and hence do not get their qualification nor their Higher School Certificate. Another issue is often Careers Advisers have so much to do there is little time for intensive and regular individual careers counselling which is where the power of assisting students through school and to further

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| 12 | <p>My thinking is that the appropriate career advice is safely in the hands of professionally developed career practitioners, the underlying or emerging issue gleaned from the interim report is one of a desired efficiency in the VET process. To unpack this, you have to look closer at the senior curriculum process, the stakeholders in the entire career advice/transition process and the desire to control the “eye watering” cost of VET delivery. But as a comparison analogy, to maintain the Australian Defence Forces’ modern capability requires vast investment of quality and expensive materiel and personnel, otherwise it is a second-best outfit. The key fulcrum moment for pathways choices seems to revolve around the end of Year 10. Schools manoeuvre large numbers of students into course selections based on; • Traditional highly rigorous academic subjects that have a historical significance. • Teacher availability and expertise • The balance of timetable restrictions, based on available student and staff numbers. • Backfilled second best options to meet the so-called needs of the less academically inclined • Geographic availability of alternate VET courses offered by external RTOs Students are prepared for these choices, often in a ad hoc manner, somehow squeezed into whatever timetable space is available. To individually interview a “normal” Year 10 cohort of one hundred and eighty students, giving each student a bare minimum of 20 minutes, requires 3 weeks of constant interviewing, ignoring everything else that is required to be accomplished. Schools then resort to mass learning, such as class lessons, faculty “marketing” events, which resemble speed dating and sparsely attended evening talks as parents succumb to the pressures of their own working lives or have a lack of desire to participate in school activities. All of these methods have limited success, and can depend entirely on student motivation and ownership of their transition choices. And it is worth noting that still the number one career-influence on a student is in fact their parents and there certainly is an opportunity to “re-educate” to absolve previous bias and misinformation. My personal opinion is that quite significant numbers of quality, potential vocational learners start appearing on careers advisers radar during Year 9. This is often manifested by disinterest in school (often with poor behaviour). Encouragement to learn and progress in this area can be hamstrung by opportunity. The challenge I feel is not the promotion of VET as a valid and worthwhile career pathway, it is matching the demand that exists with the employment and training opportunities. It is virtually impossible for a 15-year-old Taree student to relocate to Western Sydney to attain training or employment. Of if that student wishes to be a plumber, having to access training in Kurri Kurri in the Hunter Valley as the closest option. These are your concerns, not delivery of professional career advice.</p> | 01/07/2020 |
| 13 | <p>Please consider the research from NCVET titled: Workforce ready: challenges and opportunities for VET.</p>  | 01/07/2020 |
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14	<p>It is disappointing to note the commentary on page 14 of the Interim Report with regards to career information and guidance and VET delivery in schools. Previous reviews are mentioned, without being referenced, suggesting that Careers Advisers do not have experience in VET. I feel this viewpoint is very narrow and uninformed. Careers Advisers have always been focussed on working with students to match their learning with their skills and abilities. We work with the student, and their parents/carers, to the best of our ability, to find opportunities for students to start on an appropriate career pathway. A lot of Careers Advisers in schools are also the VET Co-ordinator or work with the VET teaching team to enable students to undertake learning in subjects best suited to their skills and abilities. Provision of VET options as part of the HSC is to support learning, decision making and experiences of our young people. It is part of the HSC, not the purpose of the HSC, and not all students will follow through to an industry occupation. Some students may take up to three non-related vocational courses as part of their HSC studies so therefore can't follow the industry pathway for every subject taken. VET in schools supports students to remain at school to meet the government mandated school leaving age of 17. Criteria applied by education systems influences the level of career advice in schools. When a Careers Adviser is in a part-time position in a school, there is not always sufficient time to follow through with students effectively on their career pathway choices.</p>	15/07/2020
15	<p>Based on my experience as a Careers Adviser in both independent and public high schools, the comments in this Report are generalised and far from accurate. There has been ongoing support in secondary education for the VET sector. The NSW BOS/NESA has provided VET based subjects for decades, both ATAR eligible subjects and Content Endorsed subjects across a wide vocational range. All high schools provide Year 10 Subject Information sessions, where detailed information is presented on the range of subjects available to qualify for an HSC and ATAR, giving students a range of pathways leading to both academic and vocational training options. 3. Careers Advisers in high schools provide information and advice to individual students and their parents as well as via Careers classes in Year 9 and /or Year 10 on the range of Year 11/12 Subject choices and pathways in their schools. This includes advice on pathways and RPL within the post school sector. Careers information is often provided through the weekly school newsletter advising parents and students of Open Day/Information sessions at TAFE, private colleges and universities. Socioeconomic background of students has a strong influence on choice of post school education/training and the demography of some schools creates the basis for bias towards university Vs vocational pathways. Family influence and cultural background have a significant influence on students' choices, often eclipsing the advice of teachers/Careers Advisers. I have advocated strongly for VET courses for those students interested in such careers. Many students found that the practical experience provided them with realistic insights that enabled them to make an informed decision NOT to pursue those careers, realising that they were not well suited. Students have different stages of readiness for learning about appropriate Career pathways. As this is NOT an examinable curriculum area, many students do not take seriously the information that is provided. Work Experience is undertaken by most students in Years 10. This provides a valuable insight into the basic type of work for this particular industry whether it's a trade or profession. Basic skills such as customer and workplace relations are important lessons to be learnt in these settings and these skills are readily transferable to many other aspects of life. The challenge for Careers Adviser is disseminating the huge amount of information relevant to students and their future career paths - as none of this is compulsory learning that is examinable.</p>	15/07/2020

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16	<p>I am a government school careers adviser in the regional area of Macksville. I find the statements made on page 14 of the Productivity Commission Interim Report into the Skills and Workforce Development Agreement extremely generalised and contradictive to my previous and current experiences. Firstly, student exposure to vocational pathways is a key focus of my role. Each year, my team is successful at transitioning early leavers from school into apprenticeship and/or traineeship pathways before completion of the HSC. Annually, approximately 45% of students who complete year 12 also transition to vocational pathways, either enrolment to TAFE courses or securing apprenticeships. I have built and maintained strong connections with the local TAFE and implement a range of activities targeting students from year 8 onwards. Initiatives such as TAFE My Skills, TAFE YES and stage 5 TVET courses all provide vocational experiences tailored to the industry demands of our area. I facilitate student access to various events that occasionally visit the Coffs area such as the Skills and Thrills Showcase and the HIA apprenticeship expo. Each year, I accompany my entire year 10 cohort to the Coffs Coast Careers Expo and work with each student to secure a suitable work experience in an area of interest. Secondly, I am the nominated VET Coordinator in my school, offering 6 vocational frameworks in our stage 6 curriculum. I have my Cert IV TAE and Cert II FSK so am well attuned to VET. Currently, there are major issues with VET teacher workload as well as juggling compliance with the Department of Education RTO and NESA to reach optimal student outcomes in alignment with employer needs. Limited opportunities in external VET courses do exist through the strict DoE EVET platform with the only face to face offerings in our area delivered by TAFE. Due to DoE funding arrangements, students are restricted to 1 course as well as limited by geography. Before choosing to pursue these courses, students must consider transport, time and weekly costs. For example, a current year 11 student travels 120km which equates to 3 hours round trip on a bus for a cost of \$20 to attend a TAFE campus each Wednesday. Aside from funding arrangements, courses options have been restricted in the past due to lack of TAFE teachers, not able to obtain enough work placements and limited job opportunities for students in our region. Compounding disadvantages experienced by my students often lead to situations requiring them to drop the ATAR in pursuit of a 'plan B' pathway. These students make decisions based on the individualised advice and knowledge provided by the careers team on alternate pathways including vocational qualifications. For these reasons, the comments on page 14 reflect a failure in recognising the reality of the systems in which careers teachers work, could be taken as offensive and should be considered carefully prior to further publication.</p>	16/07/2020
17	<p>I enrolled in VET three times. The first, because I didn't get into university with my high school scores. As a young person at this stage I didn't think much about my choices as my parents were footing the bill for my course, although they encouraged my choice of study area. It was a small institution and was pretty good with communicating with students because of this. The second time I was a mature aged student. The factor that drew me was wanting to enhance my skills, the course itself was very cheap at a TAFE, although I found this experience more difficult with communications with a larger place and that many of the students were straight out of school and really immature and distracting, a lot of people dropped out as well and the classes had begun overloaded. The third one was funded by my employer, and it extended on my previous training. Being engaged with industry experienced teachers was the most valued aspect of VET and studying with other focused students who had a direction and willingness and commitment to learn.</p>	27/08/2020
18	<p>1. Literacy: In addition to University training, I have also had the opportunity to study units in Hospitality and Media [Audio/visual/production etc and music] over the past 5 years (ACT) and in Welding/Fabrication (NSW) /Fitting and Machining (SA) some 20-30 years ago. In my recent studies I observed the trainers encountering significant problems with a lack of literacy of some students hindering both learning and assessment to the point where the course co-ordinators have now introduced pre-requisites for basic competency in English before a student is allowed to enrol. I have been asked by a teacher on</p>	30/09/2020

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more than one occasion to help another student struggling with their reading and writing to rework an assessment so it would meet the marking criteria – great for me as teaching is the best way to learn... so I did not mind. I support the requirement of minimum literacy and numeracy standards for enrolment into particular courses. 2. Curriculum: I was advised off the record by one teacher that as a cost cutting measure the strategy was to remove several topics from the course on the basis that students were allowed to miss x% through illness hence it was deemed okay for all students to miss x% through removal of that content and then no absence from that course was allowed due to illness etc !! Such local measures to come in “within budget” short changes both the students and society as a whole. Funding should be sufficient to allow delivery of the full curriculum. 3. Certification of Achievement of Students I am concerned by the reports of historical misappropriation of Government monies by certain VET providers and would like to see external assessment of each student’s performance with certification that they have achieved a satisfactory level before Government funding is released to the student’s training organisation. 4. Provision of up-to-date training... Vocational training must be appropriate to prepare trainees for work in the modern workplace. Accredited training should provide exposure to modern technology and work practices and should not be funded if lacking in such training. 5. Role for TAFE etc I believe that a well funded TAFE sector can help set the benchmark for training workers – with the investment in training being realised through increased productivity of our economy with returns realised from both individual income and company tax returns and better living standards....

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