

# MTA NSW Training News

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## Strengthening the Australian Qualifications Framework Proposal

The Australian Qualifications Framework Council has released for consultation a proposal for strengthening the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

The Council was established in 2008 as a committee of the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA).

As well as maintaining the AQF, supporting its users and promoting the AQF to stakeholders, the AQF Council's remit is to consider how the AQF can be strengthened to ensure it is nationally and internationally robust and supports flexible cross-sectoral linkages and pathways in training and education.

The consultation document can be found at [aqf.edu.au](http://aqf.edu.au).

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## Reasons for training: Why Australian employers train their workers

*Andrew Smith, Eddie Oczkowski, Mark Hill*

Analysing data from the 2005 NCVER Survey of Employer Use and Views of the VET System, this report looks at the reasons why employers train their workers. The report highlights that there is no simple fix to increasing employer investment in training which has generally not been a core component of long-term business planning.

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2147.html>

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## Recovering from the economic crisis: VET's role

Just how the current economic downturn will affect training is not entirely clear. A shortage of skills may emerge as the economy moves into a recovery phase but this is more an issue for the trades than most other occupations.

This was the view NCVER's Managing Director, Tom Karmel, presented at the Melbourne Institute Economics Forum in March 2009, which focused on Australia's current skill base and where this positions Australia in dealing with changing economic climates.

"Addressing skill shortages in the trades is most crucial because trade employment is very cyclical, trade training takes a long time and apprentices are the main source of entry into trades," says Karmel.

The implementation of strategies by the Federal Government—such as the Securing Apprenticeships program, which aims to provide subsidies to employers, group training organisations or training providers to take on apprentices who have been made redundant part-way through their training—indicates their concern about the retention of apprentices during the downturn.

For more information visit: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/newsevents/insight/issue34/22132.html>

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## Preserving Reframing the Future's resources

The Reframing the Future program, the major workforce development initiative of the Australian Government and state and territory governments, closed at the end of 2008.

NCVER will continue to maintain the Reframing the Future website <[www.reframingthefuture.net](http://www.reframingthefuture.net)> until the end of 2010, when the site will be decommissioned.

This website contains a comprehensive collection of electronic resources developed by Reframing the Future from 1997–2008. The website gives details of how copies of remaining print publications can be obtained.

In addition, a comprehensive collection of all Reframing the Future publications, both print and online, over the history of the program will be maintained by NCVER. NCVER will continue to provide access to these resources and archive them within the [VOCED database](#) and the NCVER library collection.

For further information, please contact Miriam Saunders on (08) 8230 8648 or email [miriam.saunders@ncver.edu.au](mailto:miriam.saunders@ncver.edu.au).

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## Joint Communique issued regarding International Students

The Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs and Ministerial Council for Vocational and Technical Education have issued a statement about recent incidents involving international students and their safety and life within the Australian community.

For the full report visit:

[http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article\\_090612\\_125447.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090612_125447.aspx)

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## VET in Schools 2006

Statistics about school students who undertook vocational education and training as part of their senior secondary certificate in 2006 are presented in this report. It includes information on participation, students, courses and qualifications, and subjects while comparing students aged 15 to 19 years enrolled in the public VET system.

<http://www.ncver.edu.au/publications/2148.html>

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## New e-learning hub launched

A new e-learning hub, [flexiblelearning.net.au](http://flexiblelearning.net.au), has been officially launched by [Rod Arthur](#), Chair of the Australian Flexible Learning Framework's ([Framework](#)) managing body - [FLAG](#) (Flexible Learning Advisory Group).

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## COAG agrees to VET reform

At its July meeting in Darwin, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to a work plan for further reforms to the vocational education and training system.

The work plan will address a number of major reform areas including:

- developing models for a national regulatory body for vocational education and training
- ensuring the Australian Apprenticeship system is responsive to the needs of individuals and enterprises, especially during the downturn and into recovery
- increasing the level of investment in nationally-accredited training
- providing timely, relevant and easy to navigate information to individuals and enterprises
- ensuring the training system, and the products of the training system, are responsive to

the needs of individuals, businesses and industry.

For more information on the COAG decisions visit

[www.coag.gov.au/coag\\_meeting\\_outcomes/2009-07-02/index.cfm#apprentice](http://www.coag.gov.au/coag_meeting_outcomes/2009-07-02/index.cfm#apprentice)

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## Report released on apprentice completions

The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry has released a research report on retaining apprentices.

The key findings of [A Systematic Approach to Retaining Apprentices](#) are structured around the following core concepts for retention as identified in the research:

- attracting the right person
- recruiting and inducting good apprentices
- making work and training meaningful
- providing personal and professional support
- providing effective training
- making full use of information and support services.

The report focuses on employer perspectives to determine views, actions, and attitudes that have a positive impact on completion rates of apprenticeships.

The report provides employers with recommended principles to follow and processes to implement as part of a holistic workplace management strategy through the recruitment and employment of an apprentice.

For more information and to view the report visit

[www.acci.asn.au/Systematic%20Approach%20to%20Retaining%20Apprentices.htm](http://www.acci.asn.au/Systematic%20Approach%20to%20Retaining%20Apprentices.htm)

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## Termination of the Noting Process

At its 25 June 2009 meeting, the National Quality Council ([NQC](#)) decided that the training package support materials Noting Process is to be terminated. No new Noting Process evaluations are to be commenced.

A new quality assurance process for non-endorsed components of training packages will be developed under the guidance of the [NQC Framework Implementation Action Group](#).

For more information visit

[www.dest.gov.au/sectors/training\\_skills/policy\\_issues\\_reviews/key\\_issues/nts/tpk/materials.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/training_skills/policy_issues_reviews/key_issues/nts/tpk/materials.htm)

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## Industry Skills Councils respond to environmental sustainability

The Industry Skills Councils (ISCs) have released a policy document about implementing 'green skills' and suggest three essential guiding principles to underpin all vocational education and training (VET) activity. Environmental sustainability initiatives must be: industry specific, appropriately timed, and add value to existing processes.

For further information visit: <http://www.isc.org.au/>

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## Environmental Scan for the Automotive Industry

Manufacturing Skills Australia is updating the Environmental Scan for the Automotive Industry and we ask for your input into this important document.

The Environmental Scan is developed annually to provide governments, the National Quality Council, Skills Australia and training organisations with the most current information and advice on training priorities and emerging workforce development needs.

The Automotive Industries are facing many challenges with the global financial situation, environmental pressures, technological advancements and changing workforce needs. We know from sound research that well developed work skills are one of the critical factors in meeting the challenges and ensuring success.

The Environmental Scan will provide real time information on your skill needs so we can help you be equipped to navigate the times ahead.

[You can view the 2008 Automotive Industry Environmental Scan here](#)

To participate and provide your feedback visit:

<http://www.mskills.com.au/survey/TakeSurvey.asp?SurveyID=600573M3874KG>

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## National agreement on OHS harmonisation

For the first time governments from each state and territory and the Commonwealth have formally committed to the harmonisation of occupational health and safety (OHS) legislation.

Currently all states and territories are responsible for making and enforcing their own occupational health and safety (OHS) laws. Although these draw on a similar approach for regulating workplaces, there are some differences in the application and detail of the laws.

By committing to the harmonisation process, the Commonwealth and State and Territory governments recognise that each jurisdiction will face some changes in their current OHS arrangements.

Safe Work Australia will act as an independent body to develop national model OHS legislation. This requires each state and territory to pass their own laws that mirror the model OHS laws and adopt them by 2011.

To view the WRMC communique on the decision visit

[www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article\\_090520\\_130430.aspx](http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Releases/Pages/Article_090520_130430.aspx)

For more information on workplace safety and the harmonisation of OHS legislation visit [www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/swa/ModelLegislation/New+National+OHS+Framework/](http://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/swa/ModelLegislation/New+National+OHS+Framework/)

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## The Australian Apprenticeships Roundtable Report

The 2008 Australian Apprenticeships Roundtable (Roundtable) has released a [report](#) which summarises the Roundtable's research into the most important issues affecting apprentices and trainees in Australia's vocational education and training sector.

The Roundtable provides a forum for Australian Apprentices, as key users of the national training system, to inform governments about issues affecting their training and careers. It comprises 28 members selected from a diverse range of Australian Apprentices.

During 2008, the Roundtable identified and investigated the following six issues:

- commencement and retention
- information and communication
- future focus
- training and learning
- workplace and industrial relations
- youth at risk.

Six working groups were created, with each group assigned one of the issues to investigate.

To download the report visit

[www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/documents/reports/AA\\_Roundtable\\_Report08.pdf](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/documents/reports/AA_Roundtable_Report08.pdf)

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## Securing Australian Apprenticeships through RTOs

The Australian Government is providing financial support to registered training organisations (RTOs) to cover the cost of off-the-job training where an Australian Apprentice (also referred to as apprentice or trainee) with an incomplete qualification has been made redundant.

The support is being provided via the Securing Australian Apprenticeships through Registered Training Organisations initiative and allows Australian Apprentices to maintain the value of their investment in training.

Depending on the number of units still to be completed, RTOs may receive either \$1250 or \$2500 for each eligible Australian Apprentice who completes the off-the-job training component of their Australian Apprenticeship with that RTO.

This new initiative will commence on 1 July 2009.

For more information contact the Australian Apprenticeships referral line on 13 38 73 or visit

[www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/](http://www.australianapprenticeships.gov.au/)

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## Joint National Communications Project

The Australian Government, represented by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, is working with state and territory governments to improve the profile of vocational education and training (VET).

This is being done under the umbrella of the Joint National Communications Project (JNCP)—the primary aim of which is to increase the flow of people into, and their retention in VET.

Under the JNCP, four pieces of research were commissioned in late 2007 to provide hard data measuring community perceptions of VET and how the VET 'story' is currently communicated.

Headline findings from this research included:

- one third of the 9,000 participants surveyed could bring nothing to mind when they heard the term 'vocational education and training'
- only 14 percent of people think that 'VET is for clever people'
- the lowest levels of knowledge about VET occur in the key VET target groups
- the plethora of uncoordinated messaging about VET from within the sector is actually adding to the poor community perception of VET
- the key spokespersons about VET in the media were politicians, but this channel appeals to none of the VET target groups
- different VET target groups (audience segments) require different engagement strategies and new engagement strategies need to be developed accordingly.

The key conclusion from the synthesized research analysis is:

*'the improved perception and status of VET across the sector appears to rely on improved efforts to consistently promote the right information about the VET system and its pathways in a recognisable way, to the right targets in ways and at times that will best cut through to those targets, led by coordinated focus and priority from the top'.*

A series of activities designed to correct the current situation identified by the synthesis of the research studies is underway as follows:

- Improved VET 'story' and promotional strategies
- Improved VET branding strategy:
- Industry champions
- Improved coordination of VET information outlets
- Targeted engagement policy and promotional strategy
- Improved guidance on coordinated VET sector marketing and promotion

For more information on the Joint National Communications Project and its research, visit [www.training.com.au](http://www.training.com.au)

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