Welcome

The feature article for this Research eLert is an abridged report from a research project commissioned by the Office of Learning and Teaching. Titled Policy and Provision in Education and Training for Victoria’s Ageing Population the report describes and discusses education, training and learning for and by older Victorians, including participation patterns and issues concerning curriculum and learning.

The report explores the ramifications for learning and teaching of an ageing population needing to learn new skills, upgrade existing ones and continue to do so for longer than ever before. It focuses on the mature aged and older population aged 45 years.

The progressive ageing of the population, combined with rapid changes in economic and social institutions and structures, is challenging the way people live and work in an increasingly complex society. With much international work progressing in this area, this report assesses how well Victoria’s adult learning policies and provision are aligning with major research reports, particularly the OECD report Beyond the Rhetoric: Adult Learning Policies and Practice.


I hope you find the feature article informative and look forward to your comments and feedback which can be forwarded to: <research@edumail.vic.gov.au>.

Dr Dahle Suggett
Deputy Secretary
Office of Learning and Teaching
Feature article

Policy and Provision in Education and Training for Victoria’s Ageing Population

This abridged feature article is drawn from work commissioned by the Office of Learning and Teaching. It reports on policy and provision in Victorian adult learning and assesses the alignment of adult learning policy and provision in Victoria against the OECD report Beyond the Rhetoric: Adult Learning Policies and Practice.

Department of Education and Training, 2005. Commissioned authors: John Fischer, Sue Foster & Julie McQueen

Further Reading
Click on hyperlink above to find comprehensive resources comprising policy documents and local and international research reports related to this project.

Related Research

The mature-aged and skill development activities: A systematic review of research

Australia's ageing population and its implications for the future supply of labour and the strength of the economy are the focus of recent debate. Encouraging older workers to remain in the labour force is cited as a major means of addressing the anticipated labour shortage. This paper asks 'what evidence is there that skill development activities for the mature-aged lead to improved attachment to the labour market and improved productivity?' and identifies the major factors affecting whether or not the mature-aged undertake skill development activities. The implications for VET policy, practice and research are also touched upon.

Peter Thomson, Susan Dawe, Alison Anlezark and Kaye Bowman, NCVER

Reconstructing the lifelong learner: pedagogy and identity in individual, organizational and social change

‘How is adult learning related to identity change in personal, social and organisational contexts?’ The authors of Reconstructing the lifelong learner seek to answer the question through an examination of adult learning for change, using a range of illustrative case studies. The case studies explore the relationship between identity and pedagogy, focusing on such topics as self-help books; work-based learning; corporate culture training; AIDS education; and gender education. Interestingly, the five authors also reflect upon ways in which the collaborative writing process has influenced their own self-perceptions. They conclude that educators and students are mutually engaged in ‘identity work’ – work that influences and reflects the ‘plural and changing dimensions of identity’.

Clive Chappell, Carl Rhodes, Nicky Solomon et.al.(2003, Routledge Falmer
Available from educational bookshops

Whatever happened to lifelong learning? Lessons from recent Australian vocational education and training reforms

What can Australia do about our current skills shortage? And how can workplace learning support a broadly skilled workforce, decent jobs and productive industries? These are two key questions underpinning Dr John
Buchanan’s paper on lifelong learning. John attributes the skills shortage, in some ways, to poor policy and planning and short-term industry-led solutions. John argues that current policy does not reflect the emerging reality of industry collaboration and he proposes a regional or industry based model of “skill eco-systems” - a unique approach being successfully trialed in a range of Australian industries.

A report on lifelong learning, skills shortages and workplace learning prepared by Dr John Buchanan, Acting Director ACIRRT, for the Committee for Economic Development Australia, Growth Series - “Lifelong learning”, 2005


Current Directions in Australia’s Vocational education and training system
An excellent article by Tom Karmel, presented at a Conference in China, on the factors which influence and shape Australia’s vocational education and training (TVET) sector. Tom provides an overview of Shaping our Future, Australia’s national TVET strategy, 2004-2010. He details major sector initiatives designed to meet our changing global economic environment: a review of training packages and a review of national standards for training providers. An overview of issues facing the VET sector from a Business Council of Australia perspective, and an examination of recent expansion in apprenticeships and traineeships is provided.

Tom Karmel’s paper was presented to the International Vocational Education Conference, in October 2004. Tom is the Managing Director of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research.

http://www.ncver.edu.au

Changing work, changing workers, changing selves: a study of pedagogies in the new curriculum: report to the NSW Department of Education and Training and report to schools: ARC funded Discovery Project, 2002-2004
This report to schools emerges from a three-year project, based on case studies that sets out to explore a range of pedagogies used in the hospitality and information industry areas by different education sectors including schools, TAFE, community colleges, private providers and universities. The researchers are especially interested to know how workplace needs, assessment requirements, and understandings of the learner are interpreted and acted upon in both industry areas and in the different sectors. They analyse ways in which the institutional features and history of schooling impact directly upon the practice of VET in schools and discuss implications for relevant policy and practice.

Lyn Yates, Mark Tennant, Carolyn Williams et.al., (2005) OVAL Research Group, Faculty of Education, University of Technology, Sydney

http://www.oval.uts.edu.au/

Young people and vocational education and training options
As the needs of senior secondary students change, the need grows for a greater diversity in educational opportunities and pathways to work or further study. This publication provides an overview of research into the VET options available to school-aged people. It also details the emerging social benefits and outcomes of undertaking recognised VET options. While VET is growing in importance as part of the senior secondary certificate, challenges remain concerning perceptions about the value and quality of the VET being delivered, delivery issues, and resourcing. Improved collaboration between schools, VET institutions and
industry may address some of the differences in perception and reduce the strain on schools in resourcing and delivering VET.

*Davinia Woods, NCVER February 2005*

**Setting the Pace**

Recent performance indicates the Victorian Government’s goal that 90 per cent of young Victorians will complete Year 12 or an equivalent qualification by 2010 is achievable. However, if Victoria is to continue to set the pace on post-compulsory pathways it must revisit and renew the policy directions and programs of the Kirby reforms. The 2003 Blueprint for Government Schools and the current review of the Victorian Education Act may provide stronger frameworks on which to build transition arrangements. This report reviews the performance of the education systems in Australia but concludes that ultimately it is not a question of comparing one state with another but with the quality of education provided by Australia’s major trading partners and near neighbours.

*A report on aspects of education, training and youth transition prepared for the Dusseldorp Skills Forum in association with the Education Foundation and the Business Council of Australia, July 2005*

[www.dsf.org.au](http://www.dsf.org.au)

**Useful Links**

**VET Research Websites**

- ACIRRT, University of Sydney
- Adult Community and Further Education, (ACFE), Victoria
- Australian Centre for Organisational, Vocational and Adult Learning (OVAL)
- Australian Flexible Learning Network
- Centre for Economics of Education and Training, (CEET), Australia
- Centre for Research in Education, Equity and Work (CREEW), University of South Australia
- Centre Undertaking Research in Vocational Education (CURVE), Canberra Institute of Technology
- Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA)
- Dusseldorp Skills Forum, Australia
- EDNA Online-Vocational Education and Training
- Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA), UK
- Learning and Skills Research Centre (LSRC), UK
- National Centre for Vocational Education and Training (NCVER), Australia
- NCVER Useful Sites for VET Information, Australia
- National Training system, Department of Education, Science and Training, Australia
- TAFE Development Centre
The Knowledge Bank Connection

In our next edition the focus will be on adolescents, and Year 9, in particular. So now is the chance to do some advance reading of the numerous case studies and Teacher Professional Leave (TPL) reports, written by our colleagues that deal with this age group. These reports and case studies can be found on Knowledge Bank at http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/knowledgebank/student/studentcasestudiesall.asp

Upcoming Events

Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) Conference: Creative Dissent: Constructive Solutions
27 November-1 December 2005
Parramatta, New South Wales

Fourth International Conference on Researching Work and Learning: ‘Challenges for Integrating Work and Learning’
11-14 December 2005
Ultimo, New South Wales

International Conference on Researching Work and Learning, ‘Challenges for Integrating Work and Learning’, University of Technology, Sydney (UTS) and Australian Centre for Organisational Vocational and Adult Learning Research (OVAL)
11–14 December
Ultimo, New South Wales
http://www.oval.uts.edu.au/rw14/

Contributions and Feedback

We are keen to hear about research being undertaken in your school or organisation and encourage you to share your work via the Research eLert. If you would like to provide feedback, including suggestions to improve Research eLert, please forward your information, suggestions or comments to: <research@edumail.vic.gov.au>.

Reflections and Action

Below are some thoughts to assist in reflective practice and to explore future actions.

➢ Consider how you can use the Feature Report to inform and guide the work in your workplace.

➢ Consider discussing the research papers that you would like to share in your workplace with a colleague and plan how this could be done.
Next edition

The theme for the 6th edition of *Research eLert* will explore the emerging research related to adolescence, particularly from a Year 9 perspective.

We are keen to include information on how schools and other learning organisations are using research to inform and guide their practice and would like to include some of this work in *Research eLert*. If you are interested, please contact the Research and Development Branch at: <research@edumail.vic.gov.au>.

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