

### **Introduction**

Structured workplace learning is on the job training during which a student is expected to master a set of skills or competencies, related to a course accredited by the Victorian Qualifications Authority (VQA). These courses are generally Vocational Education and Training (VET) programs undertaken by Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) or Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) students.

The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) VET in Schools policy, makes explicit reference to the desirability of structured workplace learning being an integral component of a VET in Schools program.

*“The post compulsory years of schooling should ... include student access to VET programs that incorporates structured workplace learning opportunities.”*

The Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority has determined that structured workplace learning is an appropriate component of VET undertaken by VCE and VCAL students. Structured workplace learning complements the structured training undertaken at the school or Registered Training Organisation (RTO). It provides the context for:

- enhanced skills development
- practical application of industry knowledge
- assessment of selected units, as determined by the RTO, and
- increased marketability of graduates.

MCEETYA has endorsed the following principles for quality structured workplace learning for school students engaged in VET programs throughout Australia.

### **Principles of quality structured workplace learning**

**Quality structured workplace learning is integrated into a program, that:**

- operates within a framework which provides the opportunity for all students to access it, though not all students may choose to do so, and
- operates within the context of vocational courses which are recognized by industry, are responsive to industry needs, and forms part of a student's exit credential.

**Quality workplace learning is structured, in that it:**

- has a clearly articulated and documented purpose
- has clearly identified and documented learning outcomes for students within accredited programs which are linked to post-school qualifications
- is of sufficient duration and depth to enable students to acquire a reasonable understanding of the enterprise/industry to demonstrate competence according to industry standards of at least Level I of the AQF
- matches students' skills and interests with the structured workplace learning, and
- thoroughly prepares students, teachers and employers beforehand so that the expectations and outcomes of the structured workplace learning are clearly understood by all parties.

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### **Quality structured workplace learning is monitored, in that:**

- the learning is coordinated by personnel with appropriate expertise and adequate resources, and
- support should be made available to students and employers throughout the course of the structured workplace learning.

### **Quality structured workplace learning is regulated, to ensure that:**

- students are protected from moral and physical danger
- students work in a non-discriminatory and harassment free environment
- students receive appropriate training and instruction in occupational health and safety
- students are not being exploited by being continuously engaged in a production or service capacity, or used to substitute for the employment of employees and payment of appropriate wages, and
- students are required to understand the roles and responsibilities of employees in the workplace and are expected to follow the directions of the workplace supervisors and the other employees.

### **Quality structured workplace learning is assessed, so that:**

- students' competencies achieved in the workplace are measured against industry standards, and contribute to the overall assessment of the program, and
- there are mechanisms for the recording and reporting of students' competencies.

When developing and reviewing structured workplace learning programs as part of the post compulsory curricula for senior students, schools should ensure that the principles for quality delivery of structured workplace learning, as endorsed by MCEETYA, are embedded wherever applicable.

### **Benefits to students**

#### **Structured workplace learning benefits students by:**

- improving understanding of the work environment and employers' expectations
- increasing self understanding, maturity, independence and self confidence, especially in the workplace
- increasing motivation to continue study and/or undertake further training
- enhancing opportunities for part-time and casual employment
- providing opportunity to develop and gain work-related competencies
- providing opportunity to include the placement in job and course applications
- providing opportunity to learn skills relevant to the workplace
- providing opportunity to try out career choices before leaving school
- providing opportunity to develop contacts with potential employers
- exposing students to the 'real' world of work
- demonstrating students mastery of specific skills and competencies related to the accredited course which they are undertaking, and
- providing opportunity to undertake relevant courses which count towards the student's exit credential and articulate into further education and training.

### **Benefits to schools**

#### **Structured workplace learning benefits schools by:**

- catering for a diverse range of students
- providing opportunity to work collaboratively with parents in schooling their students, and to assist in meeting parent expectations
- providing a relevant curriculum which develops a student's skills appropriate for life-long learning, and
- providing links with the Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs), local government, industry, unions, education and training providers to maximise employment and training outcomes for young people.

### **Benefits to employers**

#### **Structured workplace learning benefits employers by:**

- providing opportunity for involvement in the education and development of students
- contributing to the development of entry level skills in industry
- promoting industry as a career to young people
- providing access to a pool of future paid casual or part-time workers
- enabling potential recruitment of new employees who can be immediately productive

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- developing the training skills of employees who supervise and/or assess students
- providing opportunity to publicly recognise supportive schools and young people
- contributing to the development of workplace skills of students
- enabling employers to mentor young people in their career decision-making process
- providing opportunity for dialogue with teachers on aspects of work readiness and other matters related to work
- creating opportunities for building industry-school partnerships that provide for local community needs and endeavours, and
- encouraging students to become involved with businesses in their local community.

### **Benefits to parents**

#### **Structured workplace learning benefits parents by:**

- providing opportunity to discuss with their children the topic of work, including their own previous and current experiences in the workplace
- providing opportunity to positively contribute to their child's secondary education
- providing a fresh start, an unencumbered basis of interaction between parents and school staff, and
- providing opportunity for family involvement in discussions relating to further education, training and employment.

### **Benefits to the community**

#### **Structured workplace learning benefits the community by:**

- providing links between the Local Learning and Employment Networks (LLENs), local government, industry, unions, education and training providers, to maximise employment and training outcomes for young people
- involving schools, training organizations and communities in collaborative projects, and
- providing opportunity for young people to become actively involved in the building of the local community, especially in regional and rural areas.

### Abbreviations

Listed below are some of the **key terms** and names of **major organisations** in the VET area:

<b>ACACA</b>	Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities
<b>AISV</b>	Association of Independent Schools Victoria
<b>AQF</b>	Australian Qualifications Framework
<b>ARF</b>	Australian Recognition Framework
<b>CBA</b>	Competency-based assessment
<b>CBT</b>	Competency-based training
<b>CECV</b>	Catholic Education Commission Victoria
<b>DEST</b>	Department of Education, Science and Training
<b>GTA</b>	Group Training Australia
<b>GTC</b>	Group Training Company
<b>ITAB</b>	Industry Training Accreditation Board
<b>ITB</b>	Industry Training Board
<b>MCEETYA</b>	Ministerial Council for Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
<b>NCVER</b>	National Centre for Vocational Education Research
<b>NFROT</b>	National Framework for the Recognition of Training
<b>NTF</b>	National Training Framework
<b>OTTE</b>	Office of Training and Tertiary Education
<b>RPL</b>	Recognition of Prior Learning
<b>RTO</b>	Registered Training Organisation
<b>STA</b>	State/Territory Training Agency/Authority
<b>TAFE</b>	Technical and Further Education
<b>ENTER</b>	Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank
<b>VASS</b>	Victorian Administrative Software System
<b>VCAA</b>	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority
<b>VCAL</b>	Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning
<b>VCE</b>	Victorian Certificate of Education
<b>VET</b>	Vocational Education and Training
<b>VETiS</b>	Vocational Education and Training in Schools
<b>VQA</b>	Victorian Qualifications Authority

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### Glossary

The following are definitions for key terms used in this document and in the VET area.

**Accredited course:** A course of study accredited by the Victorian Qualifications Authority

**Arrangement:** A structured workplace learning arrangement made under Sections 64LC and 64LD of Part IVA of the *Education Act* 1958 (the Act) and Ministerial Order 23.

**Articulation:** Arrangements agreed to by the accrediting organisations, enabling students to move either horizontally or vertically between education, training and employment through formal linkages between the different courses of study.

**Assessment:** The process of measuring the learning which has occurred in the on-the-job and off-the-job training which determines if the student has mastered the designated set of skills and competencies.

**Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF):** The AQF covers qualifications issued by secondary schools, public and private providers that are RTOs. These qualifications are nationally consistent, and take into account the recent changes in the structure and content of vocational education and training.

**Australian Recognition Framework (ARF):** The ARF establishes the standards necessary to become a registered training organisation.

**Career education:** The development of knowledge, skills and attitudes through a planned program of learning experiences that assists students to make informed decisions about their study and/or work options and enables effective participation in working life. (MCEETYA Career Education Taskforce, 1998).

**Career Education Association of Victoria (CEAV):** Is the Victorian Association of Careers Advisers. Their mission is to support careers practitioners to improve and extend the quality of their program, promote career development as a lifelong exercise and increase the likelihood of appropriate career choices by students and adult learners.

**Certificate:** An officially recognised qualification or award gained upon completion of an accredited course of study/training.

**Competency:** The ability of a student to perform a particular task in a particular context and to apply knowledge and skills to new tasks and situations.

**Credit transfer:** Credit earned in one program being accepted by other programs.

**Duty of care:** Section 4.6.1.2 of the Victorian Government School Reference Guide states that: Whenever a student–teacher relationship exists, the teacher has a special duty of care. This is defined as: “A teacher is to take such measures as are reasonable in the circumstances to protect a student under the teacher’s charge from risks of injury that the teacher should reasonably have foreseen.” (*Richards v State of Victoria* (1969) VR 136 at p. 141)

**Group training organizations:** A network of organizations that employ apprentices and trainees for placement in host companies.

**Learning outcomes:** Statements of performance expected of students undertaking accredited programs.

**Ministerial Order 23:** covers the delivery of structured workplace learning in Victorian secondary schools. (Refer to Section E)

**Ministerial Order 24:** covers the delivery of work experience programs in Victorian secondary schools.

**Ministerial Order 25:** covers procedures for students under the age of 15 years, requiring the completion of a criminal records check of employers and any other person who will have direct supervision of the student in high risk and non high risk industries. Ministerial Order 25 also covers the procedures for obtaining work permits, required for students under the age of 15 years who are undertaking a placement in a declared high risk industry.

**myfuture:** Is an Australian careers website - [www.myfuture.edu.au](http://www.myfuture.edu.au)

**National Competency Standards:** Standards developed by industry, which describe the outcomes sought by industry in competency terms, packaged against the AQF.

**Off-the-job training:** Training and assessment delivered either at a school, the premises of public provider, such as TAFE institutes, or at the premises of a private provider. In some cases, the off-the-job training is delivered at school by a TAFE teacher or by a private provider.

**On-the-job training:** Training and assessment which occurs in the workplace.

**Privacy legislation:** Victoria has adopted two new Victorian laws – *Information Privacy Act 2000* (non-health information handled by bodies not health service providers) and the *Health Records Act 2001* (health information and most personal information handled by health service providers). Commonwealth privacy legislation does NOT apply to the Victorian Government or Victorian Government funded services. (Refer to Section C)

**Public liability insurance:** A general term which applied to forms of third party liability insurance with respect to both bodily injury and property damage liability. It insures against suits brought by members of the public. Section C provides details of arrangements for public liability insurance for structured workplace learning.

**Recognition of prior learning:** This refers to the recognition of skills and knowledge through prior education, training and/or experience.

**Regional Careers Network:** Across Victoria there are over 30 regional groups of school careers coordinators who meet on a regular basis. A key function of the groups is to coordinate the timing of programs in their region. This is to minimise the demands made on employers, and to maximise the number of places available for student placements within each year. Networks can also work together on designing evaluation forms for employers and students, and other associated documents. The CEAV can assist teachers to identify their local network.

**Registered training organisation (RTO):** Under the ARF, an RTO is a training organisation registered with the local State/Territory Training Recognition Authority involved with the delivery or assessment of nationally recognised training. The RTO has responsibility for the recording and reporting of assessment outcomes, appeals and the issuing of qualifications and statements of attainment. An RTO registered with the Office of Training and Tertiary Education (OTTE) will be approved to deliver certain defined courses within Victoria.

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**School Based New Apprenticeship (SBNA):** Under this scheme students are able to undertake at school the secondary school certificate that applies in their state, whilst in paid part-time employment and completing a nationally recognised Vocational Education and Training (VET) qualification.

**Structured workplace learning:** The involvement of students in structured on-the-job training during which they are expected to demonstrate their learning of a designated set of skills and competencies related to the course accredited by the VQA which they are undertaking.

**Structured workplace learning coordinator:** The structured workplace learning coordinator is the link between the student, the school and other training providers and the employer. The role of the structured workplace learning coordinator is to organize structured workplace learning placements, liaise with employers, provide support during the placement to both student and the employer, promote workplace learning programs to employers and monitor workplace assessments. The structured workplace learning coordinator may or may not be a teacher.

**Taxation:** Where students are paid at the minimum rate of \$5 per day during the period of the structured workplace learning arrangement, the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) will not require the students to have tax file numbers or complete income tax returns. The ATO has also said that employers will not be required to issue group certificates to these students. (Refer to Section C)

**Training agreement:** A legally binding contract which allows an employer and an apprentice/trainee to undertake an apprenticeship/traineeship. It formalises the commitment of the employer to provide systematic training and commitment of the apprentices/trainees to apply themselves to learn the trade/occupation.

**Training Package:** A flexible set of national resources designed to provide guidance on industry training requirements within the context of a national competency-based qualifications system. National competency standards, assessment guidelines, and national qualifications form the fundamental components of training packages. These components may be supported by assessment materials, learning strategies, professional development materials and unit cost information.

**Training program:** A structured approach to the development and attainment of competencies for a particular AQF qualification to meet the requirements of the endorsed components of the Training Packages. Training programs are negotiated between providers, employers, and trainees and in the case of School Based New Apprenticeships, schools and include the choice of units or options within the package and the method, training and location for achieving the competencies.

**Training providers:** Registered government or non-government training organisations, including public institutions, private providers, community organizations, industry skill centres and schools with whom students are enrolled to study.

**WorkCover:** If a student is injured while attending a structured workplace learning placement the employer responsible must complete an injury report and forward a copy to the Principal of the appropriate school. Government school principals should ensure that the injury report is recorded on CASES. WorkCover does not cover people travelling to and from work. The processes to be followed when lodging a WorkCover claim can be found in the *Schools Reference Guide*, Section 4.9.2.4. (Refer to Section C)

**Work experience:** The involvement of secondary school students in short-term industry placement, which supports their experience and understanding of the world of work and career opportunities in general. It is generally undertaken in Year 9 or Year 10. Work experience is not undertaken as part of an accredited VET in Schools or VCAL program.

**User choice:** The objective of user choice is to increase the responsiveness of the vocational education and training system to the needs of users, through allowing clients to negotiate and exercise direct influence over training delivery options, including choice of provider, content, timing, location, sequencing and mode of delivery, with public funds going to the provider of choice.

**VET coordinator:** The VET coordinator is the person responsible for coordinating the VET in Schools programs at the school. The VET coordinator is responsible for liaising with the structured workplace learning coordinator and VET teachers at the school, employers and the school administration and promoting VET in Schools courses to the school community.

**VET in Schools (VETiS) programs:** VET in Schools refers to vocational education and training undertaken by VCE and VCAL students. It includes a broad range of articulated programs combining education, training and structured workplace learning.

**VET in Schools provider:** Any school, public or private provider that is registered as an registered training organisation (RTO) with the Office of Training and Tertiary Education, to deliver specific accredited training courses.

**Workplace assessor:** The role of the workplace assessor is to assess the student at appropriate times and communicate the results to the structured workplace learning coordinator. In some cases, the workplace assessor could be the workplace supervisor, the structured workplace learning coordinator, the VET teacher or a teacher appointed by a TAFE institute or someone qualified as a workplace assessor.

**Workplace mentor:** The workplace mentor is the staff member nominated by the employer to supervise, teach and/or assess the student. In most cases, the workplace mentor is also the workplace supervisor.

**Workplace supervisor:** The role of the workplace supervisor is to supervise the student and to ensure that the student is provided with opportunities to undertake tasks in the workplace, which will enable them to master the required skills and competencies. Where required the workplace supervisor will have to assess the student at appropriate times and communicate the results to the structured workplace learning coordinator