

Description: Federation University Australia

#### Issue 6

RAVE News

*http://federation.edu.au/faculties-and-schools/faculty-of-education-and-arts/education-and-arts/research/rave-researching-adult-and-vocational-education*

**June 2016**

**Welcome**

*Professor Erica Smith, RAVE Convenor*

In the current newsletter we report on activities of the Researching Adult and Vocational Education (RAVE) research group since November 2015. The size of this edition (eight pages) reflects the extent and breadth of activities. Three major RAVE projects have concluded recently.

Further information about all of our activities is available on our web site (see web link above). Do not hesitate to email RAVE for more details about any items.

The RAVE email address has been changed, to [vet.research@federation.edu.au](https://outlook.uob.ballarat.edu.au/owa/m.wise@ballarat.edu.au/redir.aspx?C=qicVly1hm0-m_uT_kFi1WswoGNpFk9MILOSWGNsZ9MZT1J4EORn4VPd2hr4q2DxrNIkDDiONXR4.&URL=mailto%3avet.research%40federation.edu.au) . This is to help avoid some ‘junk mail’ issues. Please note that any email correspondence to the old email address will be redirected to the new address.  
  
We also report on calls for two small research grants, which RAVE is administering on behalf of the Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education group and INAP, the international network on innovative apprenticeships. **Please note applications close on 17th June.**

In the upcoming Federal election, discussion about VET has been confined mainly to the VET FEE-HELP scandal. This is very unfortunate, and we hope that this newsletter will remind you of all the positive things that happen in VET in Australia.

If you are interested in further study in VET, you might like to think about Fed Uni’s Master of Education Studies which has a VET stream. Senior RAVE academics teach the subjects in this stream. We are also having a mid-year intake into the Associate Degree in Training and Education, but only into the stream for people who already have a Diploma of VET or VET Practice. In this stream you complete your Associate Degree with only six subjects’ study. Contact me on [e.smith@federation.edu.au](mailto:e.smith@federation.edu.au) for details. An advert for the full range of VET programs is on p.7 of the newsletter.

Finally, RAVE members have been active in organising the first VET teacher-education conference for 19 years, taking place on 14th December in Melbourne (report below). It was so successful that it will be repeated in 2016, this time in Sydney. A flyer for the conference is at the end of this newsletter

**Progress on ARC-funded project on VET teachers and their qualifications**

Erica Smith has been leading a major research project on the contribution of vocational teachers’ qualifications to quality in the VET system. The project is funded by the Australian Research Council with several major industry partners from the VET sector. While 20 years ago, full-time teachers in TAFE were required to gain a degree-level qualification in teaching for the VET sector after they had been employed, now people only need to get a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment. We wondered whether this change was having an impact on the quality of VET. We believe that the need for VET teachers to be expert in their industry area does not negate the need for qualifications.

The first peer-reviewed findings from this project were presented at the conference of the Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association in Sydney in April. Many people in the VET sector have been eager to find out what we are discovering in our project. This is the first time we have been able to present findings in a peer-reviewed forum.

The paper, by Erica and Keiko Yasukawa from UTS, presented findings from in-depth case studies undertaken in TAFE Institutes and private training providers. In the case studies, they interviewed students and teachers from different areas of the colleges, and senior managers. The case studies focused on whether people observed that teachers’ qualifications made a difference to their teaching and to quality more generally.

Generally the managers thought that higher-level qualifications did make a difference, although the qualifications did not in themselves guarantee good teaching performance. One of the TAFE Institutes had a very active program of encouraging teachers to study at a higher level. Teachers with degrees were able to say how their work had improved as a result, whereas teachers without degrees tended to be sceptical about the benefit.

The research continues through the remainder of 2016, with future phases including a major nationwide survey of VET teachers and an examination of whether teachers’ qualification levels have any effect on their participation in further professional development. Jackie Tuck, RAVE’s newest member, has now joined the project team.

Erica Smith has been invited to give a keynote speech about the project in Scotland in June. She will also present on the project at a conference in Oxford in July. There is a great deal of interest in the UK about our project, as the qualification requirements for VET teachers there are being reduced.

Project web site: <http://federation.edu.au/research-vet-quality>

**Award for RAVE researcher**

Erica Smith was presented with the Ray Barker Award for Distinguished Service to VET research at the recent annual conference of the Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association (AVETRA) (pictured below). This award, which is conferred only every two years, was instituted as a way of recognising distinguished and long-term contributions to research and scholarship in vocational education and training.

Michele Simons, from the University of Western Sydney and President of AVETRA, who nominated Erica for the award, referred to her research achievements over a period of 25 years. “Across this sweep of time and experience Erica has made contributions that have shaped policy and practice and influenced the thinking and practice of many teachers and trainers,” Professor Simons said. “Erica is a scholar of global significance.”

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Erica said it was an honour to be nominated for, and to win, this award. Ray Barker was a notable VET practitioner and scholar, as well as a major contributor to several Australian industries. In his latter years Dr Barker was a benefactor to VET research in Australia. “I was particularly pleased to receive this award, as Dr Barker’s thesis on apprenticeships was one of the first works I read when commencing my PhD studies 20 years ago,” Erica said.

RAVE PhD student project

How learning technologies affect engagement for off-campus students in thinly populated regions, *Les Burr*

My research is focused on students studying higher education (HE) at TAFE Institutes and Further Education (FE) colleges in Australia and the U.K.  In particular I am studying mature age (over 25) students undertaking study at degree level within a college/institute either fully or partially online.

Addressing the employment, economic and social imbalances between urban and regional areas by increasing the participation of regional learners in tertiary education is generally agreed to be of national and international importance. Although the total number of students engaged in tertiary education has risen dramatically over the past 25 years, regional equity remains unfulfilled.

I have chosen to study ‘HE in FE’ cohorts because they are considered to be critical in increasing the participation of groups under-represented in HE; for example those learners who may be geographically dislocated, are of low SES, or are mature age. This particular cohort of students (and their needs) is not necessarily familiar with traditional universities.

The role of technology in widening participation is untested.

The U.K. has a long history of further education colleges delivering degree programs, and so provides a rich data source. I have just returned from three weeks undertaking interviews with managers, teachers and students at four colleges in the U.K, and the Association of Colleges. In the second half of this year I will be researching in four Australian regional TAFE Institutes. I will also be surveying students at all of the institutions.

I have been greatly supported in my study by being a part of the Federation University PhD Master Class under the direction of Professor Erica Smith who is also my supervisor. The PhD Master Class is made up of senior TAFE managers - all with a common research interest in vocational education.

The organisation of the field work in the U.K. has indeed proven to be “a very large project” in itself. Studying part-time whilst working within the vocational sector during the most turbulent of times has also been challenging. But I see this as part of the learnings, training, scholarship and discipline of the program.

**New RAVE member: Jackie Tuck**

****Jackie is a Research Fellow in the Federation Business School. After completing her Economics degree at the University of Nottingham and qualifying to teach Maths and Science in secondary schools, she worked as a researcher at the University across a range of economic and social science disciplines. She moved to Australia in 1997 and held the Administrative Manager role in the School of Education at the University of Ballarat for a number of years. Following completion of her PhD in 2009, in the area of corporate reputation and corporate social responsibility, she held a University of Ballarat Early Career Development Fellowship and was involved in a number of collaborative research projects including an NCVER-funded project on building innovation capacity. Jackie is currently working on the NCVER project in employer training, and is part of a research team from the Business School completing a Low Income Energy Efficiency project in the region - funded by the Federal Government. She has recently joined the ARC-funded project on VET teachers and their qualifications. Jackie is supervising a number of PhD students, and is currently the Higher Degrees by Research Coordinator for the Business School.

Research grants managed by RAVE on behalf of INAP and ACDEVEG

RAVE is administering two one-off small research grants programs on behalf of the Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education group and INAP, the international network on innovative apprenticeships. These are available as the result of the two conferences which RAVE managed in 2015, which each generated a small surplus thanks to the generosity of sponsoring organisations. The INAP grants are for research projects on apprenticeship, and are available internationally, and the ACDEVEG grants are on VET teacher-education and are only available in Australia. Each grant has an upper limit of $5000, and the work has to be completed, and a report submitted, by the end of November. For further information please email

[inap2015@federation.edu.au](mailto:inap2015@federation.edu.au) or

[acdeveg2015@federation.edu.au](mailto:acdeveg2015@federation.edu.au)

Please note that proposals must be received by June 17th.

New RAVE minor research projects

**UNESCO-UNEVOC**

**Erica Smith** was invited to contribute to UNESCO-UNEVOC’s ‘Promising Practices’ database. This database provides examples of good practice which can be adopted by other countries. She worked with officials of the Australian Department of Education and Training to provide an entry on the ‘Australian Apprenticeships Ambassadors’ Programme. <http://www.unevoc.unesco.org/go.php>

**Evaluation of 'alternative' school education for young people**

**Barry Golding** undertook a research evaluation of the original ‘Alesco’ program (set up in Newcastle in 2003 by the ACE provider, WEA Hunter) in 2009. The 2016 project again involves listening to young people's and stakeholder perceptions of the Alesco-type programs in Newcastle, as well in four new sites in rural NSW.

**OECD-ILO**

**Erica Smith** was invited to undertake an ‘India’ case study on employer engagement in apprenticeships. This was funded by the International Labour Organization as part of their stream of parallel projects to a major OECD project on employer engagement in skills development. In this project Erica updated earlier work on the Indian apprenticeship system which she had undertaken with Ros Brennan Kemmis in 2012. The project reported on new developments in the Indian system, which were mainly aimed at increasing employer engagement, and analysed their likely effectiveness. The earlier project can be seen on the RAVE web site, under ‘Recent research’, and there is a link to the project reports. Erica was invited to present both old and new research at a joint event of the Australian Government and OECD: Engaging employers in skills development for the 21st Century on 2-3 June 2016, in Adelaide. Over 100 invited senior stakeholders in the Australian VET system were present. Erica’s presentation was entitled: ‘Engaging with employers in emerging economies: India: A snapshot in 2012 and 2015’ In this presentation she drew out some Indian developments which have potential applicability in Australia.

**Rural sporting chance**

**Barry Golding**, with Dr Maryann Brown, is studying opportunities for rural vocational education and training (VET), for the philanthropic Helen Macpherson Rural Foundation based in Creswick. It involves hearing from young people 18-25 years as well as other VET stakeholders in five rural Victorian towns: Dunolly, Terang, Casterton, Kyabram and Warracknabeal. The research design involves active collaboration with local football and netball clubs.

**‘Refocusing on teaching and training in Vocational Education and Training’: National conference on VET teacher education** Sponsored by:

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This one-day conference in December 2015 in Melbourne was advertised in RAVE News #5. It proved to be a runaway success, with a full house several days before the event. RAVE staff organised the event, together with members of the Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group. Some scenes from the conference are provided below. Information about the 2016 conference is available from [acdeveg2016@uts.edu.au](mailto:acdeveg2016@uts.edu.au) and a flyer for the 2016 conference is at the end of this newsletter.

****A number of national figures in VET and VET teaching gave keynote speeches and participated in panel sessions. The papers will be developed into journal articles to be published in a special edition of the International Journal of Training Research in 2017.

A web page on the conference will shortly be available on the web site of the Australian Council of Deans of Education [www.acde.edu.au](http://www.acde.edu.au)

**NCVER-funded project completed- Employer training practices and their partnerships with training providers**

RAVE researchers **Erica Smith**, **Jackie Tuck** and **Andy Smith**, together with Victor Callan from the University of Queensland have now finished the two-year NCVER-funded project on employer training. The project examined why and how employers train their workers, and employers' choices about whether and how to engage with the formal VET sector. The NCVER will publish the report later in the year, and the project website can be found at: <http://federation.edu.au/faculties-and-schools/faculty-of-education-and-arts/research/fea-research-groups/rave-researching-adult-and-vocational-education/current-research/employer-training-in-a-changed-environment>

**Army VET history project concludes**

Carolyn Johnstone has completed her project on 'The changing relationship between the Australian Army and national systems for Vocational Education and Training', mentioned in RAVE News #3. Funded by a 2014/15 Army History Research Grant, this research in the area of military social history extended knowledge and understanding of the links between Australian Army training and wider national VET. The project examined documentary sources and a third generation cultural-historical activity theory model of two interacting activity systems was used to analyse the Army – national VET relationship. At some points, the Army’s training fed into the national system; at other times, Army drew from the wider civilian organisation; and, joint development of training also occurred. The extent to which Army and national VET have a shared purpose for their endeavours ultimately determines the strength of the relationship. As Australia continues to evolve a national system for VET, large employers (similarly to the Army) might be viewed as interacting activity systems. In this way, they can negotiate the outputs of their technical and vocational training as a common purpose and adopt some or all of the national components of the system.

**ARC-funded project on Enterprise RTOs concludes**

RAVE researchers Erica Smith and Andy Smith, together with Arlene Walker from Deakin University, have finished the three-year ARC-funded project on Enterprise RTOs (ERTOs). ERTOs are companies which have established their own internal RTO to provide qualifications to their workers. The Army (see previous article) is a good example of an Enterprise RTO. The project involved two surveys of ERTOs, detailed case study visits to nine ERTOs, and comparison of qualifications offered by these RTOs with the same qualifications offered by TAFE and private providers. The Enterprise RTO Association (ERTOA) was a project partner, along with eight ERTOs.

The findings are summarised below using the four research questions as a frame. The reliability of the findings was assisted by the multiple methods used in the research.

*Benefits and challenges for companies*

Major reasons for becoming an enterprise RTO (ERTO) were training to meet industry regulation and licencing requirements, the control of the content of training and its quality, and in some cases a lack of other providers, or quality providers, for the relevant qualification.

ERTOs all had a heavy focus on quality in assessment. The latter is necessary and desirable for all RTOs, and well regarded by the VET regulatory system, and for ERTOs it was necessary to achieve consistency of workers’ performance across multiple sites.

The project provided evidence of the complexities of setting up and operating a training provider as part of a company or other organisation whose main business is not training. In all instances, staff needed to be employed solely to manage the compliance aspects of being a registered training organisation. The cost burden, to the parent company, of operating an ERTO was considerable, and needed constant justification. Organisations had deliberately kept their scope of registration (listed qualifications and/or skill sets) small to make the task manageable.

Changes in the parent companies, and their consequential effects on the ERTOs, were an unexpected feature of the research. The effects on the ERTOs were considerable; managing these changes consumed a lot of energy on the part of ERTO staff. While change in institutional training providers as a result of external factors and internal re-organisation is hardly a novel feature, the added complication for ERTOs is that they were subject to organisational change in their parent enterprises.

Changes to funding structures at national and State level provided extra complications for ERTOs. While the availability of funding for the training was not a paramount reason for becoming or remaining an ERTO, it helped to justify the employment of staff to manage compliance matters and allowed for higher quality training.

*Benefits and challenges for workers*

Workers appreciated the practical and workplace-based nature of the training, stating that the training was highly relevant to their jobs. They reported a mix of training methods; training was not confined to on-the-job instruction. They reported a high level of satisfaction with training. They appreciated the acquisition of a qualification at no cost and within working hours, and the transferability of their qualifications and/or skill sets to other employers.

Learners confirmed additional benefits beyond the job or company-related benefits reported. In the survey, they reported ‘personal benefits’ in the survey and also their movement on to higher-level qualifications. Their relatively low prior education achievement, and the fact that over 30% responding to the survey spoke a language other than English at home, confirmed previous studies showing that ERTOs assist disadvantaged worker groups.

There were also some challenges. Some employees were not altogether happy with their training and would have preferred it to be more formalised. We concluded that the training should be more visible and explicit, and less embedded within work.

*Equivalence of qualifications with those delivered in TAFE and other institutional settings*

The project indicates that for those qualifications delivered by the ERTOs in the study, the delivery by other providers was often very similar, involving close partnerships between training providers and companies. This was an unexpected but important finding. Also, it proved difficult to find other training providers delivering some of the qualifications, even by trawling the national register, indicating that, for some people in their geographical location, an ERTO is likely to be the only option to achieve certain qualifications

*An emerging, employer-led, alternative VET system?*

More thinking needs to be done around this issue, but we can make two initial points from our data and analysis. Firstly the contribution of ERTOs is important, particularly in some industry areas and for some groups of Australian workers. They provide qualification-based training free of charge to learners and largely free of cost to the government. Secondly, the regulatory requirements of running an enterprise RTO are likely to prevent them moving from a minor to a major component of the VET system, since they belong to parent organisations whose main business is not training. The public policy question is whether ERTOs’ share of the VET system should be increased, and if so, how this might be done. The project provides much data that can inform this debate.

An extended report on the project can be found on the project web site, which is also on the RAVE site under ‘Recent research’.

**Events and news from other organisations**

**2017 International Exchange on adult learning**

Federation University Australia is a partner, with Adult Learning Australia (ALA) and ACE Aotearoa (in New Zealand) and the ELOA (Older Learner) Network of ESREA (European Society for Research into the Education of Adults) in the ‘Getting of Wisdom: Learning later in life’ international exchange and conferences, involving researchers in Europe, Australia and New Zealand is being planned and coordinated by Barry Golding. Advance information about the exchange is attached. Annette Foley and Helen Weadon (also from Fed Uni) are part of the Australian organising committee. A one day conference is to be held as part of the exchange in Ballarat on 14 Feb 2017 on the theme ‘Learning in later life in diverse contexts’. On the following day in Melbourne, the theme is ‘Learning in later life and social inequalities’.  Papers from the exchange will be included in a special, guest edited Learning in later life edition of the Australian Journal of Adult Learning in November 2017.

The Exchange and Conferences are open to researchers, policy makers and practitioners from anywhere in the world, but the core participants are anticipated from Europe, Australia and New Zealand. Further information will be available via ALA and ACE Aotearoa websites in June 2016.

**Pathways to Education and Work website**

The research group ‘Pathways to Education and Work’ at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) has a new website that has been developed by one of their graduate students. They will use it to post work from various projects on pathways and will also have a semi-regular blog. http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/pew/

**RAVE members’ publications and achievements**

*since RAVE News 5 (November, 2015)*

**Book Chapters**

**Golding, B**. & Kimberley, H. (2016) 'Australia', Book Chapter in *International Perspectives on Older Adult Education*, B. Findsen & M. Formosa (Eds.), Springer, pp.25-34.

**Smith, E**. (2015). Using apprenticeship as a whole-of-workforce training strategy: What are the effects on training quality? In E. Smith, P. Gonon, P. & A. Foley (Eds.) *Architectures for apprenticeship: Achieving economic and social goals.* Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing.

**Peer-reviewed journal papers**

**Smith, E**. (2016). Apprenticeship management at national and company levels: Good practice principles derived from recent research. *International Journal of HRD Practice, Policy & Research, 1:1, 35-52.* <http://www.ijhrdppr.com/volume-1-number-1-2016/>

**Refereed conference papers**

**Johnstone, C.,** & Cooper, M.(2016). Supporting pre-service teachers through intercultural experiences: A pathway to socially and culturally inclusive teaching. *10th International Technology, Education and Development Conference (INTED2016) Proceedings,* Valencia, Spain. 7-9 March. **ISBN:** 978-84-608-5617-7 **ISSN:** 2340-1079 **doi:** [10.21125/inted.2016.1034](http://dx.doi.org/10.21125/inted.2016.1034)

**Johnstone, C.** (2016). The Australian Army and the National System of Vocational Education and Training (VET) – An historical review of collaboration. *Putting VET research to work: collaboration, innovation, prosperity, 19th Annual AVETRA Conference*, St Leonards, NSW, 20-22 April.

**Smith, E**. & Yasukawa, K. (2016). Views of VET teachers, managers and students about VET teacher qualifications. *Putting VET research to work: Collaboration, Innovation, Prosperity.* ***19th*** *Annual Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association Conference,* TAFE Northern Sydney campus, 21-22 April*.*

**Smith, E., Smith. A**. and Walker, A. (2015). When employers become training providers: What are some institutional issues? *Work and Learning in the Era of Globalisation: Challenges for the 21st Century,* 9th International Conference on Researching Work and Learning, 9-11 Dec. Full paper at <http://www.rwl2015.com/abstracts-04.html>

**Smith, E. & Smith. A**. (2015). Work and learning in jobs that are traditionally considered unskilled or low-skilled. *Work and Learning in the Era of Globalisation: Challenges for the 21st Century,* 9th International Conference on Researching Work and Learning, Singapore, 9-11 December. Full paper at <http://www.rwl2015.com/abstracts-03.html>

**Non-refereed publications**

**Johnstone, C.** (2015).Adult education and the journey from trauma to security. *Refuge(e)s in the Cities: Post-conflict Trauma, Gendered Violence and Social Inclusion*, Melbourne, 26-27 November.

**Smith, E**. (2016). The VET FEE-HELP scandal: How afraid should we be? *Putting VET research to work: Collaboration, Innovation, Prosperity.* ***19th*** *Annual Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association Conference,* TAFE Northern Sydney campus, 21-22 April*.*

**Smith, E**. (2015). What makes a good VET teacher? Students’ views. *Refocusing on teaching and training in vocational education and training. 1st Annual Conference of the Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group,* Karsten’s Conference Centre, Melbourne, 14 December.

**Other reports**

**Smith, E**. (2016). *Case study on employer engagement in skills development: Improving employer engagement in apprenticeships.* For ILO component of OECD research programme on Local Employment and Economic Development (LEED).

**Smith, E., Smith, A.,** & Walker, A. (2015). *Enterprise Registered Training Organisations: Their operations, contributions and challenges, Project summary* is available on RAVE web site.

Lynch, D., **Tuck, J**., Hurley, C., Fraser, P. and Brown, J. (2016). *Final Report: Glenelg SAVES Consortium,* Glenelg SAVES Consortium. (Funded by the Australian Government as part of the Low Income Energy Efficiency Program)

**Other activities and awards**

**Erica Smith** was invited to provide expert advice on VET assessment to the Ministerial Training and Assessment Working Group, December 2015; and again in February 2016 as leader of a group of representatives of the Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group.

**Erica** **Smith** was invited as a member of a panel of experts to provide advice on VET assessment to the national Australian Industry and Skills Committee, October 2015.

Morgan Wise – an essential member of RAVE



Morgan is the RAVE Research Assistant (RA) and RA to Erica Smith. After completing his degree in Social Sciences and Humanities in 2010, Morgan began working as RA to Erica to gain experience in research. Morgan’s role in RAVE is to manage the production of RAVE News, organising and minuting meetings, managing the RAVE web site, and keeping our mailing list up to date. He also assists RAVE members with document formatting for publications, the preparation of conference presentations and literature searching. Morgan helps with organising RAVE’s annual OctoberVET events and with other events.

Morgan was the support officer for the 2012 and 2015 Excellence in Research Australia data collection exercise for Federation University for the Education discipline, and has been involved in several major research projects.

When not working within his RA capacity at FedUni, Morgan is also a qualified Psychiatric Nurse working in an adult acute inpatient unit and is currently undertaking a Master of Nursing by Research through Australian Catholic University. Morgan has previously worked with the psychiatric research team at the Royal Melbourne Hospital, which began as an opportunity following a scholarship awarded in his final year of the undergraduate nursing degree and concluded with co-authorship of the paper ‘*Police and clinician diversion of people in mental health crisis from the Emergency Department: a trend analysis and cross comparison study’*. <http://bmcemergmed.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12873-015-0040-7>

In future, Morgan plans to complete a research project ‘Exploring the education/informal training received by recent graduate nursing students during their integration to working within the Psychiatric Intensive Care Area/UNIT (PICA/PICU) in Victoria’, before continuing to expand his knowledge and skills in both the clinical nursing and education fields.



**Higher-level qualifications for VET practitioners**

A suite of qualifications at different levels to suit you and your staff.

**All are designed to be undertaken part-time, and are offered on-line**. All programs have a mid-year intake in 2016 (subject to demand). Special arrangements may be made for additional workshops at locations with multiple enrolments.

As a dual-sector university, Fed Uni has a special understanding of VET, and its VET research centre, RAVE (Researching Adult and Vocational Education) is well-known throughout Australia and internationally. Fed Uni has earned five stars for teaching seven years in a row.

**Associate Degree in Training and Education**. Designed for people who already have a Certificate IV TAE, with industry qualifications and experience, for which substantial credit is given. The Diploma of VET is embedded. *This is a HECS program.*

**Master of Education Studies, VET stream**. Designed for teachers or managers already working in the VET sector who already have a degree, in VET or another suitable discipline. Details can be seen at <https://study.federation.edu.au/#/course/759>. *HECS places are currently available.*

**Masters by Research in VET.** Designed for senior VET practitioners. Applicants commit to an intensive program, including face-to-face workshops. *Free places currently available.*

Contacts: *Master of Education Studies*, Dr Sharon McDonough, on 03-53279703 or s.mcdonough@federation.edu.au

*Associate Degree or Masters by Research*: Professor Erica Smith on 03-5327 9665 or at [e.smith@federation.edu.au](mailto:e.smith@federation.edu.au) .

The last two programs will only run with sufficient interest

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**2016 National Conference**

**on VET Teaching & VET Teacher Education**

**Research, Policy & Teaching Practice: building connections**

**8 & 9 December**

**Sydney TAFE (Ultimo campus & University of Technology Sydney Broadway campus)**

The conference is organised by the **Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group** (ACDEVEG) <http://www.acde.edu.au/networks-and-partnerships/acde-vocational-group/> in partnership with the School of Education, University of Technology Sydney and Sydney TAFE. It is the second ACDEVEG annual conference – the first very successful conference was held in Melbourne in 2015.

This is an important forum for VET practitioners, teacher educators, researchers and policy makers to share knowledge and work collaboratively to strengthen teaching and learning experiences and outcomes in the VET sector.

**Who should attend?**

* Teachers from TAFE Institutes and RTOs
* Teachers and trainers from Universities, TAFE Institutes, RTOs and other organisations involved in the initial education and professional development of VET teachers
* Researchers from universities, TAFE Institutes, RTOs and research organisations involved in research on VET teaching, pedagogy and related areas
* CEOs and Managers from TAFE Institutes and RTOs.

**Conference structure**

**8 December** (2 pm – 5 pm) at the Sydney TAFE campus

This part of the conference will be practitioner-driven and focus on VET teaching and training practice.Participants will be invited to engage in small group practitioner-led ‘round tables’ focussed on:

* Collaboratively ‘problem solving’ a specific issue that is salient for many VET teachers and trainers in their everyday work; or
* presenting a teaching and training innovation that has been implemented or is planned, and inviting feedback from professional colleagues as ‘critical friends’.

*A call for expressions of interest to lead round-tables will be announced soon.*

**9 December** (9 am – 4 pm) at the University of Technology Sydney

This part of the conference include key note presentations research paper sessions, related to VET teaching and training.

*A call for papers will be announced soon.*

**2 keynote speakers confirmed:**

**Prof Stephen Kemmis** (Charles Sturt University) will share his research on the professional practice and knowledge of teachers.

**Berwyn Clayton** will share her insights on some of the ‘disconnects’ between research, policy and teaching practices in the VET sector.

Other invited speakers will be announced as they are confirmed.

Email [acdeveg2016@uts.edu.au](mailto:acdeveg2016@uts.edu.au) to be placed on the mailing list for further announcements.

**Organising committee:** Keiko Yasukawa (Convenor, University of Technology Sydney)

Rob Cousins (Sydney TAFE)

Annette Foley (Federation University)

Annette Green (Charles Sturt University)

Michele Simons (Western Sydney University)