Review of C and E Course Classifications

Report

August 2021

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Foreword

I present this report on behalf of the Review Committee. In line with the terms of reference, the Review of C and E Course Classifications is considering ways to strengthen vocational education in ACT schools.

A shared understanding of vocational education in ACT schools is crucial for broadening educational opportunities and ensuring quality outcomes for students.

The report is structured to enable all educators in the senior secondary system to engage in the Review. This report proposes draft recommendations in the context of vocational education in ACT schools and provides background, context, and data to inform discussion. The Report will be published on the BSSS website and will provide a structure and focus for public consultation events.

Stakeholders are invited to provide feedback on the draft recommendations, either by using the Survey Monkey Platform available on the BSSS Website or attending a focus group event.

The BSSS Secretariat, on behalf of the Review Committee, will conduct focus groups events with key stakeholders including students, industry, parents, principals Curriculum and VET Coordinators and heads of the three sectors - ACT Education Directorate, Association of Independent Schools of the ACT and the Catholic Education Office of Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

The Review of C and E Course Classifications Committee will consider feedback from stakeholders and make final recommendations to the Board.

Finally, I would like to thank the BSSS Chair Roberta McRae for the opportunity to undertake this important task. The Review of C and E Course Classifications Committee endorses this report and acknowledges the assistance of the Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies. I invite all stakeholders to consider the issues raised in this report and participate in the public consultation events.

Louise Mayo AM
Chair
Review Committee
Review of C and E Course Classifications

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Executive Summary

Vocational education delivered to senior secondary students was introduced to enable secondary students to undertake nationally accredited VET programs while completing secondary school.

The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) recognises the value of vocational educational training (VET) courses and their contribution to quality education and enhanced transitions to work and further education.

Students can undertake Vocational Education and Training (VET) as part of a senior secondary certificate and completion by a student can provide credit towards both a recognised VET qualification and a Senior Secondary School Certificate. There are 26 BSSS courses providing access to VET training, across an increasingly diverse range of learning areas.

A key function of the Board, as outlined in the BSSS Act 1997, is to review its own operations. Between the period 2008-2019, the Board has undertaken a number of reviews including requirements for the ACT Year 12 Certificate (2014), ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum (2015), Assessment and Moderation (2018) and the ACT Scaling Test (2019). The C and E Course Classifications have not been reviewed since their inception. It is timely to review these course classifications to evaluate their role and impact in serving the needs of ACT senior secondary students.

The context of VET in schools has been the subject of discussion at national level. Recent reports, *Looking to the Future: Report of the Review of senior secondary pathways into work, further education and training* (2020), *Strengthening Skills: Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System* (2019) and *Nurturing Wonder and Igniting Passion, designs for a new school curriculum: NSW Curriculum Review* (2020), encourage reflection on the role of VET and its contribution to the senior secondary certificate. A key issue raised in these reports is provision of clear vocational pathways underpinned by robust quality assurance processes.

A comprehensive environmental scan of delivery of vocational education in senior secondary schools across Australia indicates that there is not one model for delivery. Each jurisdiction has developed an approach tailored to their own context, reflected in the processes that they implement to deliver and certify VET. These approaches are varied, complex and subject to review. The continuing national focus on reviewing VET, as well as student pathways, has not as yet resulted in an optimal model that is recognised as providing the best system for senior secondary students.

This review presents an opportunity to develop a shared understanding of vocational education in ACT senior secondary schools. The purpose of this review is to examine existing Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) curriculum, assessment and moderation policies and procedures for C and E Courses, to determine if changes are required to meet the future needs of students pursuing a VET pathway, whilst at the same time meeting BSSS legislative requirements.

The BSSS is a statutory authority responsible for the certification of senior secondary school studies in government and non-government schools in the Australian Capital Territory. The *Board of Senior Secondary Studies Act 1997* is the legislation that defines roles and responsibilities in senior secondary education in the ACT. Key legislation that is pertinent to this review relates to accreditation guidelines, quality assurance and alignment with national agreements.

Draft Recommendations

1. That C Courses be redeveloped as A/T/M/V or A/M/V courses.

2. That the level of contribution, achievement and quality assurance requirements of VET qualifications intended for consideration as E Courses on the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate are consistent with high expectations for students and support the integrity and quality of the certificate.

3. That E Courses continue to be delivered by external providers only.

4. That the BSSS establish an approved list of external non-school based RTOs, providers, and qualifications.

The draft recommendations proposed in this Review are designed to create a shared understanding of vocational education in ACT senior secondary schools. They are created to align with local and national perspectives on education and VET in schools. Key principles underpinning the draft recommendations are as follows:

- That the purpose of senior secondary education is to prepare students for diverse pathways to further learning, work and participation in civic life'. (Australian Qualifications Framework).

- That students develop transferrable skills and understanding of their use in different contexts, through curriculum that embeds the Australian Curriculum General Capabilities, with knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century.

- The learning entitlement for each student is that they become confident and creative individuals, successful lifelong learners and active and informed members of the community. (Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019)

- That the ACT senior secondary system is a part of the K-10 student learning continuum informed by the Australian Curriculum.

- That ACT senior secondary curriculum provides a platform for quality learning and upholds high expectations for achievement of all young adults.

- That all pathways are of equal status in the senior secondary system.

- That ACT teachers are duty bound by the Australian Professional Standards for teachers (AITSL).

- That ACT senior secondary curriculum reflects coherence and cohesion as informed by the BSSS Shape of ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum.

- That all assessment is subject to BSSS quality assurance measures.

- That students experience a breadth of study and have access to a diverse range of VET opportunities.

These draft recommendations are designed to maximise learning outcomes and protect students. Developing C Courses into A/T/M/V or A/T/M courses will ensure that students receive their learning entitlement. The Board recognises the learning entitlement of senior secondary education to core knowledge, skills, understandings, and values that will provide a foundation for their future contribution to Australia's society.

There are now more options for students who wish to undertake VET. There is a wide range of A/T/M/V or A/M/V courses for schools to deliver and for students to select. These are not simply training programs but include knowledge-based curriculum, providing a context for the learning. These courses have been developed specifically for senior secondary students in an ACT setting. These courses contribute to the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate and provide a safeguard for students, should the vocational training aspects of the course not be sustainable in the school context.

Integrating C Courses into A/T/M/V or A/T/M courses will safeguard students of risk factors associated with Training Packages. Training Packages are constantly being updated. The impact of changes to Training Package sometimes results in C Courses that can no longer be delivered, for example, when certificates are deleted. At times Training Package rules change and may result in conditions that schools cannot meet, and courses are discontinued. Staffing issues also result in the discontinuation of VET. When VET is embedded in A/T/M courses, students are still able to complete a course, without the VET component should this prove necessary. Likewise, if schools wish to introduce these courses, they will be able to integrate VET when they are able to formally integrate competency-based training.

A/T/M/V or A/M/V courses provide a safeguard for students, so that even if no competencies are achieved, they still receive an A-E grade in the learning area. There is more rigorous quality assurance of A/T/M/V courses through moderation processes, including the Meshing of grades and scores in schools, and Moderation Day. The quality assurance of C Courses is not informed by the specific description of student learning outcomes documented in the BSSS Achievement Standards that are embedded in A/T/M/V or A/M/V courses. This raises questions about the level of scrutiny and accountability.

The proposal to increase quality assurance measures for recognition of external VET protects students and maintains the integrity of the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate. Many RTOs are delivering high quality programs that provide opportunities for students to enhance their skills, provide industry experience and prepare them for a pathway beyond school. However, nationally, and locally, there are concerns about the lack of transparency, accountability, and quality of the training by some providers.

As a result of these concerns, some state and territory education departments and non-government schooling sectors have established preferred provider lists and prescriptions about the type of VET suitable for students in the senior phase of schooling.

A strategy for a phased transition will be developed as a result of any reforms undertaken following the Review, to allow time for implementation and to ensure that students are not disadvantaged.

In conclusion, these recommendations outline reforms to strengthen VET in schools. More importantly, they will ensure students undertaking a vocational pathway are safeguarded and receive their learning entitlement.

PART 1

The ACT Senior Secondary System

The ACT BSSS leads quality assurance in senior secondary curriculum, assessment and certification. The Board consists of representatives from colleges, tertiary providers, industry, parent organisations and unions.

The configuration of the ACT senior secondary system is unique in Australia. It is a decentralised system of education. This means that colleges have autonomy to make decisions on a range of education issues. The defining features of the ACT system is school-based curriculum and continuous assessment.

The senior secondary system is based on the premise that teachers are experts in their area – they know their students and community – and so are best placed to develop curriculum and assess students according to their needs and interests.

School-based curriculum means that college teachers are responsible for developing curriculum that is reviewed every five years. The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies accredits a diverse range of curriculum that reflects the needs and interests of all students including vocational and tertiary pathways. Curriculum makes provision for students with mild to moderate intellectual disabilities so that all students have the opportunity to achieve an ACT senior secondary certificate. Students have ownership of their learning as they can study courses that are relevant to their interests and provide a pathway beyond year 12.

Another defining characteristic of the ACT senior secondary system is its school-based continuous assessment model that ensures students are assessed throughout years 11 and 12, with both years contributing equally to senior secondary certification. Teachers and students are positioned to have ownership of senior secondary assessment. The configuration of these processes allows teachers to learn from each other and develop judgement and expertise.

Senior secondary teachers have the flexibility to assess students in a variety of ways. For example: multimedia presentation, inquiry-based project, test, essay, performance and/or practical demonstration may all have their place. College teachers are responsible for developing assessment instruments and providing feedback to students.

Only students who desire a pathway to university are required to sit a general aptitude test, referred to as the ACT Scaling Test (AST), which moderates student course scores across courses and colleges. Students are required to use critical and creative thinking skills across a range of disciplines to solve problems. They are also required to write a response to stimulus material.

(See Key Terms, Appendix 3)
(See Vision and Principles of ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum, Appendix 2)

The Board of Senior Secondary Studies Act 1997

The BSSS is a statutory authority responsible for the certification of senior secondary school studies in government and non-government schools in the Australian Capital Territory. The *Board of Senior Secondary Studies Act 1997* is the legislation that defines roles and responsibilities in senior secondary education in the ACT.

Key functions of the Board pertinent to this review relate to accreditation guidelines, quality assurance and alignment with national agreements. (See Board Functions, Appendix 1)

ACT System Moderation

The integrity of the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate depends on robust, collaborative and rigorous structured consensus-based peer review moderation.

Moderation is undertaken for two purposes: accountability and improvement. Peer reviewed moderation is the process of calibrating assessments so that there is comparability of grades either internally, within a school, or externally, across all sectors and colleges.

The process involves year 11 and 12 teachers from all public and non-government colleges that offer the ACT senior secondary curriculum. On each Moderation Day, presentations of units from A, T, V, C and M courses are provided for peer review at specified unit grade standards. These presentations include documentation of course unit delivery and a specified number of portfolios of student work according to the agreed requirements from different courses of study. Teachers from all ACT colleges compile representative presentations of student work and submit it to the OBSSS.

This moderation process takes place twice a year in early March and August. On each day portfolios of students' work in all subject areas are reviewed. In March the work from Year 11 semester 2 is reviewed and in August the work from Year 12 semester 1 is reviewed.

Teachers of each course, review presentations from other colleges and comment on:

- adherence to Board policies and course document requirements
- quality and appropriateness of criterion referenced assessment tasks and marking schemes
- teacher judgements of student grade standards against system Achievement Standards.

Consensus peer-based moderation upholds comparability and consistency in the allocation of grades, based on the analysis of student work in relation to Achievement Standards. Collaborative moderation allows teachers to explicitly state and share their tacit knowledge, understandings of curriculum and assessment practices. These professional conversations further develop teachers' knowledge and understanding of curriculum and assessment.

In 2017, moderation systems were integrated into the ACT Certification System (ACS) to allow for greater tracking of longitudinal data by schools.

Principles underpinning Senior Secondary Education in Australia

Key reforms that underpin senior secondary education in Australia include the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019), the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the establishment of the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA).

Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019)

The Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019) sets out the vision for education in Australia and a commitment to improving educational outcomes for young Australians.

The Declaration has two distinct but interconnected goals:

Goal 1: The Australian education system promotes excellence and equity.

Goal 2: All young Australians become:

- confident and creative individuals
- successful lifelong learners
- active and informed members of the community.

Achieving these goals is the responsibility of Australian Governments and the education community in partnership with young Australians, their families and carers and the broader community. Improving educational outcomes for all young Australians is central to the nation's social and economic prosperity and will position young people to live fulfilling, productive and responsible lives.

The Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019) defines the purpose of education in Australia.

> *To achieve excellence and for our system to be equitable, every student must develop strong literacy and numeracy skills in their earliest years of schooling, and go on to develop broad and deep knowledge across a range of curriculum areas.*

> *However, our education system must do more than this – it must also prepare young people to thrive in a time of rapid social and technological change, and complex environmental, social and economic challenges. Education plays a vital role in promoting the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development and wellbeing of young Australians, and in ensuring the nation's ongoing economic prosperity and social cohesion. They need to deal with information abundance, and navigate questions of trust and authenticity. They need flexibility, resilience, creativity, and the ability and drive to keep on learning throughout their lives. (Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019), p. 3)*

The Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019) makes specific reference to the senior years of schooling:

> *The senior years of schooling are a critical transition point for young people – emotionally, socially, and educationally. These years should provide all students with the high-quality, relevant and engaging education and support necessary to complete their secondary school education. The senior years of schooling should provide all students with high quality advice, support and experiences to make informed choices about their future and smooth the initial transition to further education, training or meaningful employment.*

Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)

Each state and territory issue a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education (SSCE) to signify a student's completion of senior secondary education. Each certificate is issued in accordance with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). The AQF Framework specifies the standards for educational qualifications in Australia. The purpose of the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education qualification type is to provide students with knowledge, skills and values for diverse pathways to further learning, work and effective participation in civic life. Figure 1 shows the AQF specification for the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education.

Figure 1: AQF Specification for the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education

Senior Secondary Certificate of Education qualification type descriptor	
Purpose	The Senior Secondary Certificate of Education qualifies individuals with knowledge, skills and values for diverse pathways to further learning, work and effective participation in civic life
Knowledge	Graduates of a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education will have foundational knowledge across a range of learning areas and some specialist discipline or technical knowledge
Skills	Graduates of a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education will have: • literacy, numeracy and communication skills and use information communication technologies skills to present knowledge and ideas to others • cognitive skills to access, record and act on information from varied sources appropriate to subject disciplines and to move across subject disciplines to develop new expertise • cognitive, technical, communication and creative skills for particular disciplines and to integrate disciplines to solve problems, to underpin flexible and analytical thinking and to work with others
Application of knowledge and skills	Graduates of a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education will demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills: • with depth in some areas to tasks or functions in known or changing contexts • in particular contexts within civic life, work and lifelong learning as successful learners, confident individuals and team members and active and informed citizens • in contexts that include taking individual responsibility with some direction and some accountability for the quality of outcomes
Volume of learning	The volume of learning of a Senior Secondary Certificate of Education is typically 2 years

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA)

The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) sets the curriculum expectations for what all Australian students from Foundation to Year 12 should be taught, regardless of where they live or their background.

Australian states and territories, and the systems and schools within them, are responsible for implementing the expectations of the Australian Curriculum, choosing contexts for learning, and organising and planning learning in ways that best meet their students' needs and interests.

ACARA's, *The Shape of the Australian Curriculum*, states the need for young people to be equipped for the demands of the future a wide and adaptive set of knowledge, skills and understandings skills:

> *A curriculum for the 21st century will reflect an understanding and acknowledgment of the changing nature of young people as learners and the challenges and demands that will continue to shape their learning in the future. Young people will need a wide and adaptive set of knowledge, skills and understandings to meet the changing expectations of society and to contribute to the creation of a more productive, sustainable and just society (page 6).*

The Future of Education: An ACT education strategy for the next ten years (2018)

The *Future of Education Strategy* sets out the ACT Government's vision for improving education for all students in government and non-government schools.

The strategy defines the purpose of education:

> *Learning necessarily begins by ensuring a high standard of literacy and numeracy because these skills are the gateway to a much broader range of skills and capabilities students need to become active, responsible, and engaged. Equally, participation in education develops vital personal attributes like empathy and the ability to work with others, a sense of responsibility, self-control and self-efficacy. (The Future of Education: An ACT education strategy for the next ten years, 2018, 4)*

In addition, the strategy states the importance of embedding 21st Century capabilities into the curriculum:

> *Students will notice…They are developing the knowledge, capabilities and skills to operate in the changing world.* (*The Future of Education: An ACT education strategy for the next ten years*, 2018, 12)

Australian Professional Standards for Teachers

The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL) was formed in 2010 to articulate and validate the Australian Professional Standards for teachers (the Standards) in order to promote excellence in the profession of teaching and school leadership across all Australian schools.

The Standards comprise seven Standards which outline what teachers should know and be able to do. The Standards include: know students and how they learn; know the content and how to teach it; plan for and implement effective teaching and learning; create and maintain supportive and safe learning environments; assess, provide feedback and report on student learning; engage in professional learning; and engage professionally with colleagues, parents/carers and the community.

Education in Australia is a state responsibility; therefore, each state and territory have their own policies and procedures in regard to how teacher registration and accreditation is obtained and managed. Teachers must maintain registration with their jurisdiction's teacher registration authority and as part of this maintenance, a minimum of hours of professional learning activities referenced to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers must be attended over a period of time. How this professional learning is referenced to the Standards varies from state to state, however, in the ACT, teacher must attend a minimum number of hours of Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) endorsed courses.

VET delivered to Senior Secondary School Students

Vocational education delivered to senior secondary students was established to enable secondary students to undertake nationally accredited VET programs while completing secondary school. VET delivered to school students is recognised for its role in:

- catering to the diverse interests of students

- promoting school retention

- providing opportunities for students to develop industry-specific technical skills as well as more generic skills that prepare them for the world of work.

Australian secondary school students can undertake a vocational education and training (VET) program at school. VET delivered to secondary students enables them to get workplace skills through nationally recognised training while still at school.

For students who experience success, there is the benefit of achieving competencies in nationally recognised Training Packages and the possibility of completing a qualification. This may provide preparation for a post school pathway. Alternatively, some students may not experience success and end up without a qualification, a Statement of Attainment or a grade at the end of their course.

Vocational Education and Training in ACT Senior Secondary Schools

The Board of Senior Secondary Studies is responsible for the certification of senior secondary school studies in government and non-government schools in the ACT. Students can undertake Vocational Education and Training (VET) as part of a Senior Secondary Certificate and completion by a student can provide credit towards both a recognised VET qualification and a Senior Secondary School Certificate.

The BSSS certificates VET qualifications and Statements of Attainment on behalf of ACT colleges and high schools that offer Australian VET Qualifications and are Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) or have a Third-Party Service Agreement (TPSA) with an RTO. The Board also recognises VET qualifications delivered by external RTOs and facilitates the allocation of credit towards the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate based on assessment and hours of training.

The BSSS is not an RTO and is not responsible for those aspects that relate to VET delivery in schools or externally that fall within the role of the RTO.

Vocational programs must be assessed in accordance with the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations 2015* and the guidelines outlined in the relevant training package. Students undertaking A, T and M accredited vocational programs will be assessed against the criteria and achievement standards referenced in the framework to produce A-E grades and scores. They will also be assessed against competency standards as described in the relevant training package.

The BSSS certificates VET that:

- is listed on the national training.gov.au website; and

- is delivered and assessed by an ACT college or high school, which is an RTO or has a Third-Party Service Agreement (TPSA) with an RTO that has scope from the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to deliver specified qualifications;

- is delivered and assessed in accordance with relevant Training Package requirements.

Vocational learning contributes to the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate in a variety of ways:

- BSSS accredited A, T, and M vocational courses with embedded competencies delivered by colleges are reported with A–E grades

- BSSS accredited C courses (competency-based assessment only) delivered and assessed by colleges are reported with the grade 'P' (Pass) where at least one competency is achieved by the student; or 'Q?' 'Participated' where no competencies are achieved but attendance requirements are met

- BSSS E courses recognising study at external RTOs are reported with the grade 'P' (Pass)

- Australian School Based Apprenticeships (ASBAs) are reported as E courses with the grade 'P' (Pass).

The BSSS credit arrangements recognise VET studies externally:

- through direct credit when the qualification or Units of Competence relate to a VET course that is being studied by the student

- towards the Senior Secondary Certificate, providing the VET does not duplicate content.

Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015

The Standards were endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Industry and Skills Council. These Standards form part of the VET Quality Framework, a system which ensures the integrity of nationally recognised training in Australia. RTOs are required to comply with the VET Quality Framework at all times. As the national regulator for the VET sector, ASQA regulates training providers against the VET Quality Framework.

The purpose of the Standards is to describe the requirements that an organisation must meet in order to be an RTO in Australia; ensure that training delivered by RTOs meets industry requirements (as set out in training packages and accredited courses) and has integrity for employment and further study; and to ensure RTOs operate ethically and consider the needs of both students and industry.

The Standards describe outcomes RTOs must achieve, but do not prescribe methods by which RTOs should achieve these outcomes. These organisations are diverse in size, structure, and governance and in the scope and volume of services they provide.

Trainers and Assessors

An RTO's training and assessment is delivered only by persons who have:

- vocational competencies at least to the level being delivered and assessed
- current industry skills directly relevant to the training and assessment being provided
- current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning that informs their training and assessment.

As of 30 June 2019, trainers and assessors must hold an adult education qualification that has a focus on training and assessing adults.

Training is focused on the successful demonstration of skills to achieve an industry-based competency, identified as a necessary skill to work in that industry.

Teachers in schools share a significant responsibility in preparing young people to lead successful and productive lives. The Standards are a public statement of what constitutes teacher quality. They define the work of teachers and make explicit the elements of high-quality, effective teaching in 21st century schools that will improve educational outcomes for students.

The professional standards of teachers have been developed to maximise the learning of school students. For example, developing the whole person.

1. Know students and how they learn

1.1 Physical, social, and intellectual development, and characteristics of students

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical, social and intellectual development and characteristics of students and how these may affect learning.

1.2 Understand how students learn

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of research into how students learn and the implications for teaching.

1.5 Differentiate teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of strategies for differentiating teaching to meet the specific learning needs of students across the full range of abilities.

Validation

Validation is a review process conducted using ASAQ guidelines to confirm that an RTO's assessment system is able to consistently produce valid assessment judgements. A valid assessment judgement is one that confirms a learner holds all of the knowledge and skills described in the training package or accredited course. Validation of each training product must occur once every five years.

In contrast, BSSS quality assurance processes are conducted each semester. They occur within schools and at a system level.

National Perspectives

Nationally, trends indicate that vocational education in senior secondary schools provide students with a taster. As a result of their VET studies, students elect to pursue the pathway beyond school, select a different VET pathway or opt out of further vocational education all together.

Recent reviews, including the *Review of Senior Secondary Pathways into work, further education and training* and the *Strengthening Skills: Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System* led by the Hon Steven Joyce, recognised the importance of VET in providing alternative vocational pathways to secondary students. VET also supplies the labour market with graduates who have skills and experiences employers value.

The *Senior Secondary Pathways Review* and the Joyce Review raised concerns about the quality of vocational education delivered to school students, including that VET in schools is inconsistent and perceived to be of a lower standard when compared to the other vocational training.

VET provides students with opportunities to develop work relevant skills. An enriched senior secondary curriculum provides pathways to further education and work.

VET delivered to secondary students enables them to develop workplace skills through nationally recognised training. This can come from an industry developed training package, or an accredited course. Secondary students can undertake this training while they complete their senior secondary certificate.

High quality and industry relevant VET is important in supporting students to continue onto further education, training or employment.

Numerous research reports and reviews have addressed issues associated with the suitability of VET delivered in secondary schools. These reviews have *included Strengthening Skills: Expert Review of Australia's Vocational Education and Training System* (the Joyce review) published in April 2019, the more recent *Looking to the Future: Report of the Review of Senior Secondary Pathways into Work Further Education and Training* final report released in June 2020, and a number of other state and territory reviews. ASQA documents concerns on the website, VET in Schools at: https://www.asqa.gov.au/about/how-we-regulate/regulatory-strategy/regulatory-strategy-2020-22/focus-areas-2020-22#vet-in-schools.

The views expressed in these recent reports convey the perception that VET delivered to secondary school students is of a lower standard or delivers poorer quality outcomes when compared to the other VET.

Some of the issues raised include:

- the suitability of programs for individual students and/or whether sufficient information has been provided to inform student choice
- a shortage of appropriately qualified trainers and assessors
- the vocational competency and industry currency of trainers delivering VET to school students
- lack of access to industry-standard facilities for training and assessment
- volume of learning and hours of training for school students
- inadequate work placement opportunities and experience

- lack of understanding about competency-based assessment in the school environment

- students receiving qualifications without achieving the requisite competencies

- inadequate monitoring and oversight of VET delivered by third parties

- timely certification of students on competition of training

- perceived inconsistencies in the regulation of VET

- lack of alignment in understanding between employers and schools as to the purpose of pre-vocational certificates such as the Certificate II

- risk to the reputation of VET from lower quality delivery and outcomes of VET.

In response to recent reviews conducted by states and territories, reforms are underway in a number of jurisdictions to enhance the quality and outcomes of VET. Current reforms include the following:

- establishment of preferred provider lists and prescriptions about the type of VET suitable for students in the senior phase of schooling

- changes to provider eligibility requirements to deliver VET to secondary school students

- provision of further guidance and support for schools when partnering with providers

- looking at how VET contributes to achieving a senior secondary certificate of education and promoting VET to students and parents in the context of the senior curriculum

- opportunities for employment or further training and education.

In 2019, ASQA identified VET in schools as one of the top five concerns presenting risk to the quality and reputation of VET. There is evidence that the arrangements supporting the delivery of VET to secondary school students may create specific drivers for non-compliance, which could compromise the quality of VET.

There are many examples of good practice in the delivery of VET to secondary school students. However, there is general agreement among stakeholders, and in the findings of previous reviews, about the longstanding concerns with VET. The *Senior Secondary Pathways Review* noted that:

> *VET delivered to senior secondary students is of inconsistent quality, difficult to navigate, and not well integrated into senior secondary studies. VET qualifications delivered in schools need to meet clearly defined standards and deliver or contribute to credentials that are accepted in the labour market. (Senior Secondary Pathways Review 2020, page 76).*

The Context of VET in Schools

The context of VET in schools has continued to be the subject of discussion at national level. The *Review of Senior Secondary Pathways* (2020), Australia Curriculum, *Review of the Australian Qualifications Framework (*2019), *Recognition of learning success for all* (2020), *Future of Education: An ACT education strategy for the next ten years* (Future of Education Strategy) (2018), and *Strengthening Skills* (2019), encourage reflection on the role of VET and its contribution to the Senior Secondary Certificate. A common theme in these reports is to provide clearer vocational pathways underpinned by robust quality assurance processes.

There are a range of quality assurance approaches that Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities adopt when recognising VET in senior secondary schools across the nation. For example, the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) has delegation from the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to monitor quality assurance. In New South Wales, quality assurance is led by government and non-government sectors who determine VET qualifications to be recognised on the Higher School Certificate. The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) quality assures courses integrating a Training Package through a Year 12 external examination. In contrast, South Australia recognises all VET delivered by any RTO as they are bound by ASQA compliance. In the ACT, the accountability of VET delivery and outcomes differs between A/T/M/V and C Courses.

There is more rigorous quality assurance of A/T/M/V courses through moderation processes, including the Meshing of grades and scores in schools, and Moderation Day. The quality assurance of C Courses is not informed by Achievement Standards which raises questions about the level of scrutiny and accountability.

Senior Secondary Vocational Education in Australia

There is not one model for delivery of vocational education in senior secondary schools across Australia. Each jurisdiction has developed an approach tailored to their own context, reflected in the processes that they implement to deliver and certify VET. These approaches are varied, complex and subject to review. The continuing national focus on reviewing VET, as well as student pathways, has not as yet resulted in an optimal model that is recognised as providing the best system for senior secondary students.

The processes of assessment and certification of senior secondary students also varies in each context, and this is evident in the structure and levels of resourcing of the certification and assessment authorities in each jurisdiction.

The role of RTOs differs between the states and territories: while in the ACT there are a number of senior secondary school RTOs, VET delivery in Western Australian schools is typically through an auspice arrangement with an RTO for the delivery and assessment of training. The number of schools who have RTO status in Western Australia is minimal. Schools with RTO status generally have limited scope to deliver. In South Australia, the majority of schools are not RTOs and in the main VET is delivered by public or private RTOs. Recently, significant changes to the delivery of VET in Victorian schools has occurred, to support students to develop both academic and practical skills and to provide access to VET for every senior secondary student. All senior secondary schools will become RTOs and the courses they deliver will be mandated.

In the jurisdictions with significantly larger numbers of students and higher levels of resourcing, such as Queensland and NSW, the senior secondary certification authorities are RTOs. The ACT BSSS is not an RTO.

(See Vocational Education and Training in Senior Secondary Certificates of Education, Appendix 8)

VET for ACT students

The model for delivery of VET in ACT senior secondary schools has not been constrained by expectations of duplicating implementation in other jurisdictions. While being informed and aware of effective, and not so effective, processes and practices utilised elsewhere, decisions made for the benefit of senior secondary students in the ACT can be based on maximising outcomes for students, rather than trying to replicate models employed in other states or territories.

Background to the Review

The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) recognises the value of vocational educational training (VET) courses and their contribution to quality education and enhanced transitions to work and further education. The Board has a range of policies and procedures to ensure that VET study undertaken during years 11 and 12 through schools as Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) or external RTOs can contribute towards the requirements for an ACT Senior Secondary Certificate of Education and be recognised on certificates issued by the Board.

System developed BSSS Courses integrating VET were introduced in 1998. This remains the primary approach for delivering VET qualifications to senior secondary students in the ACT.

C and E Course classifications were Board endorsed in December 2008. This followed discussions about the contribution of VET towards the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate (known then as the Year 12 Certificate). Prior to the introduction of C courses, VET was recognised in the form of registered (R) units. The decision to create a new classification was designed to increase the status and contribution of VET courses in the certification of students.

E course classification was Board endorsed to include all externally delivered VET. This included Australian School Based Apprentices (ASBAs), which were previously credited as R units on the ACT Year 12 Certificate.

The recognition of VET in the certification of students has evolved since 2008. Since 2014, student achievement in VET courses has been equally recognised with other courses and documented on the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate. These VET courses contribute to the minimum requirement of the Certificate.

In 2021 there are 26 BSSS courses providing access to VET training, across an increasingly diverse range of learning areas. Of these, 18 are a combination of A/T/M/V Course Classifications (reflecting BSSS Course Design Specifications), which differentiate knowledge, skills and understanding to meet the needs of students. There are currently 8 C Courses on the BSSS register, which contain the training skills identified by industry. (See VET Courses, Appendix 4)

E Courses are delivered by a variety of RTOs. Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) delivers the majority of external VET courses undertaken by ACT senior secondary students.

Between the period 2008-2019, the Board has undertaken a number of reviews including requirements for the ACT Year 12 Certificate (2014), ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum (2015), Assessment and Moderation (2018) and the ACT Scaling Test (2019). At a national level, the *Review of Senior Secondary Pathways (2020)*, *Australia Curriculum*, *Review of the Australian Qualifications Framework (2019)*, *Recognition of learning success for all (2020)*, and *Strengthening Skills (2019)*, encourage reflection on the role of VET and its contribution to the senior secondary certificate.

Quality assurance is a key theme for senior secondary curriculum, assessment and certification for Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA) and educational authorities at local and national levels. This review will focus on how C and E courses meet contemporary curriculum and assessment quality assurance requirements for school students.

There have been significant changes in delivery of BSSS curriculum and VET since 2008. The C and E Course Classifications have not been reviewed since their inception. It is timely to review these course classifications to evaluate their role and impact in serving the needs of ACT senior secondary students.

Terms of Reference for the Review of C and E Course Classifications

The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) is undertaking a review of C and E Course Classification. The Terms of Reference endorsed by the Board are:

a) Investigate how Vocational Education and Training (VET) is undertaken and recognised in other jurisdictions for senior secondary students?

b) Compare and evaluate the learning outcomes of E, C and V courses.

c) Determine if and how the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate should recognise VET:

- delivered by college based Registered Training Organisations (RTO) other than V courses
- undertaken as part of an Australian School Based Apprenticeships (ASBA)
- delivered by an external RTO during senior secondary.

The review does not include consideration of matters that are the domain of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF); the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA); VET delivery and decisions that are the responsibilities of Registered Training Organisations (RTOS); operational matters in the delivery of VET courses; or VET certificates which are produced in accord with national requirements.

The Review Process

The Board has appointed a review committee from defined constituencies of ACT education for their expertise. It is expected that they will consider the whole system and all students when providing advice to the Board.

This report will be prepared and released for public consultation. Key stakeholders across sectors will have an opportunity to engage in focus groups to provide feedback on the Terms of Reference. Public consultation will also include written submissions.

Recommendations will be made in the *Final Report of the Review of C and E Course Classifications*.

Composition of the BSSS Review of C and E Course Classification Committee

Chair	Ms Louise Mayo AM*
ACT Education Directorate	Mr Jason Borton
ACT Catholic Education	Dr Tony Bracken
ACT Independent Schools	Ms Rita Daniels
Canberra Institute of Technology	Mr Andrew Whale
Skills Canberra	Ms Josephine Andersen
Industry	Mr Vince Ball
BSSS Executive Director	Mr Martin Watson

* Ms Louise Mayo AM is an experienced member of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies.
   Ms Mayo is the representative for ACT Vocational and Training Organisations on the Board.

Review Schedule

Date	Event
July	**Committee Members – Meeting 1** Committee meets to discuss the following items: • Terms of Reference • Review timetable • Process for consultation with stakeholder groups
August	**Public Consultation with stakeholder groups** 1. BSSS website Board publishes paper and calls for submissions 2. Focus groups with key stakeholder groups including students, parents, industry, curriculum/VET coordinators, principals, and heads of sectors: ACT Education Directorate, Association of Independent Schools of the ACT and the Catholic Education Office of Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn
September	**Committee Member – Meeting 2** Committee members discuss the following: • Key themes from public consultation • Proposals for each terms of reference
September	**Committee Members – Meeting 3** Committee members discuss the *draft Final Report of the Review of C and E Course Classifications*
October	**BSSS Assessment and Certification Committee (ACC) and Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting** ACC and CAC provide feedback to the Board on recommendations made in the *Final Report of the Review of C and E Course Classifications*
November	**Board Principals Meeting** Principals provide feedback to the Board on recommendations made in the *Final Report of the Review of C and E Course Classifications*
November	**Board** The Board consider recommendations made in the *Final Report of the Review of C and E Course Classifications*

Note: The schedule may be subject to change.

BSSS Policy and Procedures Manual

Refer to *ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies Policy and Procedures Manual 2021* at:
http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/information_for_teachers/policy_and_procedures

PART 2

C Course Classification

C Course classification refers to courses that are competency based.

What are the nature and purpose of C Courses?

C Courses are vocational courses delivered in ACT senior secondary colleges and C stands for competency. These courses differ from other curriculum available to students, as they are solely based on the requirements of Training Packages that have been created to meet the training needs of an industry or a group of industries. They provide the training necessary to achieve an industry qualification, such as a Certificate II, or a Statement of Attainment, and are delivered and assessed against industry specific competency standards.

Students have the opportunity to become competent in the training skills that are included in the course. The courses are delivered and assessed against industry specific competency standards. Content delivered is limited to the skills identified in the relevant industry Training Package. Assessment is not based on A-E grades as for other senior secondary courses, but on whether or not the particular skill is demonstrated. The grades 'Pass' or 'Participated' are awarded depending on completion of any competencies attached to the unit. As with any VET course, C Courses can only be delivered and assessed by a college as the RTO.

A student will be awarded units of 0.5 per 27.5 hours based on the stated hours of training and assessment undertaken as a structured education program.

There are currently eight C Courses available:

Construction Pathways	Furniture Construction	Horticulture	Hospitality Industry
Live Production Services	Music Industry	Musical and Stage Performance	Outdoor Recreation

A number of the Training Packages available in C Courses are also available in the VET components of A/T/M/V or A/M/V courses.

C Courses are not developed under a BSSS curriculum framework, removing the requirement to report on student outcomes and Achievement Standards using A-E grades. Instead, the focus is on whether or not students have demonstrated the specific skills in the relevant Training Package.

Industry-based courses enable students to commence vocational skills training while still at school. The courses are stripped down to the essentials of the relevant Training Package, without curriculum content.

How do C Courses contribute to the awarding of a Senior Secondary Certificate?

C Courses may be included in the calculation of the minimum of 17 standard units required for the awarding of a Senior Secondary Certificate.

> A student will be awarded standard units in multiples of 0.5 based on agreed hours of training and assessment undertaken as a structured education program. The package must contain a minimum of four A, T, M, H, C or E courses from at least three different course areas including English. This must include at least two A, T or M courses. (8.7.1.1.3 Course Pattern *BSSS Policy and Procedures Manual)*

C Course units can form minors (at least 2 units), majors (at least 3.5 units), Major Minors (at least 5.5 units) or Double majors (at least 7 units) courses.

Why were C Courses introduced?

Prior to the introduction of C Courses, VET courses were integrated with BSSS accredited courses as A/V courses. In 2008 a Report was presented to the Board titled *Vocational Programs*, after the Board had requested in 2007 that the VET Subcommittee research and review Board policies related to VET, to highlight any issues that were impacting negatively on VET provision and to support quality VET outcomes in schools.

Subsequently, C Courses were introduced in 2008, with the aim of increasing student interest in undertaking VET in ACT senior secondary schools.

What are the benefits of C Courses for students?

The benefit for students is the highly focused attention on training, so that they can achieve work-related skills. There is also less focus on the classroom setting. Some students would see benefit in the absence of learning area content, including the focus on literacy and numeracy.

The advantage for students is, as with other VET courses, that they can commence vocational skills training while still at school. VET courses provide the training necessary to achieve an industry qualification, such as a Certificate II, or a Statement of Attainment, and the qualifications are nationally recognised.

C Courses deliver industry training and are taken directly from the relevant Training Package. They do not contain the educational elements of senior secondary curriculum. C Courses focus entirely on the competencies or skills that need to be achieved to meet the requirements of the Training Package.

Students are assessed against industry specific competency standards. This may lead to the completion of a qualification or a Statement of Attainment if the student meets the standards required. Students receive the grade 'P' (Pass) where at least one competency is achieved.

What are the disadvantages of C Courses for students?

The perceived benefits for students are also the disadvantages – that is, C Courses have not been developed to focus on the building of skills in key areas such as literacy, numeracy and ICT, as well as the General Capabilities that foster social and personal development, critical and creative thinking, problem solving and intercultural understanding. The cohort of VET students undertaking C Courses includes a significant proportion of students who would benefit from more careful attention to these lifelong skills.

This disadvantage can be compounded when a student has elected to do several C Courses, as well as E Courses, and therefore does not experience the benefit of more balanced learning. With a predominance of studies focused on training, a well-rounded approach to learning skills in a knowledge-based context does not occur.

Only courses accredited T/V contribute a score that may be used for a student's ATAR. Other VET courses (accreditation types A/V, M/V, C and E) may be used for meeting the major/minor requirements of a Tertiary package but do not contribute a score. (See section 8.7.1.1.3 Course Pattern in the *BSSS Policy and Procedures Manual)*.

The application of the '90% attendance rule' and the absence of the '70% assessment rule' (because assessment in C Courses do not have percentage weightings) or minimum standards for the award of a C Course unit means that students can be awarded units without achieving a competency.

Delivery of BSSS A/T/M courses integrating a Training Package are supported by robust quality assurance processes. Schools are required to submit presentations including assessment tasks and student work for system moderation. Grades assigned to presentations are checked against Achievement Standards. In addition, compliance matters including Training Package, scope and competencies are checked. This process ensures equity across the ACT senior secondary system, which in turn supports students. In contrast, C courses are not assessed using A-E Achievement Standards. Students are deemed as either competent or not competent.

Students undertaking C Courses are susceptible on a number of counts, such as when the course is discontinued because the VET qualified trainer leaves the school, or the course can no longer be delivered due to revised conditions in the Training Package which makes delivery of the course no longer possible in the school. These students are then unable to continue with that course of study.

Quality assurance and consistency of expectations across schools are more difficult to manage for the BSSS as these have traditionally been seen by C Course teachers as the sole responsibility of ASQA. The quality assurance method of validation, employed by ASQA, focuses on RTO's and trainers meeting requirements. It occurs much less frequently and is not aligned to outcomes for senior secondary students.

There is a greater chance of ensuring continuity of access, inclusiveness of opportunity, and an equivalent breadth and depth of student learning and quality assurance through the inclusion of competency-based training in identified A/T/M courses.

What are the differences between C Courses and A/T/M/V Courses?

C Courses are Training Packages that have been organised into similar themes or skills groupings for delivery. They have not been developed under the BSSS Course Design Specifications. C Courses detail the skills and knowledge that individuals need to perform effectively in the workplace. Training Packages are based on standards of performance required in the workplace (i.e. technical skills and workplace behaviours). They are focused on assessing whether or not a skill has been demonstrated.

The Training Packages on which they are based apply equally to adults and school students. They are focused on completing a number of competencies to achieve a qualification (e.g. Certificate II) or a statement of attainment. The developmental or learning needs of senior secondary students are not considered in the creation of these courses – rather, the skills needed to demonstrate the achievement of certain work or industry-specific skills.

VET courses with the A/T/M/V or A/M/V classification provide the opportunity for students to develop skills in a learning area context. These courses set out requirements for the implementation of a subject. An A/T/M/V Course includes a rationale, goals, content descriptions, assessment, and Achievement Standards and integrates a Training Package. Content is delivered to develop knowledge and understanding, as well as skills. Students are awarded A-E grades and also have the opportunity to achieve VET competencies. They may complete a qualification, such as a Certificate II, or a Statement of Attainment that specifies the competencies they have achieved.

A/T/M/V Courses are based on the Australian Curriculum and connect with and build on previous learning in years P-10. They are developed specifically for senior secondary students and tailored to the ACT context where appropriate.

A/T/M/V Courses can be adapted to address the context and interests of student groups and can be differentiated to address the needs of learners, acknowledging the different rates at which students develop.

A/T/M/V Courses provide students with an education experience that recognises the entitlement of students to a core of knowledge, skills, understandings and values that will provide a foundation for their future contribution to Australia's society. Students experience a balance between knowledge and skills. This approach to learning is intended to provide students with a basis for success at and beyond school, and help young people continue their learning after they have left school.

The Board endorsed Course Design Specifications (2015) for A/T/M/V Courses are developed with a common structure and learning principles, creating coherence and consistency. Courses are conceptually designed and build firm and meaningful foundational skills as well as provide the basis for developing expertise for those who move on to specialised advanced studies in academic disciplines, professions, and technical trades.

A/T/M/V courses assess students according to both the A-E Achievement Standards as well as the binary Competent/Not Yet Competent assessment of each Competency, allowing the strengths of both assessment systems to be evident.

As stated previously, students studying a C Course can be at risk when a teacher leaves the RTO or scope changes. A/T/M/V Courses makes provision for schools and students to resume training when possible or allow competency assessment through other means.

What is the risk profile of C Courses for the Board of Senior Secondary Studies?

The C Course accreditation type poses a number of areas of concern for the BSSS and an increased profile of risk.

This includes:

- C Courses have not been developed under BSSS Course Design Specifications. This raises issues with regard to the requirements of the *BSSS Act* relating to accreditation of courses, relating to the coherence of the course, the appropriateness of the course, the clarity of the course, how it is intended to teach the course, the relevant guidelines of the Board and the policies of the Board.

- The Board endorsed *Shape of the ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum* foregrounds the importance of well-developed curriculum explicitly developed to be appropriate to the needs of senior secondary students. C Courses are based on industry Training Packages intended primarily for delivery to adults.

- The *Shape of the ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum* states that senior secondary curriculum will always try to deliver a balance between knowledge and process that reflects what is known about the development of expertise in a learning area. C Courses are centred on the particular skills identified as necessary to work in certain industries.

- National and international perspectives on education, developing curriculum and preparing students for the world of the 21st Century have influenced the nature and role of school education and the responsibility of school curriculum. The Board recognises the learning entitlement of senior secondary education is to a core of knowledge, skills, understandings, and values that will provide a foundation for their future contribution to Australia's society.

- Training Packages are constantly being updated. The impact of changes to Training Package sometimes results in C Courses that can no longer be delivered, such as where certificates are deleted or requirements that cannot be met a school setting.

- Further vulnerability for students occurs when changes in staffing or resources result in courses that cannot be continued for the intended duration and the completion of competencies or full qualifications is not possible.

Have C Courses increased the status and contribution of VET towards the minimum requirements of the Senior secondary Certificate?

The C Course classification was designed to increase the status and contribution of VET towards the minimum requirements of the Senior Secondary Certificate. BSSS Certification data for the period 2006-2020 indicates that C Courses have not led to significant increases in VET engagement or outcomes. (See Long Term VET Data for ACT Senior Secondary Students, Appendix 5)

Figure 2 shows BSSS Certification data for the period 2018-2020. The data reflects that there are fewer than 200 students per year enrolled in a C Course for the period of 2018 to 2020. A small proportion of students studying VET, approximately 15%, are enrolled in a C Course. As for completion of qualifications, data indicates that there is no significant difference between students enrolled in C Courses or A/T/M/V Courses. If a student studies an A/T/M/V Course they are more likely to achieve two qualifications.

The purpose of a C Course is to achieve competencies and complete qualifications. However, the data doesn't indicate that this is a more successful way of doing so. In fact, there is no significant difference between C Courses and A/T/M/V Courses in VET attainment. This indicates that VET outcomes are not increased when students are focused on completing VET alone.

	Accreditation	2018	2019	2020	Average
Number of graduates with a USI who completed a course	A/T/M/V	1446	1272	1123	
	C	169	165	196	
Students who completed a qualification in the course	A/T/M/V	565	480	415	
	C	53	88	69	
Qualifications completed in the course	A/T/M/V	721	649	538	
	C	62	100	79	
Students who completed a competency in the course	A/T/M/V	1299	1096	929	
	C	157	161	175	
Competencies completed in the course	A/T/M/V	19464	17454	14126	
	C	2479	3357	3109	
% of students completing a qualification	A/T/M/V	39.1%	37.7%	37.0%	37.9%
	C	31.4%	53.3%	35.2%	40.0%
% of students completing a competency	A/T/M/V	89.8%	86.2%	82.7%	86.2%
	C	92.9%	97.6%	89.3%	93.3%
Rate - Qualifications per course	A/T/M/V	0.50	0.51	0.48	0.50
	C	0.37	0.61	0.40	0.46
Rate - Competencies per course	A/T/M/V	13.46	13.72	12.58	13.25
	C	14.67	20.35	15.86	16.96

Figure 2: BSSS Data on A/T/M/V and C Courses for the period 2018-2020

Do other Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities offer courses like BSSS C Courses?

The Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities (ACACA) is the body for the chief executives of the authorities in the Australian states and territories and New Zealand responsible for curriculum, assessment and certification in education.

The delivery of VET in senior secondary across the nation is complex and varies widely. The combination of variables includes an external exam such as the Higher School Certificate (HSC), system endorsed courses embedding Training Packages in a curriculum context, and courses that are more reliant on Training Packages as the basis of content. For the most recent report on *VET in Senior Secondary Certificates of Education*, see the Australasian Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities Report at: http://www.acaca.edu.au/?wpfb_dl=1304.

Internationally and nationally, there is concern about courses in schools that are solely competency based (i.e. focused on industry skills), delivered in isolation from curriculum content:

> *Education has a vital role to play in developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable people to contribute to and benefit from an inclusive and sustainable future. Learning to form clear and purposeful goals, work with others with different perspectives, find untapped opportunities and identify multiple solutions to big problems will be essential in the coming years. Education needs to aim to do more than prepare young people for the world of work; it needs to equip students with the skills they need to become active, responsible and engaged citizens.* (*page 4*)

> From *The Future of Education and Skills Education 2030*, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2018.

Professor Geoff Masters, in the recent review of NSW curriculum *Nurturing Wonder and Igniting Passion,* raises concern about the separation of skills-based training from knowledge and understanding, in particular 'the separation of knowledge-based and skills-based learning in the senior years. He explains the importance of the integration of knowledge and skills:

> *Learning in every subject is a mix of theory and application, with no subject focused only on knowledge or only on skills. New syllabuses develop skills in applying knowledge (for example, critical and creative thinking) and provide opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate such skills (page xiii).*

He cautions against a curriculum driven by the needs of industry bodies and advocates instead:

> *Vocational learning is not quarantined to a set of vocational education and training (VET) subjects but is seen as relevant to every student and area of learning. Skills such as problem solving, working in teams, collaborating, communicating, and thinking critically and creatively are promoted in all subjects and are also developed and demonstrated through a major investigative project that every student undertakes (page xvii).*

Masters advises:

> *A specific concern is that VET in Schools programs often prepare students narrowly for work in particular occupations, rather than providing them with broader exposure to an industry and the kinds of preparation that industry requires.* (*page 60*)

In the recent TAFE Directors Australia Newsletter, Chief Executive Officer Craig Robertson echoes concern about the limited nature of vocational education:

> *Unfortunately, VET's focus on teaching processes and assessing behaviours risks process workers without the capacity to adapt (unless they attend further training for the new process) and behaviours without the thinking. Assumptions in qualifications that worker quality is covered by close supervision doesn't stack up with modern workplaces.*

The 21st Century Learning Dispositions equip students with the ability to communicate, innovate, think critically and creatively, problem solve, work collaboratively and independently, better prepares them to adapt to emerging contexts:

> *An individual armed with skills – which can be transported across various jobs occupations – is forearmed for success. Workers able to be deployed to new roles with new expectations bring productivity to businesses.*

> *Workers with the transferable skills and understanding of their use in different contexts are a key feature in an advanced and sophisticated economy.*

> *Taking the higher view,* Craig Robertson (Appendix 6).

The senior secondary landscape varies across the nation. A common theme raised in national reports on Australian Senior Secondary systems is the one size fits all approach to education and the bifurcation of university and VET pathways. Most senior secondary systems have prescribed pathways for student with end of year 12 examinations. The curriculum is organised as either university or VET courses, which in turn creates a hierarchy of achievement.

In contrast, the ACT Senior Secondary school-based curriculum and assessment model treats all pathways as equal to or complementary to a university pathway, for example, Hospitality A/T/M/V. BSSS A/T/M/V courses integrate knowledge and skills. The distortion and marginalisation of VET pathways identified in the national reports is further reduced by acknowledgement of vocational and community-based learning that occurs outside schools. For example, E courses recognised VET qualifications undertaken with external RTO's. Points are gained towards the minimum requirement of the ACT senior secondary certificate.

The main criticism conveyed in reviews is that senior secondary systems privilege mastery of academic knowledge rather than how and the capacity to learn. The bifurcation of university and VET pathways has a damaging impact on student engagement and pathways. An unintended consequence of C courses is that they perpetuate this unhealthy dichotomy. BSSS A/T/M courses integrating a Training Package combine knowledge, understanding and skills, in turn, placing a VET pathway on an equal footing with other pathways. This approach to delivering VET in schools aligns with the recent Masters' review on NSW Curriculum and the *AQF specification for the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education.*

Have circumstances changed since C Courses were introduced, particularly in regard to curriculum and certification?

The accreditation type 'C Courses' was developed prior to the advent of the Australian Curriculum. In intervening years, national and international perspectives on education, developing curriculum and preparing students for the world of the 21st Century have influenced the nature and role of school education and the responsibility of school curriculum. C Courses do not reflect these perspectives.

The following documents have impacted curriculum nationally, and reveal the changed focus and the priorities identified for contemporary curriculum for Australian students:

- *The Future of Education and Skills 2030 (2018)*
- *The Future of Education: An ACT education strategy for the next 10 years (2018)*
- *The Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (2019).*

VET courses with the A/T/M/V or A/M/V classification ensures that ACT senior secondary students receive their learning entitlement. BSSS A/T/M/V courses integrating a Training Package state key knowledge, understanding and skills that provide a foundation for successful and lifelong learning and participation in the Australian community. They state high expectations for student learning and make provision for the needs of every student.

C Courses have not been developed under BSSS Course Design Specifications, which were introduced following the *Review of the ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum* (2015) and are documented in the *Shape of the ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum* (2016)*.*

The principles expressed in the *Shape of the ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum* make clear the curriculum intentions of the Board and the commitment to a curriculum that:

- provides a platform for high quality learning

- upholds high expectations for achievement of all young adults and makes provision for diverse learners

- is rigorous and displays consistency, purpose, and quality design

- is responsive to community expectations and developed collaboratively

- provides opportunities for all young adults to develop ethical and intercultural understandings

- ensures multiple pathways for all young adults to attain work and life skills including functional literacy and numeracy.

C Course classification was accredited prior to the principles expressed here and the courses are not reflective of these principles.

BSSS A/T/M/V courses state:

- the foundational knowledge across learning area and some specialist discipline or technical knowledge

- literacy, numeracy and communication skills

- cognitive skills to access, record and act on information from varied sources appropriate to subject disciplines

- cognitive, technical, communication and creative skills for particular disciplines and to integrate disciplines to solve problems.

The *Shape of the ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum* also foregrounds the importance of well-developed curriculum explicitly developed to be appropriate to the needs of senior secondary students.

The Board recognises the entitlement of students to a core of knowledge, skills, understandings and values that will provide a foundation for their future contribution to Australia's society. This learning will provide the basis for success at and beyond school, and help young people continue their learning after they have left school. (The *Shape of the ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum*, page 6).

The Shape Paper also states:

> The ACT senior secondary curriculum will always try to deliver a balance between knowledge and process that reflects what is known about the development of expertise in a learning area (The *Shape of the ACT Senior Secondary Curriculum,* page 7).

These conditions are not met by C Courses.

Prior to the introduction of C Courses, VET courses were integrated with BSSS accredited courses as A/V courses or as R Units. In 2008 the Report presented to the Board titled *Vocational Programs* raised concerns about the profile of VET and the need to raise the level of acknowledgement of VET results. The reporting issue was:

> Vocational education is an important part of a student's educational program, but registered VET studies do not currently have a profile on the Year 12 Certificate as they are reported amongst other registered units that students undertake during Years 11 and 12, under the heading Recognition of Outside Learning. (see Appendix 7)

The concerns expressed about the reporting and certification of VET that were raised in 2008 have been addressed and are no longer relevant. VET results are reported and are no longer classified as registered units.

The Board has a range of policies and procedures to ensure that VET study undertaken during years 11 and 12 through colleges as Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) or external RTOs can contribute towards the requirements for an ACT Senior Secondary Certificate of Education and be recognised on certificates issued by the Board. This includes the E Course classification that was introduced in 2015 to acknowledge VET provided by external RTOs and includes Australian School-Based Apprenticeships (ASBAs).

There are now more options for students who wish to undertake VET. There is a wide range of A/T/M/V or A/M/V courses for schools to deliver and for students to select. These are not simply training programs but include knowledge-based curriculum, providing a context for the learning. These courses have been developed specifically for senior secondary students in an ACT setting.

These courses contribute to the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate and provide a safeguard for students, so that even if no competencies are achieved, they still receive an A-E grade in the learning area.

How can students be protected from risk when studying C Courses?

There is also a range of quality assurance approaches that Curriculum, Assessment and Certification Authorities adopt when recognising VET in senior secondary schools across the nation. For example, the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) has delegation from the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to monitor quality assurance. In New South Wales, quality assurance is led by government and non-government sectors who determine VET qualifications to be recognised on the Higher School Certificate. The Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) quality assures courses integrating a Training Package through a Year 12 external examination. In contrast, South Australia recognises all VET delivered by any RTO as they are bound by ASQA compliance. In the ACT, the accountability of VET delivery and outcomes differs between A/T/M/V and C Courses. There is more rigorous quality assurance of A/T/M/V courses through moderation processes, including the Meshing of grades and scores in schools, and Moderation Day. The quality assurance of C Courses is not informed by Achievement Standards which raises questions about the level of scrutiny and accountability.

Training Packages are constantly being updated. The impact of changes to Training Package sometimes results in C Courses that can no longer be delivered, such as where certificates are deleted. At times the rule changes result in conditions that schools cannot meet, and courses are discontinued. When VET is embedded in A/T/M courses, students are still able to complete a course, without the VET component should this prove necessary.

The impact of staff changes on the delivery or assessment of C Courses by suitably qualified VET teachers may mean that the school-based RTO cannot continue delivery. When students are enrolled in an A/T/M course, this causes less disruption as students can continue their studies without the VET components.

Other circumstances that may impact the successful completion of C Courses include COVID restrictions and other situations where competencies cannot be adequately assessed.

A/T/M/V or A/M/V courses provide a safeguard for students, so that even if no competencies are achieved, they still receive an A-E grade in the learning area.
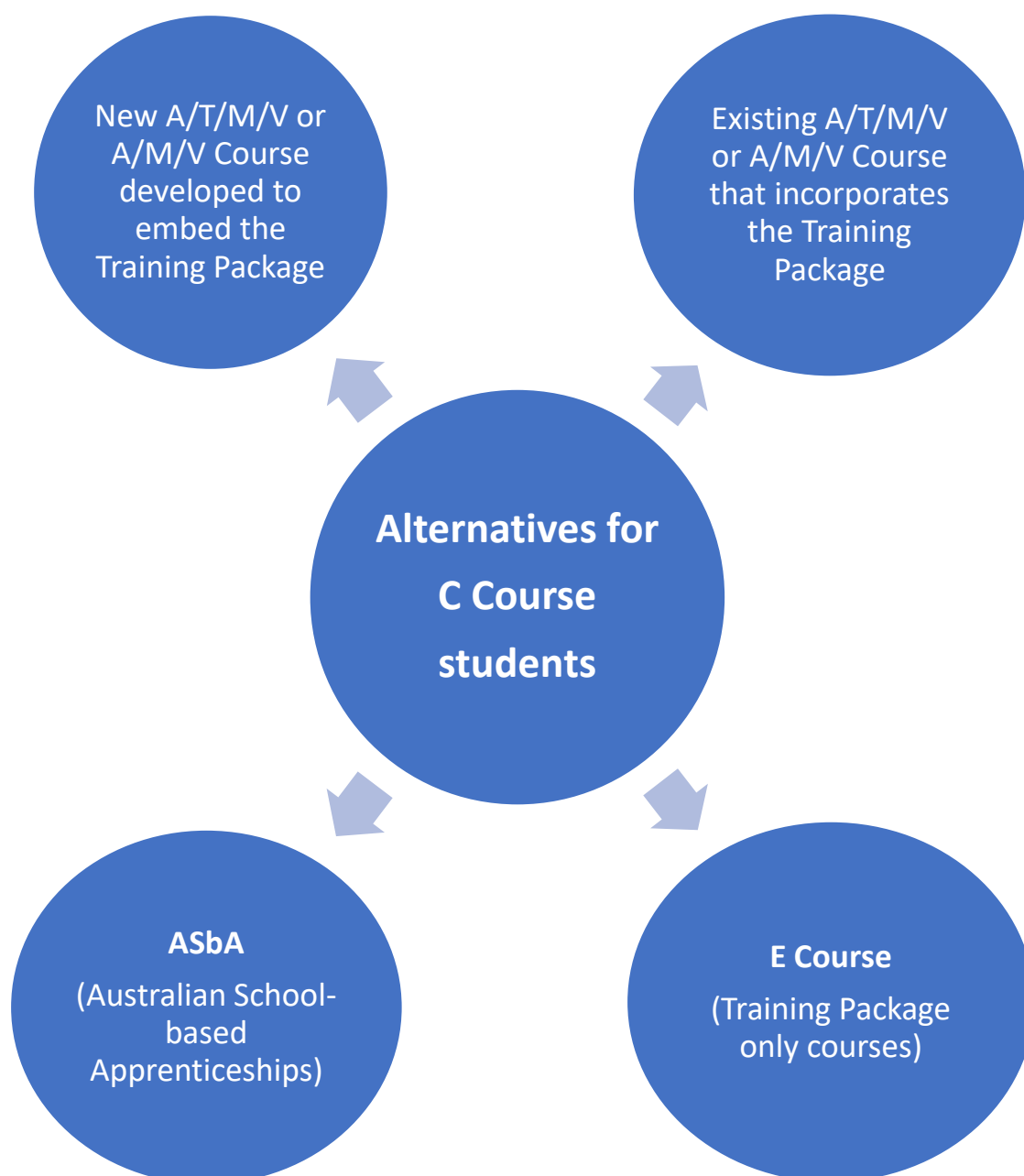
What is the impact on students studying a VET pathway if C Courses are no longer developed?

Students will not be disadvantaged if C Courses are no longer available. With Board endorsement, C courses will be redeveloped as A/T/M/V or A/M/V courses.

Schools can adopt either new or existing courses to provide vocational education pathways for students. A student may undertake an Australian School-based Apprenticeship as an alternative to C Courses.

A strategy for transition will be developed as a result of any reforms undertaken following the Review, to allow time for implementation and to ensure that students are not disadvantaged.

Teachers delivering C Courses will be provided with professional learning to support the transition from delivering C Courses to A/T/M/V or A/M/V courses.

New A/T/M/V or A/M/V Course developed to embed the Training Package

Existing A/T/M/V or A/M/V Course that incorporates the Training Package

Alternatives for C Course students

ASbA
(Australian School-based Apprenticeships)

E Course
(Training Package only courses)

PART 3

E Course Classification

E Course classification refers to all externally delivered VET courses, i.e. delivered by non-school based RTOs. There are various models for the delivery of E Courses. This includes schools liaising with an external RTO or an individual undertaking a VET Certificate outside of school, and ASBAs through either school-based or external RTOs.

The nature and purpose of E Courses

E Course classification refers to all externally delivered VET Courses, such as a CIT short course or a student undertaking a VET Certificate outside school, and ASBAs through either school-based or external RTOs.

A student is awarded standard units in multiples of 0.5 per 27.5 hours based on the verified hours a student has participated. The '90% attendance rule' does not apply. Students are awarded a Pass grade.

E Courses are named using the industry-based Training Packages that have been accredited by the Australian Skills Qualifications Authority (ASQA). Training Packages define the skills and knowledge needed by learners to perform a job and are developed for a specific industry area. Training Packages do not specify how to train learners.

E Courses are not developed by the BSSS and are not based on BSSS Course Design Specifications (2015), which are aligned with Australian Curriculum and Reporting Authority (ACARA) Australian Curriculum design specifications and the General Capabilities, Cross Curriculum Priorities and 21st Century Learning Dispositions.

E Course classification is also given to Australian School Based Apprenticeships (ASBAs). ASBAs are a national initiative to provide VET pathways for students while still experiencing the benefits of senior secondary education.

Who delivers E Courses?

Courses that are recognised by the BSSS as E Courses are delivered by RTOs that are either:

- privately owned and operated businesses
- tertiary education institutions
- schools (for in house ASBAs).

The ACT Government operated tertiary institution, Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT), delivers the majority of external VET courses to ACT senior secondary students recognised as E Courses.

How do E courses contribute to the awarding of the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate?

E Courses may contribute to the minimum requirements of the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate. Recognition is given to the hours undertaken as a structured educational program.

This package must contain a minimum of four A, T, M, H, C or E courses from at least three different course areas including English. This must include at least two A, T or M courses.

At least 12 standard units are classified as A, T, M, H, C or E.

A maximum of 8 standard units from all external (the sum of E + H) courses can contribute to the minimum requirements for a Senior Secondary Certificate. (BSSS Policy and Procedures Manual 8.7.1.1.3)

These units can form minors (at least 2 units), majors (at least 3.5 units), Major Minors (at least 5.5 units) or Double majors (at least 7 units) courses.

ASBAs are recognised in contributing to the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate:

- Students undertaking a Certificate II qualification are entitled to a maximum of 2 units a semester in the relevant industry area (1 unit for structured training and 1 unit for on-the-job training).

- Students undertaking a Certificate III qualification are entitled to a maximum of 3 units a semester in the relevant industry area (1 unit for structured training and 2 units for on-the-job training).

How do E courses differ to BSSS Accredited courses?

E Courses and BSSS Accredited courses are different in purpose, philosophy, structure, and pedagogical approach.

BSSS Accredited courses are developed specifically for senior secondary students. This means that the final years of their school education completes the learning entitlement. The curriculum is constructed to provide a continuum of learning through the acquisition of knowledge, understandings, and skills. BSSS courses build on prior learning experienced in their previous school years and prepares students for life, work, and active citizenship. These courses consider the social, emotional and personal capabilities of a young adult and endeavour support the needs of whole person in their formative years. The BSSS quality assurance process applies to these courses and moderation of student work is undertaken within the school and externally at Moderation Day.

In contrast, E Courses are not formally defined by the Board and are instead a system of recognition of study in a Training Package. Training Packages are not designed specifically for school students; they are ostensibly written for adult education and have a training focus. This means that the learning experience is very different, and pedagogy does not reflect the needs of young learners and are not tailored to the holistic development of young people. E courses are not subject to BSSS quality assurance processes. They only report on competencies that have been achieved.

The '90% attendance rule' and '70% assessment rule' do not apply to E Courses as the hours are calculated by the actual hours participated and assessment is managed by the RTO.

What are the advantages of E Courses delivered by an external RTO during senior secondary?

E Courses enable access for senior secondary students to a variety of external providers and increases the range of vocational education opportunities to across a wider variety of Training Packages. These are opportunities that are either not available for delivery by school RTOs or are not possible to deliver in a simulated school environment.

This includes E Courses such as:

- Health – Introduction to Nursing

- Community Services – Early Childhood Education and Care

- Hairdressing and Beauty services – Makeup Services

- Creative Arts and Culture Training Package – Screen and Media Training.

The ACT Government operated tertiary institution, CIT is required to observe quality assurance processes and standards of delivery and accountability. Private providers are not required to demonstrate the same level of accountability.

What are the disadvantages of VET delivered by an external RTO during senior secondary?

E Courses are based on industry Training Packages. The training conditions and courses are relevant to adults.

The skills, training and pedagogy of these courses have not been tailored to the needs or requirements of senior secondary students. The instructors are qualified as trainers rather than teachers. There is a risk that students can end up with a very narrow Senior Secondary Certificate with a lack of the broader skills and capabilities that students will need in post-schooling. This may be compounded where there are multiple C or E Courses.

From a quality assurance perspective, there is no guarantee about the training conditions. The process for recognition of E Courses for the Senior Secondary Certificate is often more difficult with private providers due to issues relating to record keeping and the provision of accurate records, such as attendance data. It is difficult to ascertain that students are participating and gaining the skills that stakeholders expect them to learn.

Like C Courses, there are no contingencies for E Courses. Students face the risk of staffing changes and circumstances such as COVID.

How should the ACT recognise VET delivered by an external RTO during senior secondary?

It is not proposed to alter the current policies or procedures relating to ASBAs in ACT schools. The involvement of schools, employers, students, and Skills Canberra in constructing the student's training plan in the ASBA process mean that quality assurance is generally more thorough and has a genuine connection to being industry ready.

It is not proposed to question the valuable role of the ACT Government operated tertiary institution, CIT in the provision of E Courses for senior secondary students. Many RTOs are delivering high quality programs that provide opportunities for students to enhance their skills, provide industry experience and prepare them for a pathway beyond school. However, nationally, and locally there are concerns about the lack of transparency, accountability, and quality of the provision VET by private businesses.

As a result of these concerns, some state and territory education departments and non-government schooling sectors have established preferred provider lists and prescriptions about the type of VET suitable for students in the senior phase of schooling. It is proposed that the Board explores processes for determining recognition of E Courses by private providers.

PART 4

The Contribution of C and E Courses to the Senior Secondary Certificate

BSSS Policy and Procedures state:

> *A standard package for a Senior Secondary Certificate will be awarded on completion of an educational program approved by the college as having a coherent pattern of study and which includes the equivalent of at least 17 standard units in a period not exceeding five years.*

> *This package must contain a minimum of four A, T, M, H, C or E courses from at least three different course areas including English. This must include at least two A, T or M courses.*

> *At least 12 standard units are classified as A, T, M, H, C or E.*

> *A maximum of 8 standard units from all external (the sum of E + H) courses can contribute to the minimum requirements for a Senior Secondary Certificate.*

> *(Course Pattern 8.7.1.1.3)*

In practice, this means that a student could count 13 C and E units towards the minimum requirements of the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate.

The number of C and E units that can contribute to the minimum requirements of the Senior Secondary Certificate raises questions about a student's learning entitlement.

The Australian Qualifications Framework clearly defines the purpose of senior secondary education as an opportunity for students to qualify:

> *Individual's knowledge, skills and values for diverse pathways for further learning, work and effective participation in civic life.*

The potential for a student to contribute 13 C and E units towards their Senior Secondary Certificate on the surface may appear to prepare students for a designated pathway. However, preparedness for life beyond school is more than the acquisition of a defined set of industry training skills.

A predominance of VET in a student's package of study may seem desirable. However, contemporary research argues that this approach is not beneficial: work readiness is now considered to be more than a specific set of workplace skills. While employers value attributes such as problem solving, critical thinking, and leadership, industry developed Training Packages are not focused on these behaviours.

Nationally, trends indicate that vocational education in senior secondary schools provides students with a taster, an opportunity to learn more about a particular occupation. This experience allows students to make more informed decisions about their future. While students may go on to pursue a VET pathway, they frequently choose a different course based on their experience. A narrow package of study is counterproductive, when too highly focused on vocational outcomes rather educational outcomes.

Narrowing the focus of a secondary education limits the options to adapt to changing circumstances. VET studied at schools is valuable, when balanced with a broader education. VET Courses with the A/T/M/V or A/M/V classification ensure that ACT senior secondary students receive their learning entitlement. The General Capabilities develop lifelong skills such as literacy, numeracy, communication, social and personal skills, critical and creative thinking, and working independently and collaboratively. These 21st Century learning dispositions are at the centre of school education while these capabilities are not the focus of Training Packages.

A requirement that students to complete a minimum of one competency for every 1.0 E unit credit on the senior secondary certificate upholds the integrity of the certificate in terms of achievement.

PART 5

Conclusion

Terms of Reference

a) Investigate how Vocational Education and Training (VET) is undertaken and recognised in other jurisdictions for senior secondary students?

b) Compare and evaluate the learning outcomes of E, C and V courses.

c) Determine if and how the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate should recognise VET:

- delivered by college based Registered Training Organisations (RTO) other than V courses

- undertaken as part of an Australian School Based Apprenticeships (ASBA)

- delivered by an external RTO during senior secondary.

Draft Recommendations

The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) recognises the value of vocational educational training (VET) courses and their contribution to quality education and enhanced transitions to work and further education.

1. That C Courses be redeveloped as A/T/M/V or A/M/V courses.

2. That the level of contribution, achievement and quality assurance requirements of VET qualifications intended for consideration as E Courses on the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate are consistent with high expectations for students and support the integrity and quality of the certificate.

3. That E Courses continue to be delivered by external providers only.

4. That the BSSS establish an approved list of external non-school based RTOs, providers, and qualifications.

PART 6

How to get involved in the Review

You can get involved in the review by:

- writing to the committee – making a submission

- providing feedback using the survey monkey platform

- attending a forum.

What is a submission

As part of a review, a committee usually asks for written submissions addressing the terms of reference and draft recommendations.

Who should I contact if I have a question about lodging a submission?

Please contact the secretariat of the Review of C and E Course Classifications for further information on 6205 7181.

Writing a submission

The best submissions:

- clearly address some or all of the terms of reference and draft recommendations - you do not need to address each one

- are relevant and highlight your own perspective

- are concise, generally no longer than four to five pages

- begin with a short introduction about yourself or the organisation you represent

- emphasise the key points so that they are clear

- outline not only what the issues are but how problems can be addressed, as the committee looks to submissions for ideas to make recommendations

- only include documents that directly relate to your key points

- are mindful of the audience, use appropriate language and communicate clearly

- submissions that include personal details or criticisms of individuals may not be able to be considered in the consultation process or published.

Before you send us your submission, check:

Have you commented on some or all of the terms of reference and draft recommendations?	✅
Is your submission no more than 4-5 pages? Have you provided a summary of your submission at the front?	✅
Have you provided your return address and contact details with the submission?	✅
Have you made sure that your personal contact details are not in the main part of the submission?	✅
If you do not want your submission published on the internet, have you made this clear on the front of your submission and told us why?	✅

Making a submission

Written submission may be emailed to BSSS Enquiries at: bsss.enquiries@act.gov.au.

Submissions on the C and E Course Classification proposal will be accepted via Survey Monkey. The link for submissions is at: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/BSSSREVIEW

Attending a forum

The Office of the Board of Senior Secondary Studies will facilitate a suite of forums to provide background on the terms of reference and recommendations. Forums will be tailored for the following stakeholder groups including:

- Curriculum and VET Coordinators
- Principals
- Heads of sectors: ACT Education Directorate, Association of Independent Schools of the ACT and Catholic Education Office of Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn.

What happens to the feedback that you provide?

Your submission will be considered by the Review Committee. The Committee will decide whether to accept your submission and whether to publish it.

Your submission is not automatically accepted and published. You should read the terms of reference and draft recommendation and structure your written submission or response via the Survey Monkey digital platform around these. The Committee may decide not to accept your submission if it does not address the terms of reference and draft recommendations.

Draft Recommendations

The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) recognises the value of vocational educational training (VET) courses and their contribution to quality education and enhanced transitions to work and further education.

In comparing and evaluating the learning outcomes of E, C and V courses, the Review seeks to identify the best options for VET and the ACT senior secondary context.

Have your say on each of the recommendations:

1. That C Courses be redeveloped as A/T/M/V or A/M/V courses.

2. That schools and school-based RTOs are not permitted to deliver E Courses.

3. That the level of contribution, achievement and quality assurance requirements of VET qualifications intended for consideration as E Courses on the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate are consistent with high expectations for students and support the integrity and quality of the certificate.

4. That the BSSS establish an approved list of external non-school based RTOs, providers, and qualifications.

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Appendix 1 – Board Functions

The Board of Senior Secondary Studies Act 1997

The ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (ACT BSSS) is a statutory authority responsible for the certification of senior secondary school studies in government and non-government schools in the Australian Capital Territory.

The *Board of Senior Secondary Studies Act 1997* is the legislation that defines roles and responsibilities in senior secondary education in the ACT. Key excepts from the Act that are pertinent to this review are as follows:

5   **Functions of board**

The main functions of the board are as follows:

(a) to accredit or register courses taught by recognised educational institutions;

(b) to approve, consistent with national agreements, recognised educational institutions for teaching vocational education courses;

(c) to establish guidelines for the development of courses by the board or by a recognised educational institution;

(d) to establish principles and procedures for the assessment of attainments of students and the moderation of the assessments;

(e) to provide to people who have undertaken courses, or units of courses, certificates and transcripts of their attainments;

(f) to provide information on -

    (i) the performance of students and former students; and

    (ii) the policies and procedures of the board;

(g) to review its own operations and the operation of this Act;

(h) to advise the Minister on any matter mentioned in this section (including something mentioned in section 5A to section 5D).

5A   **Additional functions about accreditation of courses**

For section 5(a), the board has the following additional functions:

(a) to establish guidelines (*accreditation guidelines*) for the accreditation of courses, including vocational education courses;

(b) to ensure national agreements about the accreditation of vocational education and training courses are applied, if appropriate;

(c) to identify the minimum resources necessary for the satisfactory provision of the courses that the board decides.

5B   Additional functions about assessment of students

For section 5(d), the board has the following additional functions:

(a) to prepare guidelines and requirements for the assessment of student attainments;

(b) to make arrangements for the administration by recognised educational institutions of the test known as the Australian Scaling Test, or any other test instead of the Australian Scaling Test that is approved by the board;

(c) to develop and implement procedures for the moderation of student assessments;

(d) to develop procedures for -

(i)   recognised educational institutions to review the assessments of their students; and

(ii) the board to review the procedures used by recognised educational institutions to assess their students or review their student assessments; and

(iii) recognised educational institutions, or the board, to review disciplinary action taken by recognised educational institutions in relation to their student assessments.

5C   Additional functions about certificates of attainment

For section 5(e), the board has the following additional functions:

(a) to prepare guidelines for the issue of certificates of attainment;

(b) to make the arrangements that the board considers appropriate to ensure to the greatest extent possible that certificates issued by the board are recognised by employers and providers of further training or higher education;

(c) to consult institutions that provide tertiary education or vocational education or training for the purpose of reviewing from time to time the effect of their requirements and procedures for the admission of students and to provide appropriate guidance to the institutions;

(d) to issue, consistent with national agreements, certificates, or other evidence of the achievements of vocational education or training qualifications.

Appendix 2 – BSSS Vision and Principles for Curriculum

3.1.1   Vision

The Board is committed to a curriculum that:

- promotes quality teaching and learning

- is flexible by enabling ACT colleges and teachers to determine how best to plan, teach and assess students according to needs of those students

- inspires young adults to learn and become confident, creative, active and informed citizens who make a valuable contribution to society

- reflects coherence and cohesion.

3.1.2   Principles

The Board is committed to a curriculum that:

- provides a platform for high quality learning

- upholds high expectations for achievement of all young adults and makes provision for diverse learners

- is rigorous and displays consistency, purpose, and quality design

- is responsive to community expectations and developed collaboratively

- provides opportunities for all young adults to develop ethical and intercultural understandings

- ensures multiple pathways for all young adults to attain work and life skills including functional literacy and numeracy.

Source: *BSSS Policy and Procedures Manual, 2021*

Appendix 3 – Key Terms

Accreditation type is the classification for BSSS endorsed courses, such as (T) tertiary, (A) accredited.

Achievement standards provide an indication of typical performance at five different levels (corresponding to grades A to E) following completion of study of senior secondary course content for units in a subject.

A Courses have been deemed by the Board to be educationally sound and appropriate for students in years 11 and 12.

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is the national regulator for Australia's vocational education and training (VET) sector.

An **ASBA** is an Australian School-Based Apprenticeship available for school students, 15 years of age or over, providing the opportunity to achieve a nationally recognised vocational qualification by combining paid work and training as part of their education program. An ASBA is classified as an E Course.

C Courses are competency-based courses. They are Board endorsed VET courses that deliver the competencies from a particular Training Package that may lead to the completion of a qualification or a Statement of Attainment. Students receive a Pass (P) if they achieve a competency and Participated (Q) if no competencies are achieved. Both P and Q graded units can contribute to the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate.

E Courses are courses which lead to a nationally recognised vocational qualification (VET Certificate or Statement of Attainment) that are delivered by an external Registered Training Organisation (RTO) or ASBAs through either college-based RTOs or external RTOs.

Frameworks are system documents for years 11 and 12 which provide the basis for the development and accreditation of any course within a designated learning area. In addition, frameworks provide a common basis for assessment, moderation and reporting of student outcomes in courses based on the framework.

M Courses are modified courses. These courses provide appropriate educational experiences for students who satisfy specific intellectual disability criteria.

Qualification in this context refers to the nationally recognised vocational education qualification (VET Certificate or Statement of Attainment) that may be achieved from an RTO.

Registered Training Organisation (RTO) is a training provider registered by ASQA (or a state regulator) to deliver VET services. RTOs provide training and qualifications that are nationally recognised.

R unit is a registered unit. It is a learning experience designed to develop capabilities for students in years 11 and 12.

A **subject** is a discrete area of study that is part of a learning area. There may be one or more subjects in a single learning area.

Statement of Attainment is the acknowledgement of completed VET competencies when a full qualification has not been completed.

T Courses are courses that have been deemed by the Board to prepare students for higher education. T Courses contribute to an ATAR.

Training Package refers to the requirements for completing an industry recognized qualification or Statement of Attainment. Training Packages are recognised nationally and are developed under the auspices of the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA).

V Courses are vocational courses that deliver training in workplace specific skills and knowledge which can lead to a vocational Certificate or Statement of Attainment as defined by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF). Vocational programs accredited by the Board may be classified as A, T, M or C.

Appendix 4 – VET Courses

VET Courses for ACT Senior Secondary Colleges

Course	Type
Automotive Technology	A/M/V
Business Services	A/M/V
Construction Pathways	A/M/V
Construction Pathways	C
Furniture Construction	C
Data Science	A/T/V
Design and Technology	A/T/M/V
Design and Textiles	A/T/M/V
Digital Technologies	A/T/M/V
Digital Products	A/M/V
Furniture Making	A/M/V
Horticulture	C
Hospitality	A/T/M/V
Hospitality Industry	C
Live Production Services	C
Media	A/T/M/V
Metal Products	A/M/V
Music Industry	C
Musical and Stage Performance	C
Networking and Security	A/T/V
Outdoor Recreation	C
Pathways to Work and Learning	A/M/V
Robotics and Mechatronics	A/T/M/V
Social and Community Work	A/M/V
Sport, Recreation and Leadership	A/M/V
Tourism and Event Management	A/T/M/V

Appendix 5 – Long Term VET Data

Long Term VET Data for ACT Senior Secondary Students

YEAR	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
ACT CERTIFICATED	4062	3927	4260	4266	4343	4329	4249	4283	4304	4407	4422	4448	4473	4374	4297
SENIOR SECONDARY CERTIFCATED AND COMPLETED A VET COURSE															
ATMV	2146	2010	2088	1828	1920	1835	1834	1672	1920	1824	1605	1567	1430	1332	1182
C	0	0	0	0	88	133	118	151	183	221	257	267	222	230	250
TOTAL ATMVC	2146	2010	2088	1828	1961	1893	1886	1739	1975	1888	1725	1690	1555	1448	1326
SENIOR SECONDARY CERTIFCATED AND COMPLETED A VET COURSE AND A VET CERTIFICATE															
ATMV	1199	1012	1008	941	981	939	894	781	790	803	690	675	576	541	461
C	0	0	0	0	38	55	51	62	61	86	92	98	86	110	86
TOTAL ATMVC	1199	1012	1008	941	995	951	911	801	805	822	735	708	614	582	512
SENIOR SECONDARY CERTIFCATED AND A VET COURSE AND A VET COMPETENCY															
ATMV	1887	1763	1759	1595	1736	1708	1729	1529	1668	1571	1367	1323	1200	1067	950
C	0	0	0	0	87	128	109	144	174	200	241	227	204	213	212
TOTAL ATMVC	1887	1763	1759	1595	1776	1762	1774	1593	1716	1627	1479	1422	1307	1169	1065
% SENIOR SECONDARY CERTIFCATED STUDENTS WHO COMPLETED A:															
VET COURSE	52.8%	51.2%	49.0%	42.9%	45.2%	43.7%	44.4%	40.6%	45.9%	42.8%	39.0%	38.0%	34.8%	33.1%	30.9%
VET CERTIFICATE	29.5%	25.8%	23.7%	22.1%	22.9%	22.0%	21.4%	18.7%	18.7%	18.7%	16.6%	15.9%	13.7%	13.3%	11.9%
VET COMPETENCY	46.5%	44.9%	41.3%	37.4%	40.9%	40.7%	41.8%	37.2%	39.9%	36.9%	33.4%	32.0%	29.2%	26.7%	24.8%
% STUDENTS STUDYING VET WHO COMPLETED A VET CERTIFICATE															
ATMV	55.9%	50.3%	48.3%	51.5%	51.1%	51.2%	48.7%	46.7%	41.1%	44.0%	43.0%	43.1%	40.3%	40.6%	39.0%
C					43.2%	41.4%	43.2%	41.1%	33.3%	38.9%	35.8%	36.7%	38.7%	47.8%	34.4%
TOTAL ATMVC	55.9%	50.3%	48.3%	51.5%	50.7%	50.2%	48.3%	46.1%	40.8%	43.5%	42.6%	41.9%	39.5%	40.2%	38.6%
% STUDENTS STUDYING VET WHO COMPLETED A VET COMP															
ATMV	87.9%	87.7%	84.2%	87.3%	90.4%	93.1%	94.3%	91.4%	86.9%	86.1%	85.2%	84.4%	83.9%	80.1%	80.4%
C					98.9%	96.2%	92.4%	95.4%	95.1%	90.5%	93.8%	85.0%	91.9%	92.6%	84.8%
TOTAL ATMVC	87.9%	87.7%	84.2%	87.3%	90.6%	93.1%	94.1%	91.6%	86.9%	86.2%	85.7%	84.1%	84.1%	80.7%	80.3%

The trends are more clearly revealed in the highlighted rows. The data reveals that the introduction of C Courses did not reverse the trend and did not lead to a significant increase in the number of students undertaking VET courses.

Appendix 6 – Taking the higher view - Craig Robertson comment

Taking the higher view – comment by CEO Craig Robertson

I regretted when I booked a seat in the top tier of the Ponsford Stand at the MCG to watch Collingwood play Hawthorn [1]. Specks and spots. Player and ball. I was pleasantly surprised, however, that the elevated view gave me a new appreciation for the quintessential Australian Rules Football.

Noting this was in Hawthorn's heyday, three things were apparent. Skills mattered. Systems created flows. Fortitude powered the game. I'm no AFL coach but let me explain.

In any contested possession of the football the Hawthorn player was always more precise in passing it on – by hand or foot. Under pressure, a Collingwood pass or kick was just off target which put the receiving player under more pressure and more often than not the ball spilled to the opposition. Skill with the ball – overhead, on the hand or the foot – made the difference.

Most apparent from the aerial review are the systems in play. A ground or TV view hides the constant positioning of players to be free to receive the ball and the response of the defensive players. I'm amazed by the analysis of some of the commentators comparing the systems each team puts in place.

Success overall, though depends on the fortitude and attitude of each player. The key ingredient for success these days is off the back of player intent – each working their part in the system and backing each other up.

I hope even football novices see the corollary to the nature of work.

In a recent speech I gave to a [Minerals Council function](#) I reflected on the impact of automation and digitalization on the nature and expectations of work. While it may not be apparent in our working situation, it is clear in mining as large scale automation allows for remote operations, for example. Work hierarchies and long held roles are changing – the flattening of work structures. Reliance on hierarchy for quality and process control is no longer a luxury.

Unfortunately, VET's focus on teaching processes and assessing behaviours risks process workers without the capacity to adapt (unless they attend further training for the new process) and behaviours without the thinking. Assumptions in qualifications that worker quality is covered by close supervision doesn't stack up with modern workplaces.

At this point I turn to the Australian Skills Classification (ASC) that has been released by the National Skills Commission as a beta product built from analysis of job openings data and descriptions of elements of occupations from the United States and other sources. It's power, apart from Big Data, is it drills down to the skills in operation across the labour market. It's not captured by the sometimes-imprecise definition of an occupation, but describes and codifies the skills at play across jobs no matter what occupation it is being used in. Call it a Skills First approach.

Regardless of the acknowledged shortfalls in the data, the ASC points to a new approach to defining skills, and it matters for individuals and the economy.

An individual armed with skills – which can be transported across various jobs occupations – is forearmed for success. Workers able to be deployed to new roles with new expectations bring productivity to businesses.

Workers with the transferable skills and understanding of their use in different contexts (such as systems in football) are a key feature in an advanced and sophisticated economy.

Football systems were put under pressure some years back by flooding – crowding opposition players into the forward line to stifle ball movement. The systems adapted but the same, and better, skills were required.

There's concern that the ASC is missing elements but that will be resolved over time as can the nature of transferability. Many did not want the mobile phone when it was a brick and look where we are now.

The ASC is exciting as it allows for the VET sector to start a person on a proficiency journey aimed at improvement and excellence, rather than the offer of competent for an occupation.

Simplifying and codifying the skills and capabilities that matter may be the easy part. Developing the education intervention is exciting and more promising than relying upon elaborate and outmoded occupation breakdown structures as the basis of skilling. How satisfying for teacher and student to start someone on a journey of proficiency with a wider array of opportunity before them.

There are broader implications at stake. Just this past week the Productivity Commission released its insights on productivity and wages growth. The last decade has been the slowest since the 1960s and that workers are about $11,500 worse off than they would be if pre-2012 growth had persisted.

A new approach to skilling, offered by the ASC, reflective of skills required across the economy and not captured by occupation or special interests is true transformation that can bring deeper skills to employers more efficiently. This may be the source of productivity and innovation which has a higher chance of wages growth than our current strategies.

I will gladly return to the lofty levels of Ponsford Stand to view a game. I dare say, skills reform would benefit if analysed from a similar higher perspective.

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[1] For international readers the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) is the largest sporting arena in Australia, seating over 100,000.

Appendix 7 – Vocational Programs

ACT BOARD OF SENIOR SECONDARY STUDIES

Item No: 4.4	Meeting No: 5/2008	Meeting Date: 21 August 2008
Action: Discussion		From: Vocational Education and Training Committee (VET)
Title: Vocational Programs		

Recommendations:

1. (a) The BSSS reports a VET course of study undertaken during Years 11 and 12 with an external Registered Training Organisation, as a registered course titled Vocational Program *Industry[1].*

   (b) The BSSS reports all other registered VET units undertaken during Years 11 and 12 grouped under a notional R course called External Vocational Learning.

2. The BSSS introduces a new C classification for accredited courses that are competency assessed only.

(a) C courses to be defined, as follows:

C classification is given to an accredited vocational education and training program appropriate for students in Year 11 and 12 delivered and assessed by Registered Training Organisations approved by the BSSS
(section 27 A-D, BSSS Act 1997) and registered by the ACT Accreditation and Registration Council under the Australian Quality Training Framework.

(b) C courses will be reported on the Year 12 Certificate in accord with BSSS policies on unit values (2.5.1) and course duration (2.2.4.3) for accredited courses.

(c) A student will be awarded standard units in multiples of 0.5 in a C course based on agreed hours for competencies achieved. If a student achieves competencies totalling fewer than 27.5 agreed hours, then no accredited units will be awarded.

(d) A student's achievement in each C unit will be reported as "Competent".

(e) In line with other accredited courses, C courses will be subject to BSSS moderation procedures.

   Teachers of C courses will be required to present portfolios of student work for verification that units are taught and assessed as documented, and validation that assessments meet industry standards. The Moderation Officer should report any concerns to the Board.

3. BSSS Policy 5.5.1.1.3 Course Pattern be amended as follows.

A standard package for a Year 12 Certificate will be awarded on completion of an educational program approved by the college as having a coherent pattern of study and which includes the equivalent of at least 17 standard units in a period not exceeding five years. This package must contain a minimum of three different courses in three different course areas (A and/or T and/or M and/or H ***and/or C and/or Vocational Program)***

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[1] Vocational Program Industry – the name will be customised to reflect the specific industry area eg. Vocational Program Retail.

Background

At the December 2007 BSSS meeting, the Board requested that the VET subcommittee research and review Board policies related to VET, to highlight any issues that are impacting negatively on VET provision and support for quality VET is outcomes.

The BSSS reference was discussed with stakeholders at VET and Assessment forums. The following issues were raised during the consultation:

1.   Dual assessment of grades and competencies in VET programs

2.   The inclusion of a vocational qualification as one of the 3 minors required for the award of an ACT Year 12 Certificate

3.   Profile and perceived status of vocational studies on the current ACT Year 12 Certificate – in particular Australian School-Based Apprenticeships (ASBAs)

4.   Structured Workplace Learning (SWL)
    ▪ quality and availability of placements in some industry areas
    ▪ accessibility of placements if all colleges are using week 20 of the semester
    ▪ employer knowledge and understanding related to the differences between SWL, Vocational Placements, Work Experience and ASBAs
    ▪ value of SWL when so many students already have part time and casual employment
    ▪ convincing students of the value of SWL when they would rather work in their paid employment

The above issues raised regarding SWL are related to program delivery and are outside the function of the BSSS. These matters will be referred to the appropriate stakeholders.

Draft recommendations to address the issues were discussed and revised at the July meeting of the VET Subcommittee.

Discussion

1.   BSSS reporting of registered vocational studies on the ACT Year 12 Certificate.

The BSSS has mechanisms for reporting on the Year 12 Certificate all vocational education studies external to college programs, undertaken during Years 11 and 12. Vocational certificates and Statements of Attainment are submitted to the OBSSS and equivalence is calculated based on the competencies achieved, and the studies are reported through registered units.

In the case of Australian School-Based Apprenticeships (ASBAs) units are registered with the BSSS by schools, in terms of standard units recognising the training undertaken by students.

In both instances, the VET studies are reported as registered units as the programs are not accredited by the BSSS.

Vocational education is an important part of a student's educational program, but registered VET studies do not currently have a profile on the Year 12 Certificate as they are reported amongst other registered units that students undertake during Years 11 and 12, under the heading Recognition of Outside Learning.

The new courses Vocational Program *Industry* will allow VET studies leading to a nationally recognised vocational qualification (certificate or Statement of Attainment) and delivered by an external Registered Training Organisation to be included in the minimum requirements for an ACT Year 12 Certificate. As part of an industry-training package, the vocational program has coherence of purpose and meets the requirements for a course under BSSS policy 2.2.4.

2.2.4   Course

A course consists of a combination of units with coherence of purpose. This coherence must be perceived before the student commences the course of study.

The new notional R course External Vocational Learning will allow all other registered VET units to be reported together. There will be no course type for this grouping of units. In addition, to increase consistency in

reporting on the Year 12 Certificate, a system approach to the naming of these units will be implemented in consultation with colleges.

2.   BSSS accreditation and reporting of vocational studies on the ACT Year 12 Certificate.

The BSSS already has policy allowing for accreditation of vocational courses developed and/or accredited by other educational authorities and for assessment in these courses to be competency based only.

- *Policy 2.3.5.2   Accreditation of courses developed and/or accredited by other state or national education authorities*

  On the advice of the panel chair, the Board's Executive Officer will recommend for accreditation courses developed and/or accredited by other state or national education authorities. Courses must be adapted to accord with the Board's policies on accreditation and classification of courses.

- *Under Policy 2.3.7   Accreditation of vocational programs*

  Nationally recognised vocational courses accredited by the Board as A courses may assess and report competency based standards instead of grades.

However, there are no current policies to support implementation of certification for these accredited vocational programs. The recommendations propose that this is addressed through a new classification of accredited courses.

A formal process for the submission for accreditation of vocational courses that are to be assessed and reported on competency-based standards only will be implemented.

Kaye O'Hara
Chair

ACT BOARD OF SENIOR SECONDARY STUDIES

Item No: 2.3	Meeting No: 8/2008	Meeting Date: 11 December 2008
Action: Decision		From: Vocational Education and Training Committee (VET)
Title: Vocational Programs - C Courses		

Recommendations:

1. That the following policy changes take effect for the 2010 graduating cohort.

2. That the BSSS introduces a new C classification for accredited courses that are competency assessed only.

(a) That the following be added to section 2.2.2 Classification to define C courses:

C classification is given to a BSSS accredited vocational education and training program appropriate for students in Year 11 and 12, which is delivered and assessed by Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) approved by the BSSS (section 27 A-D, BSSS Act 1997) and registered by the ACT Accreditation and Registration Council under the Australian Quality Training Framework.

A student will be awarded standard units in multiples of 0.5 in a C course based on BSSS agreed hours of training and assessment undertaken as a structured education program.

(b) That C courses be reported on the Year 12 Certificate in accord with BSSS policies on unit values (2.5.1) and course duration (2.2.4.3) for accredited courses.

(c) That in C units:

students be awarded a "Qualified Pass" if they have complied with the BSSS requirements relating to attendance (Policy 3.3.4.9.1 Attendance) and completion of assessment items (Policy 3.3.4.9.2 Completion of Assessment Items) but have not achieved any of the competencies in the unit;

students be awarded a "Pass" if they have achieved at least one of the competencies in the unit and have met the attendance (3.3.4.9.1) and assessment (3.3.4.9.2) requirements.

(d) That the following section be added to policy 2.3.6 Board Determination of Classification:

2.3.6.4 C Classification

The Board will decide on the award of C classification to a course on the advice of the panel chair and the panel industry representative. At the time of accreditation, the BSSS agreed hours will be determined for each qualification and unit of competence delivered as part of a structured education program.

The Board will decide on the award of a C classification to a course after the following issues have been verified:

- duplication of course content with other A, T, M courses has been recognised so that existing policy on duplication can be implemented.
- time requirements meet with Board policy.
- the course leads to a nationally recognised vocational qualification registered on the National Training Information Service.

Teachers of C courses will be required to present portfolios of student work for verification that units are taught and assessed as documented and validation that assessments meet industry standards. The Moderation Officer should report any concerns to the Board.

Background

The Board considered a recommendation on C courses at the October BSSS Meeting (Paper 2.2 Vocational Programs) and referred the matter to its committees for advice.

Joint VET, ACC and CAC meetings were held to consider the issues further. The recommendations in this paper are the outcomes of those meetings.

Discussion

At the BSSS Meeting, members were concerned that a student would not receive credit towards their Year 12 Certificate if they did not achieve the competencies in C courses.

Under this proposal students will gain C units towards a Year 12 Certificate based on their studies as part of a structured education program even if they don't achieve the competencies in the unit.

As the assessment is competency based, students who meet the attendance and assessment requirements will be awarded a "Pass" for the unit if they achieve at least one of the competencies in the unit and a "Qualified Pass" if they don't.

The competencies achieved will be reported on the VET Certificate or Statement of Attainment.

Kaye O'Hara
Chair

Appendix 8 – Vocational Education and Training in Senior Secondary Certificates of Education

Australian Capital Territory

1.   Description of the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education

Name of qualification	ACT Senior Secondary Certificate, Tertiary Entrance Statement
Issued by	ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS)
Time frame for completion	Awarded following a program of full-time study completed over Years 11 and 12, over a period of up to 5 years
Units of credit	BSSS accredited units are generally delivered for a minimum of 55 hours over a semester to generate 1 standard unit towards the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate.
Minimum requirements for the award of ACT Senior Secondary Certificate	**ACT Senior Secondary Certificate** Awarded on completion of an educational program approved by the college as having a coherent pattern of study. It must include at least 17 standard units and meet the following conditions: • a minimum of four A, T, M, H courses from at least three different course areas, with a maximum of two C or E courses • a maximum of 8 standard units from any one course area. • completion of a course from the English course framework. **Tertiary Entrance Statement** Student must complete at least 20 standard units over a minimum of 3.5 semesters, with a student intending to take longer than 2 years requiring the college principal's approval. The student must: • complete at least 18 standard units classified as A, T, M or H, of which at least 12.5 standard units must be T or H • undertake the ACT Scaling Test (AST) The A, T, M or H units must be arranged into courses to form at least: • four majors and one minor or • three majors and three minors, with at least three major courses and one minor course classified T or H. **Minimum achievement levels** A student's achievement in A, T and M courses is reported on the Senior Secondary Certificate on a five-point A to E scale. Grades are awarded on the proviso that the assessment and attendance requirements have been met.
BSSS Subjects/Courses	**A Courses** Courses approved as educationally sound and appropriate for students in Years 11 and 12. **T Courses** Courses approved as preparing students for higher education. Results can contribute to a student's ATAR. **M Courses** Courses providing appropriate educational experiences for students with a mild to moderate intellectual disability.

	VET (Vocational Education and Training) A, T or M courses that have embedded VET competencies. **C Courses** VET programs delivered and assessed by a college as the Registered Training Organisation (RTO). Assessment is competency-based only and the grades 'Pass or Participated' are awarded. **E Courses** Courses delivered by an RTO leading to a nationally recognised vocational qualification (Certificate or Statement of Attainment). **H Courses** Courses accredited and delivered by an Australian university, which have been registered by the BSSS; successful completion is recognised towards an undergraduate degree and may contribute to a student's university entrance rank (ATAR). Reported on ACT Senior Secondary Certificate with university grades. **R Units or Courses** Courses or units designed to provide personal development, recreational or community service activities. Reported on ACT Senior Secondary Certificate with grade "Pass".
Link to the ACACA Agency website with more information about VET in the ACTYear 12 Certificate	http://www.bsss.act.edu.au/home

2. VET Quality and the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate

The BSSS certificates VET qualifications and Statements of Attainment on behalf of ACT colleges that are Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). The Board also recognises VETqualifications delivered by external RTOs and facilitates the allocation of credit towards the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate based on hours of training and assessment.

The BSSS certificates VET that:

- is listed on the national training.gov.au website

- is delivered and assessed by an ACT college, which is an RTO with scope from Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) to deliver specified qualifications

- is delivered and assessed by a high school partnering with an ACT college RTO with a third party service agreement (TPSA)

- is delivered and assessed in accordance with relevant SNR/NVR standards and Training Package requirements.

The BSSS recognises VET that:

- is delivered externally by a private provider RTO scoped to deliver specified qualifications; and

- is substantiated by a vocational transcript, statement of attainment, or certificate issued by the RTO

The BSSS credit arrangements recognise VET:

- through direct credit when the qualification or Units of Competence relate to a VET course that is being studied by the student

- towards the Senior Secondary Certificate, providing the VET does not duplicate school based study.

In the ACT, VET is delivered through college RTOs in 16 industry areas. VET courses are developed by specialist teachers in consultation with industry, the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) and universities where applicable. Students may undertake a vocational pathway with/without a partnership arrangement between their home college and the CIT or other private RTO.

Quality Assurance

- Compliance: College VET coordinators work collaboratively and cooperatively, developing programs and tools to streamline compliance requirements for ASQA.

- Moderation: The ACT BSSS facilitates moderation processes between college RTOs twice a year to ensure VET training and assessment is:

  - compliant with ASQA and NVR requirements

  - consistent and equitable across the territory.

Note: Colleges are required to present portfolios of assessment tools and student work which are peer reviewed and validated. Any issues are referred to the BSSS for independent review and actioned as appropriate.

- Course Development: Industry is consulted in the VET course writing process. Course redevelopment occurs every 5 years as a general rule, or more frequently if Training Package changes necessitate it.

The BSSS facilitates VET course redevelopment through:

- monitoring of Training Package changes arising from the continuous improvement process.

- identification, analysis and evaluation of any changes that impact on BSSS courses.

- providing advice to teachers relating to the implications of identified changes and the appropriate timeframes to action any changes required in line with transition and teach out periods.

- facilitating discussion with local industry to ensure courses meet their needs.

- recommending that students undertake structured workplace learning (SWL) as a component of VET study. SWL units with specified competencies are embedded into BSSS accredited courses.

- only certificating VET for those colleges that are scoped to deliver the specified qualifications – this is verified through training.gov.au.

All other VET compliance is the responsibility of the college RTO.

Note: industry endorsement is a mandatory requirement for all ACT VET college based courses.

3. *Recognition of VET in the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate*

A key feature of the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate is the diversity of choice that it offers students for the inclusion of VET in their study programs. Students may undertake a dual pathway that includes a nationally recognised qualification to the Certificate II level or Certificate III for some industry areas. Students may also undertake an Australian School Based Apprenticeship (ASBA).

There are a range of policies and procedures to ensure that VET study undertaken by students during Years 11 and 12 through college RTOs or external RTOs can contribute towards the requirements for an ACT Senior Secondary Certificate.

The credit for VET is based on the specific program undertaken by the student, up to a maximum of eight standard units from any one industry and/or course area.

BSSS accredited vocational programs are developed in consultation with the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) and local industry advisers to ensure that they assist student transitions to work and further education. The programs are based on the units of competence as defined in the relevant Training Package, and are grouped into semester (55 hour) units around a work role for delivery and assessment purposes. Vocational programs range from minor courses (minimum of 110 hours) to double major courses (minimum of 385 hours).

Currently there are 23 BSSS accredited vocational courses:

Automotive Technology A/M/V	Business Services A/M/V
Construction Pathways C	Construction Pathways A/M/V
Furniture Construction C	Furniture Making A/M/V
Horticulture C	Hospitality Industry C
Hospitality A/T/M/V	Information Technology A/T/M/V
Information Technology C	Live Production and Services C
Media A/T/M/V	Metal Engineering A/M/V
Metal Engineering C	Music Industry C
Musical and Stage Performance C	Outdoor Recreation C A/T/V
Pathways to Work and Learning A/M/V	Social and Community Work A/M/V
Sport, Recreation and Leadership A/M/V	Textiles and Fashion A/T/M/V
Tourism and Event Management A/T/M/V	

Students enrolled in these courses receive credit towards the unit and course requirements for an ACT Senior Secondary Certificate based on the competencies achieved.

Where a student obtains other vocational qualifications from an RTO during years 11 and 12, recognition towards the senior secondary certificate is given as an E course, the value of which is determined by the BSSS based on the hours of training and assessment. The student must be enrolled in the college while undertaking the program.

There are currently 37 E courses from industry training packages delivered through RTOs. These courses are identified on the Senior Secondary certificate by the industry Training Package. The E courses were in 21 different Training Package areas.

4. *Workplace learning options and recognition in the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate*

Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) is the workplace component of a nationally recognised industry-specific VET program. In line with training package rules, SWL requirements are incorporated in VET courses. Students undertake supervised learning activities, in an industry context, which contribute to assessment of competence and achievement of the requirements for the relevant Training Package. It is highly recommended that students undertake SWL and in some instances, where a Training Package demands it, SWL units are mandatory. SWL units are reported on the Senior Secondary Certificate as part of the relevant industry course and contribute to associatedmajors or minors.

BSSS policy relating to SWL allows greater flexibility for students. Provision has been made for recognition of paid part-time work as SWL where:

- the student is undertaking a relevant industry specific course at school

- the part-time work occurs concurrently with the VET program

- specific competencies within the course are identified as being addressed in the part-time work

- an agreement is made between the employer and school to provide evidence for assessment of competencies.

This extension of SWL has expanded opportunities for students to develop and demonstrate competence in the workplace.

5. *Australian School-Based Apprenticeships (ASBAs)*

ASBAs offer students 15 years of age or over the opportunity to achieve a nationally recognised vocational qualification by combining paid work and training as part of their education program.

A Certificate II qualification requires a minimum of 8 hours (equivalent to one day) in the workplace and a minimum of 3 hours off the job training per week. A certificate III qualification has a greater time and work commitment and may require further work and study after the completion of Year 12.

a. Structure

Some students complete the formal training component through their home college as the RTO by studying a BSSS accredited VET program. Other students complete their training with an external RTO and gain credit as an E course.

b. Contribution to the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate

The on and off-the-job components of ASBAs are recognised on the Senior Secondary Certificate, up to a maximum of eight standard units as an E course in the relevant industry area.

6. *Contribution of VET in the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate to tertiary entrance*

VET courses with embedded competencies contribute to the requirements for a Tertiary Entrance Statement and ATAR where the course has been accredited by the BSSS as preparing students for higher education. A maximum of eight standard units can be used from any one industry area. Currently there are five BSSS accredited vocational programswith a T classification.

7.   Mechanisms for the delivery of VET

a.   Directly by an RTO

i) School which is an RTO

There are four government network RTOs (years 11 and 12) and seven non-government schools in the ACT are RTOs. As such, they must meet the Standards for NVR Registered Training Organisations 2015. Colleges must demonstrate that their VET teachers have the relevant qualifications, a Certificate IV in Training and Assessment, current industry skills directly relevant to the training and assessment being provided and current knowledge and skills in vocational training and learning that informs their training and assessment as outlined in the *Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015*. Colleges must meet all other requirements and have the physical resources specified in the Training Package.

ii) TAFE or other RTO

A number of students undertake vocational studies through the Canberra Institute of Technology (CIT) while enrolled in senior secondary studies at a college. These opportunities may be developed and promoted by the home college or accessed by the student through their own initiative. Any competencies achieved are given direct credit if the student is studying a related VET course of study at the school. Credit may also be given in the form of E units, in accordance with BSSS policies, where there is no duplication of content with school based study.

b.   By the school in partnership/auspice arrangement with an RTO

Where colleges do not have the necessary infrastructure to deliver a Training Package, they may form a partnership through a Third Party Service Agreement (TPSA) with another RTO for the delivery of part or all of the qualification.

8.   Supply of VET data to ACACA Agency

Colleges are responsible for enrolling Year 11 and 12 students into BSSS accredited A/V, T/V, M/V or C courses that have VET competencies and qualifications. The college as the RTO enters enrolment details and attainment results into the BSSS ACT Certification System (ACS).

Competency based assessment results achieved through external RTOs are communicated to the BSSS by colleges for VET recognition and allocation of E units towards the Senior Secondary Certificate.

9.   Supply of VET data to ACACA Agency

Colleges are responsible for enrolling Year 11 and 12 students into BSSS accredited A/V, T/V, M/V or C courses that have VET competencies and qualifications. The college as the RTO enters enrolment details and attainment results into the BSSS ACT Certification System (ACS).

Competency based assessment results achieved through external RTOs are communicated to the BSSS by colleges for VET recognition and allocation of E units towards the Senior Secondary Certificate.

10. Certification (reporting to students)

The BSSS produces VET certificates and statements of attainment on behalf of college RTOs, based on achievement data provided by the colleges. Vocational qualifications certificated by the BSSS include Certificate I, Certificate II, Certificate III and Statements of Attainment.

Vocational learning is reported on the ACT Senior Secondary Certificate in a variety of ways:

- BSSS accredited A, T, and M vocational courses with embedded competencies delivered by college RTOs are reported with A–E grades

- BSSS accredited C courses (competency assessment only) delivered by college RTOs are reported with the grade 'Pass' where at least one competency is achieved by the student; or 'Participated' where no competencies are achieved but assessment and attendance requirements are met

- BSSS E courses delivered by RTOs are reported with the grade 'Pass'

- ASBAs, recognition for on and off-the-job training component are reported as E courses with the grade 'Pass'

- Other vocational learning through external RTOs is given block credit for competencies achieved with a 'pass' grade in E courses.

11. Other reporting

The BSSS publishes student VET achievements for Years 10, 11 and 12 annually in the BSSS Vocational Education Study. It also completes the AVETMISS VET in Schools data and national VET provider collection submitted through NCVER for national reporting of ACT VET activity.

Qualifications/competencies achieved through external RTOs are not reported to AVETMISS, although the total number of students undertaking vocational courses through external RTOs is reported to the Board annually.

12. Future directions

The new Health and Physical Education suite of courses has been redesigned and rewritten to align more closely with TAFE and University course prerequisites.

New South Wales

1.   Description of the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education

Name of qualification	Higher School Certificate (HSC)
Issued by	NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA)
Time frame for completion	May be accumulated over a period of up to five years.
	Students typically complete in two years – Year 11 and Year 12.
Units of credit	Preliminary and HSC credit units.
	1 unit = 60 indicative hours of programmed teaching time.
Minimum requirements for the award of the HSC	Students must complete a minimum of 22 credit units –12 Preliminary and 10 HSC.
	Must include four credit units of English.
	Students must satisfactorily complete HSC course requirements to be awarded credit units.
	From 2020, students must meet minimum standards of literacy and numeracy (ACSF Level 3).
Subjects/Courses	Board Developed courses are developed by NESA.Board Endorsed courses are endorsed by NESA.
Link to the ACACA Agency websitewith more information about VET inthe HSC	educationstandards.nsw.edu.au
	educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/11-12/stage-6-learning-areas/vet

2.   VET quality and the NSW Higher School Certificate (HSC)

Ensuring the quality and industry recognition of the outcomes of VET studied as part of the HSC has been at the heart of arrangements developed in NSW by NESA in close collaboration with the school systems and TAFE NSW.

In addition to the VET sector quality assurance arrangements that apply to all VET recognised in the HSC, the quality of HSC VET is underpinned by packaging appropriate qualifications and units of competency for study, and mandatory work placement requirements.

NESA consults with industry and employer representatives to ensure that courses accord with industry training needs and are appropriate for school-aged students.

The quality of VET studied as part of the HSC is also underpinned by the delivery arrangements used in NSW where Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) have direct responsibility for the quality of delivery and assessment. There is virtually no use of partnership (or auspicing) arrangements for VET delivered in schools.

NSW schools are generally part of school system RTOs with direct responsibility and accountability for compliance with the VET Quality Framework. School system RTOs ensure that all school teachers delivering and assessing AQF VET qualifications as part of the HSC hold both the industry specific (vocational) VET qualifications to at least the same level as that being delivered and assessed, and the current VET sector trainer qualification in addition to their teaching qualification.

These arrangements and strategies are implemented in partnership with NSW industry representatives, including the NSW Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs).

3.   *Recognition of VET in the HSC*

Nearly all VET recognised in the HSC is through formal credit arrangements (HSC VET courses). A provision also exists for unspecified recognition through HSC credit transfer arrangements.

Assessment for all HSC VET courses is competency-based.

a.   *Formalised*

HSC VET courses provide credit units towards the HSC.

Units of competency and qualifications are 'packaged' into HSC VET courses. As with all courses for the HSC, each VET course has an indicative hours value that translates into credit units. For example, a 120 indicative hour HSC VET course provides 2 credit units towards the HSC.

Each unit of competency is given an HSC credit weighting called 'HSC indicative hours' which is reflective of the relative level of complexity and volume of learning in the unit of competency.

HSC VET courses can be of two types – Board Developed courses or Board Endorsed courses.

Industry Curriculum Frameworks (Frameworks) are suites of HSC VET courses in a specific industry area made up of AQF VET qualifications and units of competency from national Training Packages.

Typically each Framework includes:

- a 120 indicative hour course (2 credit units)

- a 240 indicative hour course (4 credit units) – the 'standard' course in most Frameworks.

Frameworks may also include:

- specialisation study courses allowing more HSC recognition for study at the same AQF level as the 240-hour course

- extension courses allowing more HSC recognition for study at a higher AQF level than the 240-hour course.

Board Developed Framework courses have certain requirements which include:

- HSC indicative hour requirements (for example, to complete a 120 indicative hour VET course, students must study units of competency whose HSC indicative hours total a minimum value of 120 HSC indicative hours)

- mandatory focus areas and associated units of competency that must be studied for the HSC

- HSC Content (focus areas) that set out the scope and depth of study required for the purposes of the HSC and the HSC examination.

- elective units of competency that can be chosen to lead to particular AQF VET qualifications

- work placement requirements (for example, a student completing a 240 indicative hour course completing a minimum of 70 hours of mandatory work placement).

Frameworks in trade areas include pathways for school-based apprentices, allowing access to qualifications and units of competency not generally available to students.

In addition to the competency-based assessment, an HSC examination is available in each Framework. Students who have completed the 240-hour course in the Framework are eligible to sit for the HSC examination. This provides the opportunity for students to have their HSC examination mark contribute to the calculation of an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

The HSC VET examination is independent of competency-based assessment undertaken during the course and has no impact on student eligibility for AQF VET qualifications.

Currently there are 13 Industry Curriculum Frameworks:

- Automotive
- Business Services
- Construction
- Electrotechnology
- Entertainment Industry
- Financial Services
- Hospitality
- Human Services
- Information and Digital Technology
- Metal and Engineering
- Primary Industries
- Retail Services
- Tourism, Travel and Events.

Board Endorsed VET courses exist in a wide range of industry areas (or qualifications) not covered by Industry Curriculum Frameworks. They are based on AQF VET qualifications and units of competency from national Training Packages or accredited courses.

The courses are generally structured as 120, 180, 240 or 360 indicative hour courses. Students must attempt units of competency to meet minimum indicative hour requirements for the HSC VET course and qualification packaging rules.

> b.   *Unspecified*

Students who have completed AQF VET qualifications through an RTO within the last five years may gain up to 10 credit units towards the HSC by applying for credit transfer. The credit units are counted as Board Endorsed and are listed as 'credit transfer units' on HSC documentation. This currently accounts for a very small proportion of VET recognised in the HSC.

4. *Workplace learning options and recognition in the HSC*

Mandatory work placement requirements are a significant feature of the NSW model of VET for school students. They underpin the quality and industry recognition of the outcomes of HSC VET courses. Work placement involves educational and industrial sectors entering into partnerships, delivering benefits for the student, local business/host employer and industry.

Work placement is a mandatory requirement for many HSC VET courses. When allocating work placement hours, advice is sought from industry to ensure it is appropriate to the industry and the qualification outcome.

Board Developed Industry Curriculum Frameworks have mandatory work placement requirements. More recently, allocation of these requirements have allowed for variances in industry requirements and expectations and consideration of the qualification outcome of the course, rather than applying a generic requirement based on the unit credit the course attracts. Previously, a minimum of 35 hours of work placement would be allocated to a 120 indicative hour course and a minimum of 70 hours of work placement would be allocated to a 240 indicative hour course.

Work placement requirements for Board Endorsed VET courses vary, in that some courses have mandatory work placement, while others have recommended only or no specified work placement requirement.

Under certain conditions, students can use their part-time work to fulfil some or all of the mandatory HSC work placement requirements.

Students do not gain additional credit towards the HSC for work placement undertaken as part of HSC VET courses.

For school-based apprentices and trainees (SBA/T's), HSC VET course work placement requirements are met through the on-the-job component of the apprenticeship or traineeship.

Students undertaking an SBA/T may also elect to complete the Board Endorsed Industry-based Learning course, to gain up to 4 additional credit units for evidence of learning from their employment in the work place. This course has generic course outcomes based around employability skills. It is not an HSC VET course.

5. *Australian School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships*

a. *Structure*

In NSW, apprenticeships and traineeships are employment-based training arrangements approved under the *Apprenticeship and Traineeship Act* 2001. The apprenticeship and traineeship system in NSW is administered by Training Services NSW within the NSW Department of Education.

Apprenticeships are established in recognised trade vocations and traineeships in other industry areas or qualifications. School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SBA/Ts) are established when the signed application for a Training Contract has been approved byTraining Services NSW.

It is a requirement that a Training Plan be developed by the RTO for SBA/Ts. The plan sets out the proposed combination of school, work and formal training that the apprentice or trainee will undertake. The plan must be endorsed by the apprentice or trainee, parent or guardian (if student is under 18 years), RTO, school principal or authorised representative, school system and employer.

All the formal training components of the Training Contract which support a SBA/T must be completed by the end of Term 3 of the year they will complete their HSC to ensure that the student receives appropriate credit for the HSC.

b. *Contribution to the HSC*

In NSW students can only undertake a SBA/T as part of their HSC pattern of study and the formal training component (VET course) must contribute unit credit towards the HSC.

Appropriate qualifications and units of competency for SBA/Ts are identified by industry representatives and made available through either Board Developed VET courses (Industry Curriculum Frameworks) or Board Endorsed VET courses.

With school system support, a student may commence an SBA/T in Year 10 through early commencement of an HSC VET course.

6. *Contribution of VET in the HSC to tertiary entrance*

NSW universities use the marks achieved by a student in their best 10 HSC credit units from Board Developed courses (including 2 HSC credit units from English) to calculate an ATAR. The ATAR is the main mechanism for selection to university direct from Year 12. Board Endorsed courses do not contribute to the ATAR.
Students who have completed a 240-hour Board Developed VET course (i.e. Framework course) and undertaken the HSC VET examination can have their mark awarded for the examination contribute to an ATAR.

NSW universities have, currently designated Board Developed VET courses and VET examinations as 'Category B'. For the purposes of calculating the ATAR, no more than two units can be included from Category B courses.

The HSC (or equivalent) is an entry requirement for many TAFE NSW courses at higher AQF levels.

7. *Mechanisms for the delivery of VET*

a.   Directly by an RTO

i) School who is an RTO

In NSW, secondary schools or colleges are designated delivery sites of school system RTOs. This includes the four NSW Public Schools RTOs, nine Catholic Dioceses RTOs and the Association of Independent Schools of NSW. There are a few individual schools or colleges with their own RTO status – generally specialised trade or vocational colleges.

All school teachers delivering/assessing HSC VET are selected on the basis of their qualifications and experience and undergo additional training/work placement to meet VET Quality Framework and Training Package requirements for trainers/assessors.

ii) TAFE

Where HSC VET courses are delivered by the TAFE NSW RTO, students undertake the course wholly through TAFE NSW with the TAFE college/campus undertaking the responsibilities of the school for the purposes of the HSC. In some cases, the course is delivered through a combination of school RTO and TAFE NSW RTO delivery.

iii) Other RTO

A small proportion of HSC VET courses are delivered by other RTOs under contractual arrangements with individual schools/colleges, school systems or through the NSW Approved Provider List for School-Based Apprenticeships or Traineeships.

b.   By the school in partnership/auspice arrangement with an RTO

There is virtually no use of partnership (or auspicing) arrangements for VET delivered in schools.

8. *Supply of VET data to ACACA agency*

School system RTOs enrol students in VET qualifications and units of competency as part of the HSC course entry process managed through the NESA Schools Online system. The unit of competency outcomes are also managed through this system. NESA distributes VET credentials on behalf of school system RTOs from this data in conjunction with the HSC credentials.

Students doing their HSC VET courses through TAFE NSW are enrolled directly into the TAFE NSW student management system. The data on VET qualifications and unit of competency participation and achievement is transferred electronically to NESA in the following year as part of the national AVETMISS (Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standard) reporting processes.

Some RTOs other than school system RTOs and TAFE NSW can enter VET qualification and unit of competency participation and achievement data directly to the NESA online system.

9.   *Certification (reporting to students)*

NESA provides the following credentials to students who are eligible for an HSC which includes a VET course:

- Higher School Certificate testamur

- HSC Record of Achievement

- AQF VET Certificate or Statement of Attainment (vocational documentation).

The HSC Record of Achievement shows the course name, unit value and results achieved for all courses satisfactorily completed. For all VET courses the statement 'Refer to Vocational documentation' appears next to the course name and unit value. Credit transfer appears only as 'Credit Transfer Units' with the number of units of credit granted.

Students who leave school before achieving their HSC are issued with a Record of School Achievement (RoSA) that shows similar information to the HSC Record of Achievement.

AQF VET Certificate (and transcript) or Statement of Attainment

Students who have undertaken their HSC VET course through a school system RTO, and have met the requirements of the qualification, receive an AQF VET Certificate. The Certificate is accompanied by a Transcript of Competencies Achieved. Those who do not qualify for a full VET Certificate receive an AQF VET Statement of Attainment showing partial completion of the relevant Certificate listing the units of competency achieved.

The AQF VET Certificates and Statements of Attainment (the 'Vocational documentation' referred to on the HSC Record of Achievement) are distributed by NESA on behalf of schoolsystem RTOs.

For students who have undertaken their HSC VET course through TAFE NSW or another non-school system RTO, the reference to Vocational documentation appears on the HSC Record of Achievement but students receive their AQF VET Certificate or Statement of Attainment directly from the RTO.

10.   *Other reporting*

NESA reports directly to schools on the HSC results of their students and provides results to the Universities Admissions Centre NSW and ACT (UAC) for use in selection for university entrance.

NESA also reports to the NSW school systems on enrolments and qualifications in HSC VET courses and compiles the AVETMISS for submission to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER).

NESA reports enrolments and qualifications by industry area and school for My School.

Northern Territory

1.   Description of the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education

Name of qualification	Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET)
Issued by	Northern Territory Board of Studies
Time frame for completion	Most students complete their NTCET over three years – Year 10 (Personal Learning Plan), Year 11, and Year 12. There is no time limit within which students must complete their NTCET. Stage 1 level subjects are usually studied in Year 10 and 11; Stage 2 subjects are usually studied in Year 12.
Units of credit	1 unit (10 credits) = approximately 60 hours of teaching and learning time and generally considered to be equivalent to one semester course 1 unit (10 credits) = 70 nominal hours of VET delivery
Minimum requirements for the award of the NorthernTerritory Certificate ofEducation	A student is required to gain 200 credits to complete the NTCET. This comprises of compulsory elements awarded 100 credits and non- compulsory elements awarded a total of 100 credits. Compulsory elements: students must complete at a grade of C or better (or equivalent for courses) all of the following requirements: - Personal Learning Plan – at Stage 1, awarded 10 credits - literacy requirement – at Stage 1 or 2, awarded 20 credits - numeracy requirement – at Stage 1 or 2, awarded 10 credits - other Board-accredited subjects and/or Board-recognised course at Stage 2 awarded 60 credits. Non-compulsory elements: students must complete 100 credits from Board-accredited subjects and/or Board-accredited courses (e.g. VET qualifications, University Studies, interstate and overseas courses or other recognised learning). Student must complete 140 credits at a C or better.
Subjects/ Courses	- Board-accredited subject outlines (subjects) at Stage 1 and Stage 2 - Vocational education and training (VET) qualifications and units of competencies towards qualifications - Subject or courses from interstate or overseas senior secondary certificates of education - University Studies - Community Learning.
Link to the ACACA Agency website with more information about VET in the Northern Territory Certificate of Education	http://www.education.nt.gov.au/students/curriculum-ntbos/ntcet

2.   *VET quality and the Northern Territory Certificate of Education*

The NT Board of Studies recognises completion of VET qualifications or units of competencies from partly completed qualifications towards the NTCET.

The Board will only recognise VET that:

- is on the National Training Register and is listed on the training.gov.au website and delivered and assessed by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO)

- is delivered and assessed in accordance with relevant VET Quality Framework

- can be certified on a transcript, statement of attainment, or qualification issued by an RTO.

Thus in the Northern Territory, the VET that is recognised, is that which forms part of the AQF and is quality assured using processes in line with the VQF.

In Northern Territory, a majority of the VET that is undertaken by school students is delivered by, or under the auspices of public and private RTOs. Schools can also be registered RTOs.

Schools and RTOs are committed to working in partnership, to ensure students seeking to commence VET qualifications have clear pathways and opportunities to complete both the NTCET and VET qualifications while at school and to establish meaningful post-school pathways.

Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) is the national regulator for Australia's Vocational Education and Training. It is the body with responsibility for quality assurance of VET. ASQA is committed to ensuring the quality of VET in NTCET arrangements.

The SACE Board VET Recognition Register has details for each VET qualification and the NTCET stage assigned to it.

Recognition of VET in the Northern Territory Certificate of Education

The SACE Board of SA's policy on the recognition of VET towards the NTCET is outlined in *Recognition Arrangements for Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the SACE* policy, available at www.sace.sa.edu.au/web/vet/what-is-vet/policy

The purpose of the recognition arrangements for VET in the NTCET is to help students build coherent and meaningful pathways in the NTCET through VET. These arrangements encourage students to complete, or make significant progress towards completion of VET qualifications while completing the NTCET.

VET that is recognised for NTCET purposes

The Recognition Arrangements for VET in the NTCET include recognition of:

- Completed qualifications

- Completed one or more units of competency.

The Board will only recognise qualifications or partly completed qualifications that are on the National Training Register (training.gov.au).

Alignment of VET with Compulsory and Non-compulsory Elements of the NTCET

To complete the NTCET, students must achieve 200 NTCET credits, 160 of which can be gained through the recognition arrangements for VET in NTCET. In addition to these 160 VET-based credits, students must also fulfil the literacy, numeracy and personal learning plan requirements of the NTCET.

Students can use a maximum of two qualifications at Certificate I level to gain credits towards the completion of the NTCET. There is no limit to the number of qualifications at Certificate II level or higher that students can use to gain credits towards the completion of the NTCET.

VET contributes towards the NTCET in the following ways:

a. Formalised

Students can undertake units of competency that can contribute towards the assessment of the Board-accredited subject, Workplace Practices. Students can study this subject at Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the NTCET.

b. Unspecified

Students earn 10 NTCET credits for the successful completion of 70 nominal hours of VET, up to the maximum number of credits allocated for each qualification.

The SACE Board determines whether the NTCET credits earned for a particular VET qualification will be recognised at Stage 1 or at Stage 2 level.

In most cases a VET qualification (i.e. all the units of competency that make up the qualification) is recognised at Stage 1 or at Stage 2 level. However, specific units of competency from some Certificate II or Certificate III qualifications are recognised at Stage 1 whereas other units of competency from the same qualification are recognised at Stage 2.

The levels that the SACE Board assigns to qualifications are recorded on the Board's VET Recognition Register. The SACE Board publishes the VET Recognition Register to show, for each VET qualification, the:

- maximum and minimum number of NTCET credits that students could expect to earn by completing the qualification
- NTCET level (Stage 1 and/or Stage 2) at which credits earned for the qualification will be recognised for NTCET purposes

The VET Recognition Register does not show every VET qualification available through the VET sector. However, the SACE Board recognises any VET that is listed on the National Training Register (training.gov.au) website. For a qualification that is not listed on the VET Recognition Register, schools and other providers can contact the SACE Board for details of the number of NTCET credits that the completed qualification, or units of competency from the qualification, can earn and the NTCET Stage(s) to which it has been assigned.

Completed VET qualifications at Certificate III level or above can be used as recognised study towards an ATAR.

3. Workplace learning options and recognition in the Northern Territory Certificate of Education

Structured work placement is encouraged as an opportunity to reinforce the development of practical skills. RTOs, through their VET delivery arrangements, are required to refer to the appropriate training package for the conditions in which competency is to be assessed.

For NTCET completion purposes, a structured work placement is not mandated as part of the recognition of VET in the NTCET.

4. Australian School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships

a. Structure

The employer, student and parent/guardian are all signatories to the Contract of Training, with the chosen Registered Training Organisation and the Australian Apprenticeship Centrenominated on the contract. A Training Plan is negotiated by these parties, with school involvement in negotiating and agreeing on the school, work and training components.

b. Contribution to the Northern Territory Certificate of Education

VET undertaken as part of an Australian School-Based Apprenticeship or traineeship have the same recognition arrangements as VET in the NTCET.

5. Contribution of VET in the Northern Territory Certificate of Education to tertiary entrance

An NTCET student can count the completion of a Certificate III or above as the equivalent of one subject in the calculation of the university aggregate and its' associated ATAR.

To obtain a university aggregate and an ATAR based on a completed NTCET, the student:

- must qualify for the NTCET

- comply with the rules regarding precluded combinations

- comply with the rules regarding counting restrictions

- complete at least 90 credits of study at Stage 2 of which 60 credits of study must be

- 20 credit Tertiary Admissions Subjects from a maximum of three attempts which need not be in consecutive years. Twenty credits, which may be from additional tertiary admission subjects or from 'recognised studies' can contribute to the calculation of the ATAR. VET studies completed at AQF Certificate III or above (thathave been deemed to be equivalent to Stage 2 of the NTCET) are considered 'recognised study'. For the completion of a VET Certificate III or above, the student receives a scaled score that is equivalent to the average scaled scores for the 70 credits from Board-accredited subjects.

6. *Mechanisms for the delivery of VET*

The SACE Board's policy recognises that the partnerships developed between schools, industry and registered training organisations (RTOs) provide opportunities for students to undertake VET and complete the NTCET, and promote successful transitions from school to work and/or further education and training. The policy acknowledges that an RTO is responsible for conducting, or authorising the delivery and assessment procedures of a training program.

Schools can provide VET for its students in the following ways:

a. *Directly by an RTO*

In the Northern Territory, the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) registers training providers as registered training organisations (RTOs). A RTO must ensure it delivers quality training and assessment for individual students, industry and the vocational education and training (VET) sector. A RTO must ensure it complies with the conditions of its registration throughout the period of its registration. These conditions can include those that apply to all RTOs and are described within the *National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011*, and those imposed by ASQA on the registration of a particular RTO.

The RTO accepts responsibility for ensuring the organisation complies with the *VET Quality Framework* and all other applicable conditions of registration. The RTO is responsible for aspects of training, delivery, assessment, quality assurance, record management and issuing transcripts (e.g. student academic record) in accordance with the AQF qualifications and/or statements of attainment. The school is responsible for enrolling its students with the SACE Board and for submitting students' results to the SACE Board.

b. *By the school in partnership / auspice arrangement with an RTO.*

Schools that are not RTOs enter into an agreement with RTOs for the delivery and assessment of components of a training program. This may comprise formats where:

- the school delivers training and assessment of students in qualifications or units of competencies in agreement with an RTO

- the RTO delivers training and assessment of students in qualifications or units of competencies

- a combination of the two approaches described above is used.

The school is responsible for:

- enrolling its students with the SACE Board

- enrolling its students with the RTO

- submitting its students' results to the SACE Board and the RTO.

The RTO is responsible for:

- providing students with transcripts (e.g. student academic record), and/or

- awarding the AQF qualifications or statements of attainment to students.

7. *Supply of VET data to ACACA agency*

The schools supply the SACE Board with VET enrolment and outcome data using the Schools Online System.

Data is returned to Teaching and Learning 10-12 for validation and is then forwarded to ACARA for inclusion on the MySchool website.

8. *Certification (reporting to students)*

Reporting of completed VET activity towards the NTCET by the SACE Board of SA is undertaken against the relevant VET qualification.

The NT Board of Studies provides students with the following documentation of their achievements:

- Record of Achievement
- NTCET.

Students' VET achievements are formally certified by transcripts, statements of attainment, and/or national recognised qualifications (for completed qualifications) awarded by the RTOs.

The NT Board of Studies recognises VET achievement that contributes to the NTCET and reports it on the NTCET Record of Achievement

For each qualification for which a student has recorded completed units of competency, the NT Board of Studies will report on the student's Record of Achievement, the:

- name of the qualification
- number of NTCET credits earned for the units of competency, reported against each qualification
- NTCET stage at which the credits will be recognised
- year in which the NTCET credits were gained.

9. *Other reporting*

The SACE Board of South Australia collects and reports the VET that students use to meet the requirements of the Northern Territory Certificate of Education and Training (NTCET).

- This data is collected at the student level and includes the VET unit being undertaken, the nominal hours attached to that VET unit, and the AQF certificate to which that VET unit is attached.
- The data is supplied to DTBI using AVETMISS and forwarded to NCVER once a year.

Queensland

1.   Description of the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education

1.1 Description of the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)

Name of qualification	Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)
Issued by	Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA)
Time frame for completion	Credit towards a QCE can be accumulated over a nine-year banking period but generally three years: Years 10–12. Students who do not achieve the required credit in the required pattern to qualify for a QCE by the end of Year 12 can add to their learning account for a further nine years after leaving school. Once they achieve 20 credits and meet all the QCE requirements, the QCAA will award their QCE in the following July or December.
Units of credit	See the section below.

Minimum requirements for the award of the Queensland Certificateof Education	To be awarded a QCE, a student must achieve the set amount of learning, at the set standard, in a set pattern, while meeting literacy and numeracy requirements.
	Set amount:
	20 credits from learning options, including:
	• QCAA subjects or courses
	• Vocational education and training (VET) qualifications
	• Non-Queensland studies
	• Recognised studies
	
	Set standard:
	• Satisfactory completion, grade of C or better, competency or qualification completion, pass or equivalent.
	
	Set pattern:
	• 12 credits from completed Core courses of study, and
	• 8 credits from any combination of:
	    o Core courses of study
	    o Preparatory courses of study (maximum 4)
	    o Complementary courses of study (maximum 8)
	• At least one credit must be from Core studies completed while enrolled at a school
	Literacy and numeracy requirements:
	• Students must meet literacy and numeracy requirements through one of the available learning options published on the QCAA website.
	
	Achievement in different types of learning attract different credit values, with credit being assigned when a minimum standard of achievement is reached. Partial completion of a course of study may contribute credit to the QCE.
	
	Further information about the Queensland Certificate of Education is available on the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) website.

Subjects/ Courses	There are three categories of learning options that are eligible to contribute credit to the QCE: Core, Preparatory and Complementary. Core courses of study are the types of courses usually undertaken by students during the senior phase of learning. Core courses of study are quality assured by the QCAA or a recognised authority (e.g. International Baccalaureate Organisation or Australian Skills Quality Authority). These courses include QCAA Applied and General subject syllabuses, Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) VET qualifications at Certificate II, III and IV levels (including school-based apprenticeships and school-based traineeships). Preparatory courses of study provide foundational learning for further education and training. They provide foundation or entry-level access to Core courses of study provided in senior schooling or the workplace. Preparatory courses include QCAA Short Courses, AQF VET Certificate 1 qualifications and some recognised studies. Preparatory courses of study contribute a maximum of four credits to the QCE. Learning in the Preparatory category does not contribute to the completed Core requirement of the QCE. Complimentary studies of study generally go beyond the scope and/or depth of what is considered senior schooling. Typically, Complementary courses of study may include courses with depth and breadth different to that in Core courses of study. Complementary courses usually include Diploma and Advanced Diploma qualifications in VET, as well as university subjects, QCAA Short Course in Career Education and QCAA Short Course in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages, and some recognised studies. Complementary courses of study may contribute a maximum of 8 credits to the QCE. Diploma and Advanced Diploma VET qualifications, as well as university subjects are only eligible to contribute to the QCE when completed while a student is enrolled at a school.
Link to the ACACA Agency website with more information about VET in the Queensland Certificateof Education	https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/certificates-qualifications/qce

1.2 Description of the Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA)

Name of qualification	Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA)
Issued by	Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA)
Time frame for completion	The QCIA recognises and reports the achievements of students whose learning is part of an individual learning program during senior secondary schooling. The certificate is an official record that students have completed at least 12 years of education, and provides students with a summary of their skills and knowledge that they can present to employers and training providers.
Units of credit	Not applicable.

Minimum requirements for the award of the Queensland Certificateof Education	Students must have an impairment or difficulty in learning that is not primarily due to social-economic, cultural or linguistic factors. • The person is nominated for the issue of the certificate by the principal of a school at which the person is enrolled; and • The person has completed at least 24 semesters of schooling, other than schooling in the Preparatory Year, and • At least one result for contributing studies for the certificate is recorded in a student account kept for the person; and • The person completes studies that are part of an individual learning program developed for the person at the school. Students cannot receive both a Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) and a QCIA upon completion of senior schooling. However, a student may be issued with a QCIA and also have learning recorded as credit towards the QCE. In this situation, a QCE may be achieved and issued post-school.
Subjects/ Courses	The QCIA is an information-rich certificate, showing a student's demonstrated achievement within their individual learning program. There are two types of statements included in the QCIA: The QCIA records the student's educational achievement in two areas: • The Statement of Achievement provides an overview of a student's demonstrated educational achievement within curriculum organisers: o Communication and technologies o Community, citizenship and the environment o Leisure and recreation o Personal and living dimensions o Vocational and transition activities • The Statement of Participation includes the names and titles of activities a student has undertaken. There is no provision for explaining the activity or indicating the nature of any achievements or standards that might be associated with the activity. Further information about the [Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement](#) is available on the [Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority](#) (QCAA) website.
Link to the ACACA Agency website with more information about VET in the Queensland Certificateof Individual Achievement	https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/certificates-qualifications/qcia

2. *VET quality and the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)*

VET reported on the Senior Statement and contributing to the QCE must be delivered by registered training organisations (RTOs) complying with the VET Quality Framework, usingnationally endorsed training packages or nationally accredited courses. Many Queensland schools are RTOs.

3.   *Recognition of VET in the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)*

Certificate I–IV and Diploma units of competency can contribute credit towards the QCE. There is no 'packaging' of VET into subject-sized units of credit in the QCE. Completion and partial completion of VET qualifications can contribute to the QCE. Credit is assigned to the QCE appropriate to the amount of learning completed by a student.

Table 1: Formalised Credit Arrangements for VET

VET qualification	Requirements	QCE credits	Notes
Certificate I	**Recommended hours**	**4 (maximum credit available)**	
	• 200 hours or more	3	
	• Fewer than 200 hours	2	
Certificate II	**Recommended hours**	**4 (maximum credit available)**	
	Not applicable	4	QCE credits contribute to the completed Core requirement when a student successfully completes the full qualification from the Core category of learning.
Certificate III and IV	**Recommended hours**	**8 (maximum credit available)**	
	• 440 hours or more	8	QCE credits contribute to the completed Core requirement when a student successfully completes the full qualification from the Core category of learning.
	• 385-439 hours	7	
	• 330-384 hours	6	
	• Fewer than 330 hours	5	QCE credit for VET qualifications is based on the recommended hours of learning as determined by the Queensland Government, Department of Employment, Small Business and Training.
School-Based Apprenticeships		**6 (maximum credit available)**	
VET qualification	Maximum training that school-based apprentices may complete while at school, dependent on the nominal term (full-time) of the apprenticeship: • Four years – up to 33.3% of the competencies • Three years – up to 40% of the competencies • Two years – up to 50% of the competencies.	Up to 2	School-based apprenticeship VET qualifications do not contribute to the completed Core requirement of the QCE, as they cannot be completed while at school.

VET qualification	Requirements	QCE credits	Notes
On-the-job	Minimum 50 days (375 hours) per 12 months from date of commencement (a minimum of 7.5 hours per week averaged over each 3-month period)	Up to 4 (2 credits for each 50 days completed each 12 months)	QCE credits may contribute to the completed Core requirement when a student completes all the on-the-job hours while at school. Partial credit may apply. The Queensland Government, Department of Employment, Small Business and Training provides further information about [school-based apprenticeships and traineeships](#).
School-based traineeships		**8 (maximum credit available)**	
	As outlined with the relevant VET certificate level.	Up to 8	No additional QCE credit is accrued for on-the-job hours completed for a school-based traineeship.

Table 2: VET – partial qualifications

VET qualification	Competencies complete	QCE credits			
Certificate II Maximum credit available for a completed course is 4 credits.	100% complete	4			
	75% complete	3			
	50% complete	2			
	25% complete	1			
	<25% complete	0			
		Maximum credit available			
Certificate III and IV Maximum credit is determined by the recommended hours provided by the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training.	100% complete	8	7	6	5
	75% complete	6	5	4	3
	50% complete	4	3	3	2
	25% complete	2	1	1	1
	<25% complete	0	0	0	0

Applied subjects and VET Certificate II qualifications with duplication of learning

To ensure breadth of learning within a QCE, credit will accrue for new learning only. Applied subjects and Certificate II level qualifications that have similar subject matter and learning goals are considered duplication of learning.

A list of the Certificate II qualifications and Applied subjects that have [duplication of learning](#) is published on the QCAA website. Students may enrol in both however, where duplication has been identified, QCE credit will only accrue for one completed course. A maximum of 4 QCE credits can be achieved.

All completed and partially completed qualifications are recorded on the Senior Statement.

Multiple VET qualifications and qualifications from the same training package

To ensure the requirements for the amount and breadth of learning for a QCE are met, limitations are placed on the amount of QCE credit that can contribute to the QCE for some VET qualifications.

Credit for the QCE accrues when a student completes new learning. When a student completes multiple VET qualifications, a RTO may transfer credit for completed units of competency from one qualification to the completion of another qualification. New learning in VET is identified as units of competency that are recorded as competent, rather than credit transfer. Credit transfer relates to learning in VET qualifications, which is different from credit contributing to a QCE.

When a student completes or partially completes multiple qualifications from within the same VET training package (e.g. Certificate II in Business and Certificate III in Business), the highest-level qualification in the category of learning will contribute credit to a QCE. A maximum of 8 credits from the same training package can contribute to a QCE.

All completed qualifications are recorded on the Senior Statement.

Table 3: Qualifications from the same training package – category of learning and QCE credits.

Certificate I	Certificate II	Certificate III orIV	Category of learning	Maximum QCE credit
✓			Preparatory	2-3
	✓		Core	4
	✓✓		Core	4-8
	✓	✓	Core	5-8
✓	✓		Preparatory Core	4-7
✓	✓	✓	Core	5-8
	✓	Partially completed	Core	4 from Certificate II (0-4 additional credit from partial completion of the Certificate III accrues for new learning)

4. *Workplace learning options for VET in the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)*

The QCAA strongly recommends work placement for students undertaking VET qualifications. However, no QCE credit is accrued for hours completed for work placement.

Students undertaking a school-based apprenticeship may have their on-the-job training recognised for the QCE (see Table 1: Formalised credit arrangements for VET).

5. *Australian School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships*

In Queensland, Australian school-based apprenticeships are known as school-based apprenticeships and traineeships (SATs).

Queensland continues to recognise the difference between a traineeship and an apprenticeship. The latter leads to a trade qualification.

Students may undertake any traineeship or apprenticeship under school-based arrangements. Recognition for these is described in Table 1: Formalised credit arrangements for VET.

Students undertaking a school-based apprenticeship may have their on-the-job training recognised for the QCE (see Table 1: Formalised credit arrangements for VET).

6. *Contribution of VET in the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) to tertiary entrance*

Queensland introduced a new QCE system starting with Year 11 students in 2019.

From 2020, the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) will replace the Overall Position (OP) as the primary pathway for Year 12 students to tertiary study in Queensland.

The Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) will calculate ATARs for Queensland students. QTAC will calculate ATARs based on either:

- A student's best 5 General subject results, or

- A student's best results in a combination of 4 General subjects results, plus 1 Applied subject or completed VET qualification at AQF Certificate III qualification or above.

If a student is eligible for an ATAR in both categories, QTAC will use their highest ATAR. To be eligible for an ATAR, a student must also have:

- satisfactorily completed an English subject;

- accumulated their subject results within a 5-year period.

More information about the ATAR is available on the QTAC website.

7. *Mechanisms for the delivery of VET*

a. Directly by an RTO

i) School RTOs

In Queensland, secondary schools can be RTOs. Currently there are 297 schools that are RTOs registered with the QCAA, acting under a delegation from the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). This includes 198 state schools, 60 Catholic schools and 39 independentschools. All school teachers delivering/assessing VET must have the qualifications and experiences to meet VET Quality Framework and Training Package requirements for trainers/assessors.

        ii) TAFE and other RTOs

Schools that are not RTOs can offer VET courses through TAFE and other RTOs. Students undertake the course wholly through TAFE Queensland or the private/community RTO under contractual arrangements with individual schools/colleges or school systems.

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) provides public funding towards the cost of training and assessment. These User Choice programs can be accessed by students while still at school. Only one apprenticeship or traineeship can be funded at any single point in time. DESBT publishes a list of approved training providers and the apprenticeships and traineeships that are funded under the User Choice program.

School-based apprenticeships and traineeships (SATs) are available to students in either Year 10, 11 or 12, but students may be able to enter a SAT prior to starting Year 10 in exceptional circumstances. All SATs must be supported by the employer, the school, a supervising RTO, and the parent or guardian. Students are paid for the time spent working with their employer.

b.   By the school in partnership/auspice arrangement with an RTO

A proportion of school RTOs deliver VET courses to students under contractual arrangements with private/community RTOs or TAFE Queensland.

8. *Supply of VET data to ACACA agency*

Schools registered by the QCAA under a delegation report enrolment and outcome data to the QCAA using the Student Management application via the QCAA Portal. Data from the Student Management application is transferred to QCAA's database and students' learning accounts.

AVETMISS compliant data can be extracted from the Student Management application for reporting purposes.

Non-school RTOs report enrolment and outcome data for eligible learners to the QCAA Student Management application through the State Training Agency Clearinghouse (STAC). This may be managed through AVETMISS-compliant software or paper records.

Learning providers (including RTOs) may also bank learner enrolment and outcomes information into the Student Management application directly.

9. *Certification (reporting to students)*

Learning providers are responsible for banking student achievements into students' learning accounts via the QCAA Student Management application.

Students are issued a Senior Statement which includes information contained in their learning account, including details of contributing units of competency, the parent qualification and the learning provider.

RTOs are responsible for issuing VET Certificates and Statements of Attainment

The QCAA issues students in Queensland with a Senior Education Profile (SEP) upon completion of senior secondary schooling. This profile may include a:

- Senior Statement

- Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE)

- Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA).

Senior statement

Students are issued with a Senior Statement in the December following the completion of QCAA-developed and QCAA-approved courses of study. The Senior Statement is a cumulative record of achievement for all units undertaken in which a result was obtained and contributed to a QCE. All VET qualifications which were studied during the senior phase of learning are listed on the Senior Statement. Credit which has been achieved through the VET qualification will be identified against each qualification.

10.   Other reporting

School reports on Year 12 outcomes

Each year, the Queensland Government publishes a Year 12 Outcomes Report. The reportis compiled from data provided to the QCAA by Queensland schools, the Department of Education, the Queensland Tertiary Admissions Centre (QTAC) and other learning providers. For each school, the report includes information on the number of students awarded VET qualifications. The report is published on the QCAA website at www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/617.htm

National reporting

The State Training Agency Clearinghouse (STAC) reports all Queensland VET data (school RTO and non-school RTO data) to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) for national reporting purposes.

School registration data for school RTOs registered by QCAA is provided to the Australian Skills Quality Authority each month for inclusion in training.gov.au.

Each quarter, Queensland student enrolment and outcome data are transferred to STAC for inclusion in Queensland's reports to NCVER.

South Australia

1. *Description of the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education*

Name of qualification	South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)
Issued by	SACE Board of South Australia
Time frame for completion	Most students complete their SACE over three years – Year 10 (Personal Learning Plan), Year 11, and Year 12. There is no time limit within which students must complete their SACE.
	Stage 1 level subjects are usually studied in Year 10 and 11; Stage 2 subjects are usually studied in Year 12.
Units of credit	10 credits = 50–60 hours of teaching and learning time (usually one semester)
Minimum requirements for the award of the South Australian Certificate of Education	A student is required to gain 200 credits to complete the SACE. This comprises of compulsory elements awarded 110 credits and non-compulsory elements awarded a total of 90 credits.
	Compulsory elements: students must complete at a grade of C or better (or equivalent for courses) all of the following requirements:
	- Personal Learning Plan – at Stage 1, awarded 10 credits - literacy requirement – at Stage 1 or 2, awarded 20 credits - numeracy requirement – at Stage 1 or 2, awarded 10 credits - Research Project at Stage 2, awarded 10 credits - Other Board-accredited subjects and/or Board-recognised courses (including VET) at Stage 2, awarded 60 credits.
	Non-compulsory elements: students must complete 90 credits at Stage 1 and/or 2 from Board-accredited subjects and/or Board- recognised courses (e.g. VET qualifications, University Studies, interstate and overseas courses).
Subjects / Courses	Board-accredited subjects include:
	- about 60 subjects available - Vocational education and training (VET) qualifications and units of competencies towards qualifications - Community Learning programs - Subjects or courses from interstate or overseas senior secondary certificates of education - University Studies - International Baccalaureate Diploma Program - Intensive English Learning Programs - Language courses delivered by the School of Languages, South Australian Department of Education – (DfE).
Link to the ACACA Agency website with more information about VET in the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)	www.sace.sa.edu.au

2.   *VET quality and the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE)*

The SACE Board of SA recognises completion of VET qualifications or units of competencies from partly completed qualifications towards the SACE. The Board will only recognise VET that:

- is listed on the www.training.gov.au website as the national register of information on VET in Australia

- is delivered and assessed by, or under the auspices of, RTOs that are registered to deliver and/or assess the VET that is to be recognised

- is delivered and assessed in accordance with ASQA's AQTF and training package requirements

- can be certified on a transcript, statement of attainment, or qualification issued by an RTO.

Thus the VET that is recognised is that which forms part of the AQF and that which is quality assured using processes in line with the AQTF.

In South Australia, the large majority of the VET that is undertaken by school students is delivered by, or under the auspices of, a public and private RTO. In the main, schools are not RTOs.

The ASQA, as the national regulator for the VET sector, is the legislated body responsible for the regulation of VET in South Australia. ASQA regulates courses and training providersto ensure nationally approved quality standards are met.

The South Australian Training and Skills Commission provides independent advice to the South Australian Government about the State's skills and workforce development priorities. The Training and Skills Commission and the SACE Board of South Australia are committed to working in partnership to ensure students seeking to commence VET qualifications have clear pathways and opportunities to complete both the SACE and VET qualifications while atschool and to establish meaningful post-school pathways.

The SACE Board of SA has compiled a VET Recognition Register (see Section 3.b. Unspecified VET recognition). The Register provides information about how the various VETqualifications are aligned to the SACE. This Register was compiled following a series of consultations with respective Industry Skills Boards, TAFE SA, private RTOs, and the three schooling sectors representatives.

3.   *Recognition of VET in the SACE*

A copy of the Recognition Arrangements for Vocational Education and Training (VET) in the SACE policy is available at: www.sace.sa.edu.au/web/vet/what-is-vet/policy

The purpose of the recognition arrangements for VET in the SACE is to help students to build coherent and meaningful pathways in the SACE through VET. These arrangements encourage students to complete, or make significant progress towards completion, VET qualifications. The qualification is thus the key means of organising recognition of VET in theSACE and helping students to plan and purse their pathways.

VET that is recognised for SACE purposes

The recognition arrangements for VET in the SACE include recognition of:

- completed qualifications

- partly completed qualification (for which a student has completed one or more units of competency).

Alignment of VET with Compulsory and Non-compulsory Elements of the SACE

To complete the SACE, students must achieve 200 SACE credits, 150 of which can be gained through the recognition arrangements for VET in the SACE.

Students can use a maximum of two qualifications at Certificate I level to gain credits towards the completion of the SACE. There is no limit to the number of qualifications at Certificate II level or higher that students can use to gain credits towards the completion ofthe SACE.

VET contributes towards the SACE in the following ways:

a.   Formalised

Students can undertake units of competency that can contribute towards the assessment of the Board-accredited subject, Workplace Practices at Stage 1 and/or Stage 2 of the SACE.

b.   Unspecified

Students earn 10 SACE credits for the successful completion of 70 nominal hours of VET towards qualifications, up to the maximum credit allocation for a qualification, for:

- completed qualifications

- partly completed qualifications (for which a student has completed one or more units of competency).

The SACE Board determines whether the SACE credits earned for a particular VET qualification will be recognised at Stage 1 or at Stage 2 level.

In most cases a VET qualification (i.e. all the units of competency that make up the qualification) are recognised at Stage 1 or at Stage 2 level. However, specific units of competency from some Certificate II or Certificate III qualifications are recognised at Stage 1 whereas other units of competency from the same qualification are recognised at Stage 2.

The levels that the Board assigns to qualifications are recorded on the Board's VET Recognition Register. The SACE Board publishes the VET Recognition Register to show, for each VET qualification listed on the Register, the:

- maximum and minimum number of SACE credits that students could expect to earn by completing the qualification

- SACE level (Stage 1 and/or Stage 2) at which credits earned for the qualification will be recognised for SACE purposes.

The VET Recognition Register details the translation of completed units of competency towards VET qualifications into SACE credits. The SACE Board bases this translation on VET Training Package Qualification Rules and details within Training Package Purchasing Guides used by the South Australian Department for Innovation and Skills (DIS) (formerly Department for Skills Development (DSD) Purchasing Guides provide information on how to implement a Training Package and detail nominal hours for qualifications and units of competency as an estimate of time taken for structured training and assessment.

The SACE Board uses the units of competency and the associated nominal hours, as outlined in the Purchasing Guides, to determine the number of SACE credits a student can gain towards the SACE.

The VET Recognition Register does not show every VET qualification available through the VET sector, as it is a list of qualifications students commonly undertake as part of their SACE. However, the SACE Board recognises any VET that is listed on the www.training.gov.au website.

4.   *Workplace learning options and recognition in the SACE*

Work placement is encouraged as an opportunity to reinforce the learning. Schools, through their VET delivery arrangements, are required to refer to the appropriate training package for the conditions in which competency is to be assessed.

A work placement is not mandated as part of the recognition of VET in the SACE.

Generally, students in years 10, 11 and/or 12 may undertake work experience and/or structured workplace learning, as facilitated by schools for individual students. Schools in each of the three schooling sectors use the South Australian Workplace Learning Guidelines to enable students to acquire industry-specific skills in a real workplace, prepare to seek job opportunities as well as learn generic work skills that are transferable to any job. The basis for Workplace Learning Programs for all eligible South Australian students is documented in the 'Workplace Learning Guidelines' Booklet available at:

https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/curriculum-and-teaching/numeracy-and- literacy/workplace-learning-students

Opportunities within the SACE are available for students to have their work placementand/or structured workplace learning recognised through:

- the SACE subject 'Personal Learning Plan', at Stage 1
- the SACE subject 'Workplace Practices', at Stage 1 and/or Stage 2
- the processes for the recognition of Community Learning in the SACE, at Stage 1and/or Stage 2.

5.   *Australian School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships*

The employer, student and parent/guardian are all signatories to a Training Contract, with the chosen RTO and the Apprenticeship Network provider nominated on the contract. A Training Plan is negotiated by these parties as part of the Training Contract, with school involvement in negotiating and agreeing on the school, work, and training components.

Schools complete an '-ASbA Endorsement Checklist' with the School Principal endorsing the special section of the Training Plan.

ASBAs are not recognised distinctly from the strategies for recognising VET in the SACE described in Section 3: Recognition of VET in the SACE and Section 4: Workplace learning options and recognition in the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).

6. Contribution of VET in the SACE to tertiary entrance

A SACE student can count the completion of a Certificate III or above that is recognised at Stage 2 in the SACE, as the equivalent of one, full-year subject in the calculation of the university aggregate and/or TAFE SA aggregate, and its associated ATAR and/or TAFE SA Selection Score.

To obtain a university aggregate and an ATAR based on a completed SACE for tertiary entrance, the student:

- must qualify for the SACE

- comply with the rules regarding precluded combinations

- comply with the rules regarding counting restrictions

- complete at least 90 credits of study at Stage 2 of which 70 credits of study must be 20-credit Tertiary Admissions Subjects from a maximum of three attempts which need not be in consecutive years. The remaining 20 credits is referred to as the 'Flexible option', which may be a fourth Tertiary Admission Subject or a 'Recognised Study'. Completion of a VET Certificate III or above that is recognised at Stage 2 in the SACE is considered a 'Recognised Study'. For the completion of a VET Certificate III or above as a Recognised Study, the student receives a scaled score that is equivalent to the average scaled scores for the 70 credits from Board- accredited subjects.

To obtain a TAFE SA aggregate and a TAFE SA Selection Score based on a completed SACE, the student:

- must qualify for the SACE

- comply with the rules regarding precluded combinations

- comply with the rules regarding counting restrictions

- complete at least 60 credits of study at Stage 2 of which 40 credits of study must be 20-credit Tertiary Admissions Subjects from a maximum of three attempts which need not be in consecutive years. The remaining 20 credits is referred to as the 'Flexible option', which may be a third Tertiary Admission Subject or a 'Recognised Study'. Completion of a VET Certificate III or above that is recognised at Stage 2 in the SACE is considered a 'Recognised Study'. For the completion of a VET Certificate III or above as a Recognised Study, the student receives a scaled score that is equivalent to the average scaled scores for the 40 credits from Board- accredited subjects.

7.   *Mechanisms for the delivery of VET*

The SACE Board's policy recognises that the partnerships developed between schools, industry and RTOs provide opportunities for students to undertake VET and complete the SACE, and promote successful transitions from school to work and/or further education and training. The policy acknowledges that an RTO is responsible for conducting, or authorising the delivery and assessment procedures of, a VET training program.

Schools can provide VET for its students in the following ways:

a.   Directly by an RTO

i) School who is an RTO

A school that is registered as an RTO is responsible for all aspects of training, delivery, assessment, quality assurance, record management procedures and issuing transcripts (e.g. student academic record), AQF qualifications, and/or Statements of Attainment. The school is also responsible for submitting students' VET results to the SACE Board to claim VET recognition in the SACE.

ii) TAFE

In negotiation with the school and TAFE, a school student may attend TAFE to undertake VET. The TAFE is responsible for all aspects of training, delivery, assessment, quality assurance, record management procedures and issuing transcripts (e.g. student academic record), AQF qualifications, and/or Statements of Attainment. The TAFE provides the documentation to the student and school. The school is responsible for submitting students' VET results to the SACE Board to claim VET recognition in the SACE.

iii) Other RTO

In negotiation with the school and other RTO, a school student may attend an RTO to undertake VET. The RTO is responsible for all aspects of training, delivery, assessment, quality assurance, record management procedures and issuing transcripts (e.g. student academic record), AQF qualifications, and/or Statements of Attainment. The RTO provides the documentation to the student and school. The school is responsible for submitting students' VET results to the SACE Board to claim VET recognition in the SACE.

b.   By the school in partnership / auspice arrangement with an RTO (including TAFEand/or other RTOs).

Schools that are not RTOs enter into partnerships with RTOs for the delivery and assessment of components of a training program. This may comprise formats where:

- the school delivers training and assessment of students' in qualifications or units of competencies in partnership with an RTO

- the RTO delivers training and assessment of students' in qualifications or units of competencies

- a combination of the two approaches described above is used.

The school is responsible for:

- registering its students with the RTO

- ensuring results (e.g. student academic record) issued by the RTO are submitted to the SACE Board.

The RTO is responsible for:

- providing students with transcripts; and/or
- awarding the AQF qualifications or statements of attainment to students.

SACE students can undertake accredited VET training through a variety of formats that are principally based on the mechanisms for the delivery of VET described above, namely:

- School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships
- Training Guarantee for SACE Students – refer: https://s.skills.sa.gov.au/
- Purchased
- Auspiced.

8. *Supply of VET data to ACACA agency*

The RTO responsible for accrediting VET qualifications and/or units of competencies within qualifications that have been successfully completed, provides the school/student with a transcript / statement of results (e.g. Student Academic Record, Statement of Attainment etc).

The school reports to the SACE Board the VET outcome data to be recognised (according to the Statement of Attainment provided by the RTO) using the SACE Boards' Schools Online System.

9. *Certification (reporting to students)*

Reporting of completed VET activity towards the SACE, by the SACE Board of SA, is undertaken against the relevant VET qualification.

The SACE Board provides students with the following documentation of their achievements:

- Record of Achievement
- SACE.

Students' VET achievements are formally certified through transcripts, statements of attainment, and/or national recognised qualifications (for completed qualifications) awarded by the RTOs.

The SACE Board recognises VET achievement that contributes to the SACE and reports it on the SACE Record of Achievement.

For each qualification for which a student has recorded completed units of competency, the SACE Board will report on the student's Record of Achievement, the:

- name of the qualification
- number of SACE credits earned for the units of competency, reported against each qualification
- SACE stage at which the credits will be recognised
- year in which the SACE credits were gained.

10.   *Other reporting*

Senior secondary schools in South Australia report to the SACE Board of South Australia the VET that students wish to recognise towards their SACE:

- this data is collected at the student level and includes the VET unit being undertaken, the nominal hours attached to that VET unit, and the AQF certificate to which that VET unit is attached.

- VET data is supplied to the South Australian Department for Innovation and Skills (DIS), formerly Department of Skills Development (DSD), for the purposes of reporting 'VET in schools' data for the MCEETYA report.

- the data supplied is at the VET unit level for those students that have enrolled in any VET units for that particular year.

- the data is used to confirm the 'VET in Schools' records that are also collected by DIS directly from RTOs as total VET activity.

- the data supplied is at the VET unit level for those students that have enrolled in any VET units for that particular year.

- this data set is forwarded from DIS to NCVER who then manipulate the data for inclusion in the MCEETYA report.

- this data is provided once a year.

- Total VET activity (TVA) is reported to NCVER by the South Australian Department for Innovation and Skills (DIS).

11.   *Future Directions*

Throughout 2018 there was an independent review conducted into the Stage 2 requirements of South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE). The final review, published in December 2018 outlined 16 recommendations. In December 2019, the Minister for Education announced a $5 million investment to enhance the SACE, specifically to:

- Renew the compulsory Stage 2 Research Project, with clearly defined options including skills-based or vocational projects, entrepreneurial and serviced projects with a STEM focus;

- Renew the Personal Learning Plan (PLP);

- Renew the VET recognition register, with support from the Industry Skills Councils; and

- Embed capabilities, including entrepreneurial thinking, into the SACE.

VET qualifications continue to be in high demand in South Australia, as identified by the Training and Skills Commission. The SACE Board will continue to work on a variety of internal reviews and projects while also consulting with stakeholders, school sectors and industry bodies to ensure there is clear understanding on how the recognition of VET can contribute to a student's SACE completion. The SACE Board continues to strengthen the connection between education, training and the labour market, while supporting both employers and students as they transition from school to work.

The SACE Board will continue to look at ways to ensure there is better recognition of workplace learning. This will support the work on how capabilities can be developed and assessed throughout the completion of VET, while also exploring how we can recognise skill sets and micro-credentialing more broadly within the SACE. This will involve reviewing the current SACE recognition register tool and the SACE policy guidelines that surround this structure, ensuring we can recognise all the different ways of student learning. It is envisioned that students who undertake VET with their SACE do so as a lever for change and continued growth.

The SACE Board will continue to strive to incorporate the very best research evidence in policies and practices, while aiming to develop innovative curriculum and assessment work to meet the learning entitlement of the 21st century learner, allowing our students to thrive.

Tasmania

1.   Description of the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education

Name of qualification	Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE)
Issued by	The Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards and Certification (TASC). www.tasc.tas.gov.au
Time frame for completion	The TCE can be completed over a students' lifetime. Generally students complete the certificate in two years.
Units of credit	Each TASC accredited senior secondary course, VET unit of competency or qualification and other formal learning recognised by TASC (for example, AMEB music qualifications) is located within a framework of: • size ('how large'), expressed in units, where 1 unit represents the equivalent of 10 nominal hours • complexity ('how difficult/demanding'), expressed in levels that align with the levels of the AQF (1 to 10) • robustness ('how confident can we be in the quality assurance of these results'), expressed in one of five levels. To gain credit towards the TCE, a student must record a minimum level of attainment in a course regarding: • Preliminary Achievement in a TASC accredited course • competent or Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in nationally recognised training (NRT) • pass or equivalent in TASC recognised formal learning. Students are credited with a number of units of credit equal to the recorded size value at the recorded complexity level.
Minimum requirements of the TCE	To achieve the TCE students must meet the five standards of the TCE. 1. Participation and achievement standard – achieved at least 120 credit points in senior secondary education and training with at least 80 credit points in studies at Level 2 or higher. 2. Everyday adult reading and writing in English standard 3. Everyday adult mathematics standard 4. Everyday adult use of computers and the internet standard 5. Develop and review future career and education plans standard. The standards can be met through satisfactory completion of TASC accredited courses and/or by completing a safety net test, if required.
Courses	TASC accredits a range of senior secondary courses from pre-Level to Level 4. These courses and a range of other recognised formal learning can contribute to meeting the requirements of the TCE. All VET units of competency and VET qualifications contribute to meeting the Participation and achievement standard of the TCE.
Link to the ACACA Agency website with more information about VET in the Tasmanian Certificateof Education	For more information about the TCE visit https://www.tasc.tas.gov.au/students/qualifications/tasmanian-certificate- of-education-tce/ Use the TCE course planner to find out how VET units contribute TCE credit points https://www.tasc.tas.gov.au/students/course-planner/

2.   ET quality and the Tasmanian Certificate of Education (TCE)

TASC recognises any nationally endorsed VET qualifications and/or units of competency towards the achievement of a TCE. This includes VET achievement outside of a school arrangement.

VET competencies and qualifications are determined only by the RTO, whether they are schools, or other RTOs (publicly funded, privately funded or enterprise-based).

Priorities since 2015

- The Tasmanian Government's goal for young Tasmanians is to increase levels of engagement, retention, and attainment so that students complete Year 12 with a meaningful qualification.

- The work of the Office of TASC, is underpinned by legislation and guided by a number of state and national policy initiatives including the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians which clearly outlines a nationally consistent future direction for Australian schooling including that (Goal 2): all young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.

- Senior secondary education is directed by Tasmanian Government policies including initiatives such as extending all government high schools to Year 12 by 2022.

- Additionally, changes to the Tasmanian Education Act, to be fully implemented in 2020, will ensure that Tasmanian students stay at school until they complete Year 12, a Certificate III, or turn 18.

- The 9-12 Project, which has been established as a result of the recommendations of the 2016 Australian Council on Educational Research Review of 9-12 in Tasmania includes initiatives such as the development of a state-wide vision for VET and vocational learning.

3.   Recognition of VET in the TCE

All nationally recognised VET qualifications and/or units of competency from training packages attained by any person can contribute towards the achievement of the TCE and are also recognised in the Tasmanian Qualifications Certificate.

4.   Workplace learning options and recognition in the TCE

TASC recognises all nationally recognised units of competency towards the TCE, in terms of its complexity, as expressed in levels that align with the levels of the AQF (1 to 10) and size-value which is calculated with reference to the delivery of nominal hours.

Unit (course) size-value (for the purposes of the TCE) is now 'auto-stripped' and updated from AVETMISS (NAT00060) metadata.

Students do not need to provide their VET attainment records for training undertaken outside of the school system (e.g. from MacDonald's, Woolworths, online RSA) to TASC for TCE inclusion as TASC is legislated to receive this data from RTOs to then provide to NCVER. The data (and therefore, TCE credit points) is then automatically attributed to a student.

5. *Australian School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships*

No preferential or additional value is placed upon attainments gained through apprenticeship and traineeship arrangements. All student attainments in VET (competent, RPL) are assigned credit points and counted towards the achievement of a TCE.

6. *VET in the TCE and contribution to tertiary entrance*

Every successfully undertaken VET unit contributes towards a student's TCE. Currently, VET does not contribute towards a Tertiary Entrance score, and therefore, a students' Australian Tertiary Admission Ranking (ATAR) in Tasmania. This is a determination of the University of Tasmania as the Tasmanian Tertiary Admissions Centre. However, there are many pathways into tertiary study, including VET qualifications.

7. *Mechanisms for the delivery of VET in the TCE*

Directly by an RTO

School who is an RTO

Some Government and non-government schools are registered training organisations including the Tasmanian Senior Secondary Colleges RTO.*TAFE*

TasTAFE is Tasmania's largest public provider of VET. TasTAFE provides VET to students in some schools under auspice arrangements.

Other RTO

There are many private training providers delivering VET in Tasmania, sometimes to students under auspiced arrangements with schools; and sometimes to students undertaking private arrangements with these RTOs.

Attainments are reported by the managing RTO. Because TASC concentrates only on recording the client attainments that are delivered by an RTO, differential value is not placed on wheth er that RTO is a school, college, or private organisation. If an organisation is an RTO and is delivering to a Tasmanian client, then it has a legislated obligation to report client attainments to TASC under the TASC Act 2003.

8. *Supply of VET data to ACACA agency*

TASC collects data from schools and RTOs. All RTOs (whether publicly or privately funded) that deliver in Tasmania provide quarterly updates of competencies attained and qualifications issued to persons in Tasmania. The data from RTOs are collected in AVETMISS format.

9.   *Certification (reporting to students)*

TASC provides individuals with records of all their achievements in senior secondary education including VET and other education.

On completion of Year 12, students who have successfully undertaken TASC accredited courses, VET, higher education or other formal learning recognised by TASC are issued with the Tasmanian Qualifications Certificate.

The Qualifications Certificate bears a unique verification number that can be used by, for example, an employer to verify the information that it records.

Persons needing official certification of qualifications issued by Tasmanian RTOs (for example where the original certificate has been lost or the RTO has ceased operating) are issued on request a Tasmanian Qualifications Certificate that includes these qualifications.

For VET, the qualifications certificate shows the relevant RTO, units, qualifications, size and level.

On completion of Year 12 (or any subsequent year, as TASC recognises learning undertaken by a student throughout their lifetime) a student who meets the standards of the TCE (as outlined above) will be issued with the TCE.

10.   *Other reporting*

TASC provides detailed profiles of achievement at state-wide, sector and school, level. TASC's annual reporting includes:

- detailed profiles of attainment to schools and government RTOs operating in Tasmania
- ATAR and equivalent tertiary entrance ranks to the University of Tasmania, along with individual course results
- provisions of AVETMISS data to NCVER for their 'VET in schools' collection
- provision of school enrolment and achievement data to ACARA for reporting on the
- My School website.

11.   *Future directions*

TASC continues to work with all school sectors and industry bodies to ensure there is understanding about how VET contributes to a students' senior secondary qualification, including the TCE and Tasmanian Qualifications Certificate. As a key proponent of the Year 9-12 Project, TASC is contributing to the future of a VET / vocational learning vision for Tasmania.

Victoria

1.   Description of the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education

1.1   Victorian Certificate of Education

Name of qualification	Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)
Issued by	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)
Time frame for completion	The VCE can be completed over an unspecified period of time. Generally students complete the certificate in two to three years – years 10, 11 and 12
Units of credit	A 'study' is broken up into four units. Each VCE study unit is numbered 1,2, 3 or 4. Most students undertake a study in the following sequence: • Units 1 and 2 (normally Year 11) • Units 3 and 4 (normally Year 12)
Minimum requirements for the award of the VictorianCertificate of Education	16 units are required for satisfactory completion of the VCE. Students must have at least three units from the English group of studies with at least one of the units from the Unit 3 or 4 level. Students must also have three sequences of Unit 3 and 4 studies in addition to the sequence chosen from the English group. These sequences can be from VCE studies and/or VCE VET programs or other VET qualifications that provide a Unit 3 and 4 sequence through Block Credit recognition.
Subjects/ Courses	The VCAA develops VCE courses that enable students to acquire skills and knowledge in a wide range of studies. The VCAA develops VCE VET programs drawn from Nationally Recognised VET qualifications. These are typically packaged into the Unit 1– 4 structure of the VCE.
Link to the ACACA Agency website with more information about VET in the Victorian Certificate ofEducation	https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vet/Pages/index.aspx

1.2   *Victoria Certificate of Applied Learning*

Name of qualification	Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL)
Issued by	Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA)
Time frame for completion	The VCAL is usually completed over a 2 year period, years 11 and 12 with students completing 2 VCAL levels. A certificate is awarded upon completion of the course requirements for each level.
Units of credit	The VCAL is comprised of 3 levels - Foundation, Intermediate and Senior. Units are selected from the four compulsory VCAL strands, VCE units and VET. 1 unit of credit = 100 nominal hours
Minimum requirements for the award of the VictorianCertificate of Applied Learning	Students must complete a learning program which contains a minimum of 10 credits at any of the 3 levels. It must contain a minimum of six credits at the VCAL level undertaken with a minimum of one credit being required from each VCAL strand.
Subjects/ Courses	VCAL learning programs must be designed to meet the VCAL course requirements. Each student should be enrolled in a learning program that includes curriculum strands that develop literacy and numeracy skills, industry specific skills, work related skills and personal development skills. The strands may be completed through undertaking VCAL units or VET UoCs and or VCE units that satisfy the strand requirements. VET is a mandated component of Intermediate and Senior VCAL.
Link to the ACACA Agency website with more information about VET in the Victorian Certificate ofApplied Learning	https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vet/Pages/index.aspx

2.   *VET quality and the VCE and the VCAL*

The VCAA recognises completion of VET units of competency or modules towards the VCE or VCAL.

The VCAA will only recognise VET that:

- is listed on the www.training.gov.au website as the national register of information on Vocational Education and Training in Australia

- is delivered and assessed by or delivered under the auspices of registered training organisations (RTOs) which are registered to deliver and/or assess the VET

- is delivered and assessed in accordance with the VET Quality Framework standards or the relevant Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF) standards and training package requirements

- can be certified on a transcript, statement of attainment, or qualification issued by an RTO.

Thus in Victoria, the VET that is recognised is that which forms part of the AQF and that which is quality assured using processes in line with the VET Quality Framework.

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) is the body with responsibility for quality assurance of VET for Victorian registered RTO's which includes school based RTO's, currently slightly below 10% of schools providing the VCE or VCAL. The Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA), as the national regulator for the vocational education and training sector, is the legislated body responsible for the regulation of vocational education and training for RTO's registered to deliver in multiple jurisdictions, including all Victorian TAFEs.

3. Recognition of VET in the VCE or VCAL

3.1 Recognition of VET in the VCE

The VCAA develops, approves, and manages a suite of 26 VCE VET programs (comprising 45 individual VET certificates)

a. Formalised

VCE VET programs are typically in the VCE Unit 1 – 4 structure. This would normally equate to between 360 and 400 nominal hours. VCE VET programs would normally see the completion of at least a Certificate II, with some containing selected Certificate III UoC's and others provide a complete Certificate III.

b. Unspecified

Unspecified credit into the VCE is known as Block Credit Recognition. This is where credit accrues within a certificate at the rate of one unit of credit for each 90 hours of completed UoC's. VET Certificates at an AQF level 2 provide credit towards the VCE unit at 1 & 2.

Certificates at AQF level 3 provide credit towards the VCE units 1 to 4. Certificates at AQF level 4 or above, where approved by the VCAA provide credit at VCE units 3 & 4.

3.2 Recognition of VET in the VCAL

a. Formalised

All credit for VET undertaken by VCAL students accrues at the rate of 90 completed hours of UoC's equating to one unit of credit. This can accrue from a single certificate or be drawn from multiple certificates. VET certificates at AQF level 1 will provide credit towards the VCAL at the Foundation and Intermediate levels. VET certificates at AQF level 2 or above will provide credit towards all 3 levels of the VCAL.

The VCAA has a restriction policy on VET drawn from Certificate IV or above qualifications. Schools or RTO's need to apply for approval to deliver qualifications at this level, this approval process requires detail of the suitability of the qualification to the educational needs and pathway of the student. Credit is restricted to two Units 3 & 4 sequences.

4. *Workplace learning options and recognition in the VCE and the VCAL*

4.1   VCE

Within VCE VET programs Structured Workplace Learning (SWL) is strongly recommended. Each program outlines a minimum recommended time to be spread across the duration of

the program. Where assessment within the unit of competency is required in an employment context a period of SWL is mandated.

Where a student undertakes VET through Block Credit Recognition SWL is recommended however no guidelines are provided by the VCAA.

SWL contributes to students understanding of the industry their VET studies are drawn from and enables them to practice and demonstrate skills acquired through their VET.

The VCAA formally recognises the time spent in SWL aligned to a VCE VET program into the VCE or VCAL. Students are assessed on their reflections of workplace experiences and employability skills where they have completed a minimum of 80 hours of SWL. Students are eligible to receive up to three units at the VCE units 1 or 2 level where they have completed the requirements of SWL recognition.

4.2   VCAL

SWL can be used as a reference point for some of the learning outcomes of the Work Related Skills unit of each level of the VCAL.

The Industry Specific Skills strand requires VET units of competency totalling 90 hours to be undertaken of which SWL may be a recommended component.

Students are eligible to receive up to 3 general credits towards any level of VCAL where they have completed the requirements of SWL recognition.

5. *Australian School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships*

Structure

In Victoria, School-Based Apprenticeships or Traineeships (SBAT) can be undertaken as part of the VCE and VCAL. Students must complete a minimum of 13 hours per week incorporating:

- at least 6 hours of training to be undertaken during the regular school week; and

- at least 7 hours of employment, averaged over 3 periods of 4 months in each year of the program.

Additional requirements include the signing-off of training plans by the school-based apprentice/trainee's school representative. Funding for the training is provided through the Victorian Skills First funding arrangements.

Apprenticeships or traineeships that are undertaken by school students that do not comply with the arrangements above are regarded as part-time apprenticeships or traineeships and do not attract any Victorian Skills First funding.

SWL recognition is available for students undertaking a SBAT. Up to 4 VCE units or VCAL general credits are available for students undertaking a SBAT. A unit of credit is available for each 180 nominal hours of training undertaken by the student.

Contribution to the VCE and the VCAL

Contribution to the VCE or VCAL for either school based or part time apprenticeships or traineeships is based on the guidelines for unspecified recognition.

SBAT's in selected industries where VCAA approved VCE VET programs exist provide the same credit as the VCE VET program i.e. in the VCE unit 1 – 4 structure.

6.   *Contribution of VET in the VCE to tertiary entrance*

VCE VET programs fall into two categories: those with a scored Unit 3 – 4 sequence and those with an unscored Unit 3–4 sequence.

Scored programs

There are 14 VCE VET programs covering 16 qualifications which provide students with the option of undertaking scored assessment of the designated Unit 3–4 sequence. For scored VCE VET programs, the study score is calculated through performance judgments on 3 coursework tasks and an external examination conducted in the end of the year VCE examination period.

The score allows the students to use their VCE VET program for direct contribution towards the ATAR, that is, as one of the 'primary four' study scores. Students may count up to three VCE VET programs in the primary four. VCE VET program scores not falling within the primary four contribute as a 5th or 6th study increment at the rate of 10 per cent of the study score. There are industry restrictions imposed by VTAC in Music and Information Technology where students can only count a maximum of 3 scores from VCE and VCE VET towards the ATAR.

6.2   Unscored programs

For students who undertake a VCE VET program that does not include scored assessment but does contain a designated Unit 3–4 sequence or who receive Block Credit Recognition for a Unit 3 – 4 sequence in a VET program, Victorian Tertiary Admission Centre (VTAC) may award a 10 per cent increment towards their ATAR. The contribution towards the ATAR is subject to VTAC rules around the contribution by VCE studies or VET programs in specified industry areas.

Unit 3 – 4 sequences obtained through Block Credit Recognition will only contribute to the ATAR when fewer than 6 Unit 3 – 4 sequences from VCE studies or VCE VET programs have been used in its calculation.

Up to two 10 per cent increments may be used in the ATAR calculation.

7. *Mechanisms for the delivery of VET*

a.   Directly by an RTO

i) School who is an RTO

The VET qualification delivered in schools where the school is the RTO generally tend to be from those industries which are less resource intensive, for example Business, Information,

Digital Media and Technology, Screen and Media, and Sport and Recreation. The increasing number of schools with Trade Training Centres (TTCs) has seen them being able to widen their industry offerings. School based RTOs are also used where cluster arrangements exists with a group of schools co-located within a region.

ii) TAFE

TAFEs provide a broad range of VCE VET and VET programs to students. These programs are either auspiced or delivered in TAFE facilities.

TAFEs deliver training and assessment to students attending the TAFE campuses and in some instances in TTC's aligned to TAFE. Attendance and assessment reports are communicated directly to school.

iii) Other RTO

Non TAFE/School RTOs make up an increasing proportion of VET delivery to VCE/VCAL students. As with school based RTOs, the qualifications delivered are largely programs which are less resource intensive, as outlined above. The most common mechanism for non TAFE/School RTOs is through auspicing arrangements.

b.   By the school in partnership / auspice arrangement with an RTO.

Where auspicing takes place, schools conduct the delivery and assessment of the program in a formal partnership with the RTO. School teaching staff are required to comply with Clause 1.13 of the Standards for RTO's 2015 to enable them to deliver this training and design and report assessment outcomes to the RTO. Within this arrangement schools must also agree to be compliant with all other relevant clauses within the Standards as required by the RTO. As with School based RTOs, the programs auspiced by schools are more likelyto be less resource reliant.

8. *Supply of VET data to ACACA agency*

Schools are responsible for enrolling VCE or VCAL students on the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS). Students are enrolled into VET certificates and the units of competency expected to be completed in the current year. Where the VET is not deliveredby the home school the enrolment details and results are communicated to them by the assessing school or RTO and are then recorded by the home school on to VASS.

9. Certification (reporting to students)

The VCAA issues a Statement of Results at the end of the calendar year to all students who have obtained results in VCE studies, VCAL units and VET units of competency.

Units of competency that have been satisfactorily completed are reported on the student's VET Statement of Results. Units of competency not yet completed will not appear on the student's Statement of Results.

VCE and VCAL Certificates are issued at the end of the calendar year to eligible students.

The official records of all VET Certificates and Statements of Attainment awarded to the student are issued by the Registered Training Organisation.

10. Other reporting

The VCAA reports directly to schools on the VCE and VCAL results of their students. Results are provided to the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) for use in selection for university entrance.

Reports are provided to the Government, Catholic and Independent school sectors on enrolments and qualifications in VET courses. In addition, the VCAA maintains a relationship with the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) in the preparation of the 'VET in Schools' data ("AVETMISS data").

11. Future directions

Appropriateness and Quality

The VCAA is currently undertaking a review of all of the VET qualifications being undertaken by VCE or VCAL students as to their appropriateness for this cohort. This work is being supported by Industry, schools and RTO's. They will also be looking at ways to enhance the quality of VET offerings through enhanced assessment materials and guidelines.

Promotion of VET to School Communities

The VCAA is undertaking a project to provide more appropriate information to school communities on how VET contributes to the VCE and VCAL, pathways into and through VET and industry specific information relating to VET offerings.

The promotional material will be in print and online versions and a series of 30 videos are to be rolled out from August 2019.

Western Australia

1.   Description of the Senior Secondary Certificate of Education

Name of qualification	Western Australian Certificate of Education (WACE)
Issued by	School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority)
Time frame for completion	Generally, students complete two years (Years 11 and 12) of senior secondary study to achieve the WACE although the School Curriculum and Standards Authority provisions enable students to meet the WACE requirements over a lifetime.
Units of credit	1 course unit = 55 notional class contact hours for each WACE course unit Unit equivalent: VET unit equivalence towards the WACE is allocated for the successful completion of a full qualification as follows: Certificate I = 2 units Certificate II = 4 units Certificate III or higher – Partial = 4 unitsCertificate III or higher – Full = 6 units Endorsed programs are allocated one, two, three or four unit equivalents on the basis of 'average learning time'

Minimum requirementsfor the award of the WA Certificate of Education	Achievement of a WACE signifies that a student has successfully met the requirements for breadth and depth, the achievement standard and the literacy and numeracy standard in their senior secondary schooling.
	
	These requirements are:
	
	• **Breadth-and-depth**
	
	    Completion of a minimum of 20 units or the equivalent. This requirement must include at least:
	
	    – 10 units or the equivalent at Year 12
	
	    – two Year 11 units from an English course and one pair of Year 12 units from an English course
	
	    – one pair of units completed in Year 12 from each of List A (arts/languages/social sciences) and List B (mathematics/science/technology).
	
	• **Achievement standard**
	
	    Achievement of at least 14 C grades or higher (or the equivalent) in Year 11 and 12 units, with a minimum of six C grades or the equivalent at Year 12.
	
	    Completion of at least four Year 12 ATAR courses or of a Certificate II (or higher) VET qualification. Students may meet the minimum VET requirements through the completion of partial Certificate III or higher according to a specified criterion.
	
	• **Literacy and numeracy standard**
	
	    Completion of at least four units of an English course post-Year 10 and studied over at least two years.
	
	    Demonstration of the minimum standard of literacy and numeracy.

Subjects/Courses	Five types of courses and two types of programs are within the WACE: **Preliminary courses** are for students who have been identified as having a learning difficulty and/or an intellectual disability. Preliminary courses do not contribute to achievement of the WACE.

	Foundation courses provide a focus on functional literacy and numeracy skills, practical work-related experience and the opportunity to build personal skills that are important for life and work. The Foundation courses are not designed, nor intended, to be an alternative senior secondary pathway. Foundation courses are for students who have not been able to demonstrate the minimum standard for literacy and/or numeracy before Year 11 and are unlikely to do so before the end of Year 12 without significant levels of student support.
	General Courses are for students who are typically aiming to enter further vocationally based training or the workforce straight from school. These courses are not externally examined. However, they each have an externally set task (EST) which is set by the Authority
	ATAR courses are for students who are aiming to go to university. These courses are examined by the Authority. Student results in ATAR courses are used by the Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC) to calculate a student's Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).
	Nationally recognised VET qualifications and/or units of competency from training packages that are successfully completed by senior secondary students in years 10, 11 or 12 may contribute towards the achievement of a WACE. Qualifications and units of competency can contribute to the WACE as WACE course units when completed through VET industry specific courses. Alternatively, unit equivalence can be achieved through VET credit transfer.
	Endorsed programs provide access to areas of learning not covered by courses and contribute to the WACE depth and breadth requirement through unit equivalence.
Link to the ACACA Agency website with more information aboutVET in the WA Certificate of Education	https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/vet/how-vet-contributes-towards- wace

2.   VET quality and the WA Certificate of Education

The Authority only recognises VET achievement within the WACE if it is certified by a RTO. RTO certification assures the public that an individual has met all relevant standards in the delivery and assessment of a qualification as regulated by the VET sector. As such, schools must become a RTO or work in a partnership arrangement with a RTO. VET undertaken as a part of a school program must meet the requirements of the relevant VET regulator standards under which an RTO is accredited. The Authority also provides recognition for VET achievement outside of a school arrangement (for example VET that is arranged through a student's employer at their part time job).

In Western Australia, the Training Accreditation Council (TAC) is responsible for quality assurance and recognition processes for RTOs with scope of delivery limited to Western Australia and Victoria and for the accreditation of courses. For RTOs in partnership with Western Australian schools, but with scope not limited to WA, the quality assurance is regulated under the National VET regulator through the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA). The TAC applies the same audit processes to schools and other training providers involved in VET delivery and assessment to Western Australia senior secondary students as it does to all other RTOs.

The Authority has an inbuilt data integrity checking mechanism within its student management system which validates school VET achievement data. In addition, the requirement for schools to retain evidence of RTO certification is subject to an achievement data audit by the Authority.

WA schools rely heavily on their partnership arrangements with RTOs for up-to-date information relating to specific content and delivery requirements of a VET program. VET delivery in WA schools is typically through an auspice arrangement with an RTO for the delivery and assessment of training. The number of schools who have RTO status in WA is minimal. Schools with RTO status generally have limited scope to deliver.

The basis for a partnership agreement between the school and an RTO is that:

- students will receive the appropriate training to industry standard as prescribed within a training package

- there is the appropriate and timely certification of such training

- the contractual arrangements prescribed within the partnership agreement will be sustained for the duration of the program and

- the relevant VET regulator standards will be met.

While the Authority advocates quality VET programs, its main role is to record and report VET achievement and provide mechanisms for recognition of VET towards the WACE. Issues that relate to the quality of delivery, assessment and the outcomes of training sit outside of the scope of responsibility and influence of the Authority.

The Authority does however work closely with the education systems and sector, the VET sector and industry stakeholders to encourage schools and students to undertake quality VET programs. In recent years the Authority has been involved in initiatives which aim to improve the outcomes of VET for secondary students. One such initiative was the Authority's involvement in the development of the WA VET Qualifications Register for Secondary Students. The register provides industry advice for schools and RTOs on the suitability of qualifications for secondary students and delivery requirements to meet industry standards.

Another mechanism that the Authority has developed to improve the quality of VET undertaken as a part of the WACE, has been to package nationally recognised VET qualifications and mandatory industry related work placement into VET industry specific WACE courses. Each VET industry specific course is developed collaboratively with representatives from schools, training providers, members of business and industry and the WA Industry Training Councils (ITC).

VET industry specific courses do not have any other prescribed curriculum; they meet the packaging rules specified in the relevant national training packages and require delivery and assessment to be carried out in accordance with the relevant VET regulator standards in partnership with a RTO. Final sign off from the relevant ITC Chief Executive is a requirement for accreditation of these courses by the Authority Board. The ITC endorsement of the VET industry specific courses affirms that the course meets the expectations of a quality VET program for secondary students and complies with the training package rules.

3.   Recognition of VET in the WA Certificate of Education

Nationally recognised VET qualifications and/or units of competency from training packages achieved by senior secondary students in years 10, 11 or 12 can contribute towards the achievement of a WACE.

a. Formalised

VET industry specific WACE courses

Qualifications and units of competency can contribute to the WACE as course units when completed through VET industry specific courses.

For each VET industry specific course, full qualifications are 'packaged' with mandated time in industry related workplace learning. Before accreditation by the Authority, each VET industry specific course is endorsed by WA Industry Training Councils.

The ten VET industry specific WACE courses are:

Automotive	Hospitality and Tourism
Business and Financial Services	Information and Communications Technology
Community Services and Health	Primary Industries
Construction Industries	Sport and Recreation
Creative Industries	Engineering

Each qualification packaged within a course is allocated a number of WACE course units as follows:

AQF Qualification	Number and distribution of WACE course units		
	Year 11	Year 12	Total
Certificate I	2	0	2
Certificate II	2	2	4
Certificate III	2	2	4

The requirements to achieve a qualification within a VET industry specific course are the same as outlined within the packaging rules of the relevant training package. In some instances elective units have been carefully selected and made 'compulsory' or 'mandatory' within the course. The mandating of elective units is made in conjunction with industry and training providers to reflect the needs of the local industry, and to encourage best practice and promote clearly defined pathways.

The VET industry specific courses have explicit requirements for student achievement in the associated course units:

Training and assessment of the units of competency must be done in partnership with a RTO or alternatively the school must be an RTO with the relevant qualification on scope.

Students must be deemed competent in units of competency listed as 'compulsory' or 'mandatory' in addition to the specified number of electives.

Students must successfully achieve mandated workplace learning; one unit (or unit equivalent) for Certificate I qualifications and 2 units (or unit equivalents) for Certificate II and Certificate III qualifications.

Assessment of VET industry specific courses is competency-based. If the full qualification is completed, and workplace learning requirements met then a 'C' grade is awarded for each of the course units allocated to the course program. This can be used in the calculation of the required 'C' grade average, as well as the breadth and depth requirements for WACE achievement.

If a student does not complete all components of the course, recognition of the units of competency that have been achieved is provided through unspecified credit (known in WA as VET credit transfer).

a. *Unspecified*

WACE unit equivalence

Unit equivalence can be obtained through VET qualifications and/or endorsed programs. The maximum unit equivalence available through these programs is eight units – four Year 11 units and four Year 12 units. Students may obtain unit equivalence as follows:

- up to eight unit equivalents through completion of VET qualifications, or

- up to four unit equivalents through completion of endorsed programs, or

- up to eight unit equivalents through a combination of VET qualifications and endorsed programs, but with endorsed programs contributing no more than four unit equivalents.

VET credit transfer

VET that results in the attainment of nationally recognised units of competency that lead to a full or partial AQF qualification can be used as credit transfer towards the WACE. Delivery and assessment of VET credit transfer is not packaged with mandatory workplace learning (unless specified in the relevant training package) and occurs independently from any WACE course curriculum delivery.

Students who have completed full VET qualifications may gain up to 8 unit equivalents towards the WACE (students require 20 units to achieve the WACE with a minimum of 12 to be derived from WACE course units). Achievement is allocated credit on the following basis:

VET credit transfer and unit equivalence

Completed qualification	Total Equivalents	Year 11 Credit allocation (Unit equivalents)	Year 12 Credit allocation (Unit equivalents)	Satisfies the minimum VET qualification requirement for WACE
Certificate I[2]	2 units	2	0	No
Certificate II[3]	4 units	2	2	Yes
Certificate III or higher – Partial	4 units	2	2	Yes
Certificate III or higher – Full	6 units	2	4	Yes

VET credit transfer is not graded and therefore does not contribute to the calculation of the C grade standard required for achievement of the WACE. However, unit equivalence reduces the number of courses over which the average is calculated up to a maximum of eight units.

4.   *Workplace learning options and recognition in the WA Certificate of Education*

Workplace Learning is an Authority-developed endorsed program that is managed by individual schools. To complete this program, a student works in one or more real workplace/s to develop a set of transferable workplace skills. A student must record the number of hours completed and the tasks undertaken in the workplace in the Authority's *Workplace Learning Logbook.*

A student must also provide evidence of his/her knowledge and understanding of the workplace skills by completing the Authority's *Workplace Learning Skills Journal* after each 55 hours in the workplace.

The Workplace Learning program outline and teacher support materials, including a template for the *Workplace Learning Logbook and Workplace Learning Skills Journal*, are available on the Authority website.

Unit equivalence for the Workplace Learning endorsed program is allocated on the basis of one unit equivalent for each 55 hours completed in the workplace, to a maximum of four units (220 hours). The total number of hours completed in the workplace in Years 10, 11 and 12 is reported on the student's Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA).

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[2] *Equivalence is only awarded for completed Certificate I qualifications where the total achievement in units ofcompetency is equal to or greater than 110 nominal hours (the equivalent of two course units).*

3   *Equivalence is only awarded for completed Certificate II qualifications where the total achievement in units ofcompetency is equal to or greater than 220 nominal hours (the equivalent of four course units). Certificate II qualifications with units of competency that are less than 220 nominal hours in total will meet the minimum Certificate II qualification requirement however the qualification will only contribute towards the WACE as two Year 11 unit equivalents.*

5.   Australian School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships

a.   Structure

In WA, School-Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships are employment-based training arrangements undertaken by senior secondary school students and are regulated under the *Western Australian Vocational Education and Training Act 1996* and the *Vocational Education and Training (General) Regulations 2009.*

School-Based Traineeships and Apprenticeships (SBT/A) allow senior secondary students to start a traineeship or apprenticeship while also completing the WACE. Under these arrangements students are both a full-time student and a part-time employee with the same employment and training responsibilities as other trainees or apprentices. Specific School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships for Indigenous students are also available.

Students undertaking a WACE may also choose to undertake a Pre-Apprenticeship in Schools (PAiS) which are Certificate II programs approved by industry. The PAiS programs require students in Years 11 and 12 to attend school, train with an RTO and access industry through work placements. These students are eligible for a variable reduction in term if they continue on to an apprenticeship with the same title.

b.   Contribution to the WA Certificate of Education

Credit for SBT/A and PAiS programs contribute to the WACE mainly as unspecified recognition through VET credit transfer. However, some VET industry specific courses have been developed to include
pre-apprenticeships, providing students with formal recognition of these programs and the opportunity to include the achievement under the course requirements for WACE completion.

6.   Contribution of VET in the WA Certificate of Education to tertiary entrance

In contrast to other Australian states and territory arrangements, students in WA cannot use their VET achievement to contribute directly to an ATAR. VET can only contribute indirectly to tertiary entrance.

Unlike in other WACE courses, students who undertake a VET industry specific course do not have opportunity to sit a WACE examination for tertiary entrance. These students must rely on the remaining WACE courses within their senior secondary program to gain an ATAR.

7.   Mechanisms for the delivery of VET Types of partnerships

a.   Directly by an RTO

i) School who is an RTO

Western Australia has a small number of secondary schools with RTO status. Although schools generally have a limited scope of registration, the qualifications span a broad range of industries and in many cases are indicative of the specialist programs that a school offers.

For example, all WA Agricultural Colleges have scope for Certificate I, II and in some cases III qualifications from the field of primary industries. In some cases their scope extends to qualifications in automotive, construction and engineering. Similarly, specialist schools in the Arts have scope for qualifications from the Creative Industries. Other common qualifications on scope in WA schools include low AQF level qualifications in Business, Information Technology and Hospitality.

ii) TAFE

The increase in auspice arrangements between schools and RTOs over the past few years is, in part, a result of the limited number of available 'profile funded' or 'student contact' hours available to secondary students in WA, particularly in industries that are not identified as a 'state priority occupation'. This shift has meant that the profile hour mode has become a highly competitive way to access VET for secondary students. Schools that engage in a profile funded partnership with a TAFE access its publicly funded student hours. In this mode, students may be under a training contract and/or attend training directly delivered and assessed by one of the state training providers.

Another mode for direct delivery by a TAFE on behalf of a school is done so based on a 'Fee for Service' arrangement. Schools outsource all delivery and assessment which is conducted either at an external location or on school premises on a negotiated fees basis. Due to the cost implications for schools this is not a common partnership arrangement in WA.

iii) Other RTO

Direct delivery by a private RTO on behalf of a school is done so based on a 'Fee for Service' arrangement. Schools outsource all delivery and assessment to a private RTO which is conducted either at external premises or at the school on a negotiated fees basis. Due to the high costs associated with this type of arrangement for schools it is not a common partnership arrangement in WA.

b. By the school in partnership / auspice arrangement with an RTO

The majority of VET undertaken by secondary students in WA is offered by schools in an auspice partnership with both RTO and TAFE. Through auspice arrangements, all delivery and assessment of training is provided to students by the school. An auspice agreement requires RTOs to be responsible for the quality assurance of the training under the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) 2015 and for issuing the appropriate certificate(s) in accordance with AQF requirements. In some cases RTOs may be engaged in a proportion of the delivery and assessment for reasons such as the greatercapacity for the RTO to meet the required standard of delivery and assessment or, to provide opportunities to students that can only be accessed directly from the RTO.

8. *Supply of VET data to ACACA agency*

In WA, VET enrolment and achievement data is provided electronically by the school through various student management systems to the School Curriculum and Standards Authority. The Authority employs two main strategies to maintain integrity of the achievement data collected by schools. The first of which is an inbuilt data integrity mechanism within its student information record system which prevents data upload if certain criteria is not met. The second strategy includes school VET data integrity checks which targets the evidence kept by a school that shows the achievement reported to the Authority can be validated by evidence of RTO certification or other relevant transcripts ofachievement.

9. *Certification (reporting to students)*

At the end of senior secondary education, all students who have satisfactorily completed any WACE course unit, endorsed program or VET unit of competency receive a folio of achievement. The folio of achievement contains one or more of the following items:

- the Western Australian Certificate of Education (for students who meet the requirements)

- a Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA) that includes the following information relating to VET achievement:

  - AQF qualifications undertaken by the student and the name of the RTO
  - the units of competency undertaken and the name of the RTO

- an individual Course Report for ATAR courses.

10. *Other reporting*

The School Curriculum and Standards Authority reports directly to schools on the WACE results of their students and provides student WACE examination results to the Tertiary Institutions Service Centre (TISC) for use in the calculation of their ATAR.

The Authority in conjunction with the Department of Training and Workforce Development submits AVETMISS data to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) for the national 'VET in schools' collection.

The Authority also reports school enrolment and achievement data to ACARA for reporting on the My School website.