

THE COOPERATION BETWEEN HIGHER EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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Introduction

- Calls for ‘seamless’ education increasing
- Seamless education: each sector, whilst maintaining its distinctive purposes has multiple points of entry and exit, thereby encouraging life long learning

(Victorian Dept of Education, Employment & Training)

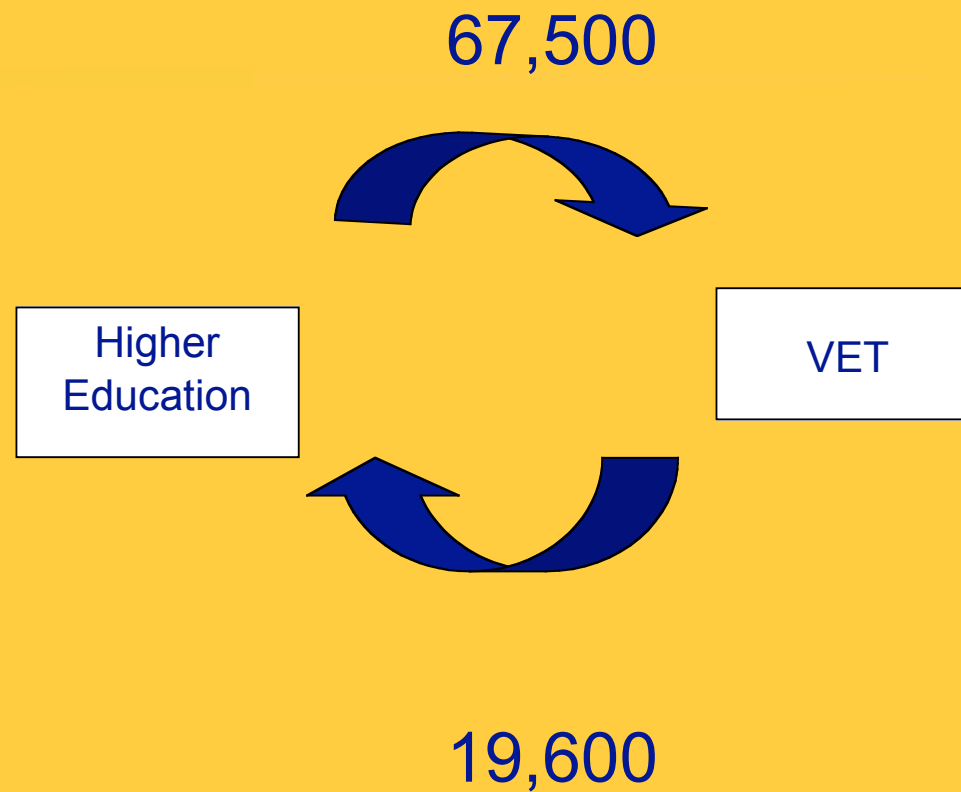
Political Environment

- Higher Education Review - discussion paper produced but remained largely silent.
- Recognition that both sectors are working towards greater flexibility, but that significant barriers remain
- MCEETYA (July 2003) emphasised that greater cooperation is still a clear goal for both State & Federal Ministers

Why is Cooperation Important?

- Increased recognition of ongoing participation in learning
- need for multiskilled workforce
- already considerable movement between the two sectors

STUDENT FLOWS: VET AND HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR 2000



Source: ANTA, 2000

Why is Cooperation Important?

- Both VET and Higher Education will be essential in providing a range of training & education opportunities
- BUT this seamless approach has not yet been achieved

What are the Barriers?

Number of issues, including:

- Lack of coherent national framework
- Few incentives for collaboration
- Fear of ‘cross-subsidisation’
- HECS issues
- Assessment issues
- VET and HE focus on different outcomes
- Different needs and missions

Can these barriers be overcome?

- Overseas experience suggests that they can

What is happening in Australia?

Victoria

- Working on a ‘Credit Matrix’ - attempting to provide a ‘common currency’ which will facilitate comparison of qualifications

What is happening in Australia?

WA

- Strong State Government support
- working to document existing articulation and credit transfer arrangements
- next step will be the establishment of guidelines for credit transfer and articulation for all WA universities and TAFE colleges

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- Strong commitment to lifelong learning
- Three ‘learning precincts’ (Northern Metropolitan, Central Perth and South West) established to maximise cross sector collaboration
- WAAPA@ECU - dual sector awards

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- Working with TAFE colleges to develop flexible, accountable and transparent pathways
- But also aware of other entry routes (ECU's University Preparation Course, private providers etc)
- Developing an admissions procedure to meet wider community needs

Conclusion

- Opportunities for greater cooperation
- Important however not to lose sight of the distinctiveness of the two sectors
- Must avoid duplication - rather need to find complementary skill sets to support life long learning

Conclusion

Barriers to greater cooperation must be overcome - benefits to individuals, business and the community are too great for this not to occur.