

27 February 2023



Women in Adult and Vocational Education (WAVE)

# **RESPONSE TO TERMS OF REFERENCE INQUIRY INTO THE PERCEPTIONS AND STATUS OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING**



## Acknowledgement

Women in Vocational and Adult Education (WAVE) acknowledge the traditional owners of our lands and waters – the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples – who are the first educators and the first teachers of this land.

We pay our respects to elders, past present and emerging and recognise that these lands and waters have never been ceded.

We support truth, treaty and reconciliation and the Uluru Statement of the Heart.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal land.



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TOR 1. Information available to students about VET qualifications and related career pathways along a student's journey through secondary schools, vocational education, higher education, and work transitions, with a focus on how this combines with other sources of advice, including informal advice, to influence student choices, and how Commonwealth funded information for students about VET may be improved. ....	19
TOR 2. Perceptions and status of the VET sector and how this may be impacting student enrolment choices, employer engagement, and recruitment and retention of the VET educator workforce, and how perceptions and status of the VET sector can be improved. International best practices in relation to VET perception and qualifications status should be examined. ....	22
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

For WAVE, the way to improve the perceptions of VET in our community is to address the systemic and structural drivers of inequity, that perpetuate gendered perceptions of skill and work across Australia.

Further, it is time for VET to be respected as a full and key participant to Australia's education system. That means, it needs to be respected enough to give it the full resources to transform and enable it to deliver to its core promise – equitable pathways for lifelong learning to jobs and work.

Our consistent call through out this, and other submissions to the Australian Government is for an intersectional lens and gender-responsive measures to be applied to VET, so women (and therefore all sex and genders, given visible and invisible biases) can access secure and well-paid jobs, education, and training systems. That involves the following steps:

- Understand and know the prevalence of gender inequity in our education and skills system, and, how the education and skills system and structures continue to reinforce this inequity, both within the skills system, and contribute to inequity in our labour markets.
- Put equity at the centre of the reforms and the reformed education and training system, rather than adding equity/equity policies as an “afterthought”.
- Defining and developing policy using gender based disaggregated data that enables the Australian Government to understand the gendered drivers of inequity that are present in our education and training system as well as measure the impact that our system has to addressing gender inequity
- Undertake root and branch reform of our education and skills system
- Build the capability and capacity of our education and training systems and people to address intersectional gender inequity within their own practices

## Recommendations

Throughout this submission WAVE provide a range of recommendations (numbered throughout) in response to the questions posed. In summary we advocate and recommend that:

### **For information available about VET qualifications**

- I. Access to information about VET must be streamlined, regularly updated and easily accessible via a well-publicised single portal for potential users at every stage of their lifespan.
- II. The focus of Commonwealth funded information about VET for the school sector and young Australians be targeted to addressing parental perceptions of the VET sector and that any information campaign be supported by social research into understanding parental perceptions.
- III. the Australian Government work with the relevant State and Territory governments to encourage greater school-industry collaboration to improve the knowledge of contemporary industry career pathways to ensure that career advice is non-gendered and relevant.
- IV. the Australian Government commission research to understand the effectiveness of programs such VETiS and SATs in increasing students' and parents' awareness of VET career pathways and occupational outcomes for secondary school students.

- V. both the Universities Accord and the National Skills Partnership embrace the principle of a more integrated tertiary education sector that will deliver better outcomes for all students

#### **For how perceptions are impacting student enrolment choices**

- VI. The Australian Government clearly defines the VET sector along with its purpose and social and economic benefits, highlighting access points and learning pathways in and across all education sectors.
- VII. The Australian Government along with states and territories adopt the terminology “Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as part of a campaign to raise the status of the sector and to bring Australia into line with international best practice.
- VIII. the Australian Government clearly define the VET sector in Australia to enable clear differentiation of the sector from the public provider.
- IX. The Australian Government ensure that all provider types within the sector have equal representation in VET decision-making forums such as the JSA Consultative Forum.
- X. The Australian Government ensure that representation on all key VET decision making bodies such as but not restricted to the JSA Consultative Forum is balanced and inclusive of the range of stakeholders including education experts, equity experts, community and learner voice representation.
- XI. The Australian Government undertake a risk assessment as to the impact on the perception of the VET sector of all its activities (current and future).
- XII. All jurisdictions work with training providers to support the conversion of part-time, particularly casual and sessional positions to more secure employment. This will contribute to improving the quality of VET outcomes and lifting the status of VET in Australia.

### Key Contacts:

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## WHO IS WAVE?

WAVE is a national network of women involved in Vocational Education and Training (VET) and adult education. WAVE provides research, policy advice and advocacy to Australian and State/ Territory Governments on gender equity in skills and adult education policy, and provides input into VET and adult education internationally. We are supported within each state by local representatives who, in turn, contribute collaboratively to national events and governance. Formed in 1985 WAVE is the first and only national independent, non-government organisation for Australian women and girls in the adult, community and vocational education and training sector/s.

Our mission is to advocate so that Australia's vocational education and training and adult education systems are equitable for all women and girls. Our vision is for a future where women and girls can participate fully in all aspects of work and democratic society, through equitable and transformative vocational and adult education.

### Our Way of Working

WAVE undertakes its work within a feminist framework recognising that intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalisation can impact a person's capacity to access and benefit from Australia's vocational and adult education system/s. As such, WAVE is keenly aware of the importance of centring lived experience in our work. We advocate for the vocational and adult education system to enhance its inclusivity, relevance and affordability for those who may be left behind to provide a coherent voice for under-represented, vulnerable and marginalised groups.

The transformative power of inclusive education, training and lifelong learning that centre gender equity is at the core of WAVE's values.

As leaders in the areas of gender equity and vocational and adult education, WAVE is uniquely placed to provide expert advice to Australian and State/Territory Governments on ways that these systems can be equitable for all Australians. We can provide partners, members and stakeholders with deep understanding of the last 40 years of evidence in VET and adult education and gender equity from Theory of Change to Theory of Action and monitoring and evaluation of results.

We work in collaboration and in partnership with organisations, leaders and communities that share an appreciation of the breadth of challenges associated with gender inequity, especially as they relate to Australia's national adult education and skills system/s.

WAVE's mission is to partner with organisations and individuals with a shared commitment to social justice in the co-production of sound research and advocacy.

## Context of our feedback

In keeping with the global practice on intersectional gender equity, and the evidence of both the economic and social returns that equitable approaches deliver, we ask the Australian Government to apply an intersectional gender lens to its reviews of current Foundation Skills policies and programs.

By applying an intersectional gender lens across all aspects of its work, the Australian Government will:

- Emancipate available labour to engage in the workforce in a way that is meaningful for community, individuals, our society and economy

- Reveal opportunities to enable transformational change in our communities that are in keeping with our nation’s commitment to human rights
- Demonstrate that gender equality is at the heart of the Australian Government’s vision for a better future; that it is committed to restore Australia’s leadership on gender equality.
- Increase our standing internationally as a leader in human rights, and in creating equitable economies that are productive and sustainable

### A note on international frameworks and agreements

In putting forward these points we draw from the evidence of such organisations as the United Nations, UN Women, UNESCO, UNESCO-UNEVOC, the World Bank, major consultancy firms such as KPMG and PwC, and significant research institutions internationally including our own Group of 8.

WAVE supports Australia’s commitment to the UN’s *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (Agenda 2030) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) along with its central tenet of ‘leave no one behind’. Our work is informed especially by SDGs 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women & girls); 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all<sup>1</sup>), and 8 (Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all).

Similarly, we acknowledge Australia’s support of the *Marrakech Framework for Action: harnessing the transformational power of adult learning and education* (MFA) agreed at CONFINTEA VII and, in line with UNESCO’s global initiative *Futures of Education* and calls for a new social contract for education<sup>2</sup>, the commitments made in Australia’s submission at the Transforming Education Summit (TES) convened in September 2022 in response to a global crisis in education. The *National Statement of Commitment*<sup>3</sup> states (in part):

Australia recognises the power of education to transform lives and, through targeted actions and continuous improvement, is committed to meeting Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4 as a global benchmark for ensuring inclusive and equitable access to quality education and promoting lifelong learning. ...

To respond to current and emerging skills needs, Australia recognises the need to support equitable access to lifelong learning, including formal learning such as higher education and vocational education and training, as well as informal and non-formal learning. Lifelong learning has an important role in helping disadvantaged community members, for example, through improving adult literacy and numeracy, and developing digital literacy (pp. 1,2).

We also endorse the range of advice and advocacy from gender equity colleagues internationally, reflected in major policy frameworks in the European Union and in countries such as Canada,

<sup>1</sup> SDG4 is supported by 10 targets & 11 indicators. Those that are relevant to VET and adult education are targets 4.3 - 4.7.

<sup>2</sup> See: UNESCO *Futures of education* for detail & associated publications <https://en.unesco.org/futuresofeducation/>

<sup>2</sup> See: UNESCO *Futures of education* for detail & associated publications <https://en.unesco.org/futuresofeducation/>  
<sup>3</sup> Australian Government (2022) *National Statement of Commitment to Transform Education*. 14<sup>th</sup> October 2022

<sup>3</sup> Australian Government (2022) *National Statement of Commitment to Transform Education*. 14<sup>th</sup> October 2022  
<https://transformingeducationsummit.sdg4education2030.org/AustraliaNationalStatement>

Germany and the United States all of which have a nation-wide gender equity framework, policy and impact/measurements system resourced to drive accountability, build capability and enable transformational change. Noting the scope of our role, we will contain our feedback to that relating to the national adult education and VET systems.



# OVERVIEW: PERCEPTIONS AND STATUS OF VET

*We open with two key strategic issues that need to be confronted to improve the perceptions of VET.*

## It's Time for VET to be Respected.

It is well time to recognise VET as a vital and integral component of the institution of education in Australia, by transforming education in Australia into a well-integrated system under a formalised lifelong learning policy approach, rather than four disparate but interconnected sectors each subject to differing hierarchical status and funding. Such transformation has the potential to build a sustainable and equitable education system offering multiple learning pathways for all Australians to access quality affordable inclusive education and training; a system fit for purpose in C21 that will sustain individuals, communities and the nation socially as well as economically.

A plethora of research, articles, news items and anecdotal discourses from multiple sources about the perceived (negative/low) status of 'VET' has continued to accumulate, especially over the last two to three decades. Over this same time frame, the size and sheer complexity of our national system of vocational education and training in Australia has burgeoned to a point where we contend that, for many, it is only possible to 'know' VET from a limited and particular standpoint of interest and/or engagement. The acronym 'VET' provides an entry point that acts to help solidify the complexity into a (supposedly) knowable object, a stable fixture in the provision of work-related education and training<sup>4</sup>.

Along with changing badging and various nomenclatures (technical education; Technical & Further Education; VET; Skills and Training; Skills and Jobs) over the last few decades, VET has been shifted to and from various portfolios (in & out of education, with science and technology; employment; workplace relations to name a few); and had multiple Ministers (and some assistant ministers) overseeing it. It has been commodified, marketised into a competitive system, and designated a key plank in assisting to remediate various waves of economic (and social) crises and reforms and changing labour markets through rapid policy, political and ideological shifts. While being 'national', VET, its status and delivery differs from state to state/territory. Through all of this turbulent recent history, while proving resilient, flexible and able to accommodate rapid change, VET has served us well, despite its built-in flaws<sup>5</sup>. One result of these turbulence changes is that, unlike information for

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<sup>4</sup> Butler, E. & Shore S. (2010), '(re)configurations: Articulating VET knowledge making practices. A work in progress.' Keynote paper at *VET Research: Leading & Responding In Turbulent Times* AVETRA 13th Annual Conference. Surfers Paradise Queensland 7-9th April 2010. AVETRA, Crows Nest, NSW.

<http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/50091>; Shore, S. and Butler, E. (2012) 'Missing things and methodological swerves: Unsettling the it-ness of VET', *International Journal of Training Research* (2012) 10(3): 204–218; Zoellner, D. (2022): Applying discourse analysis to Australian national VET policy: more than one, less than many, *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, DOI: 10.1080/13636820.2022.2088605

<sup>5</sup> Butler, E. & Ferrier, F. (2023), *A fair go for all? Equity frameworks and landmark documents in Australian vocational education and training*, VET Knowledge Bank, NCVET, Adelaide. <https://www.voced.edu.au/vet-knowledge-bank-landmark-documents-equity-access-historical-overview>.

schools or universities, accessing information on the web about what VET is, and where to go to find out more specific detail is now a convoluted and time consuming process.

However, in recent times, calls for a widespread review and reform of the VET system have accelerated. WAVE supports and adds our voice to such calls. While the foundations of VET are undeniably those of blue collar trades and occupations accompanied by masculinised notions of work, of learning, and of what constitutes 'skill' and how it is valued including remuneration, changes over the last decades have not been adequate to shift perceptions that VET still favours those gendered foundational assumptions; that VET through its structures and systems is inequitable; that VET still reflects and so reinforces and helps to reproduce the highly gendered nature of Australia's labour force.

For WAVE, transformational change is needed in all sectors of education as it is now configured, along with significant changes in VET to shift perceptions so that VET is seen as an integral and integrated sector of education in Australia; that VET and the whole system is inclusive, equitable and sustainable. Fit for purpose in C21. The importance of this is underlined by information contained in the JSA Report released today, not only of the differences in participation rates (p.4) and underemployment rates (p. 5) between men and women or the increasing significance of feminised industries and occupations:

Total employment continues to shift towards jobs that are commensurate with some level of post-secondary school qualification (skill level 1 to 4 jobs) and away from jobs that do not typically require such a qualification (skill level 5 jobs). Over the past year, around 36% of total employment growth has been in Skill Level 1 occupations, while just over 60% of total employment has been in Skill Level 2 to Skill Level 4 occupations (where VET qualifications are the primary pathway). This underscores the importance of both the higher education and VET systems to growing a highly skilled Australian workforce<sup>6</sup>.

## VET is Gendered

The perception of VET is effected by the fact that it is a gendered experience.

Notwithstanding the paucity of our current enrolment collections to understand participation beyond binary, there are broadly, equal number of enrolments from male and female students in VET.

However, our VET system perpetuates and reinforces those drivers of our gender segregated workforce – that is the perceptions of what VET pathways of learning to participate in, is impacted by the broader stereotypes of work, and skill that we hold in our society.

To improve the perceptions of VET, we need to fundamentally address these stereotypes that limit learners capacity to realise their own potential, work in a variety of industries and settings, and fundamentally improve the outlook to address our skills crisis.

WAVE has reported regularly to the Federal Government on this gendered nature of VET and adult education through a range of submissions including:

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<sup>6</sup> Jobs and Skills Australia (2023), *Labour Market Update. February 2023*. Canberra: Australian Government. <https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/reports/labour-market-update-december-2022>

- Australian Government’s Consultation on the [Employment White Paper](#)
- Response to the Australian Government’s Discussion Paper on [Future Delivery of Foundation Skills in Remote Australia](#)
- Response to [Australian Apprenticeship and Supports Discussion Paper](#)
- Submission to Federal Government on new [skills and employment agency Jobs and Skills Australia](#)
- Response to Australia’s development of [a new migration strategy](#)

## Gendered Participation in Work and Learning<sup>7</sup>

As recently as the 10<sup>th</sup> of November 2022, the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) released data on engagement in work and/or study. At a headline level it tells us that of the 14.5 million Australians that were engaged (partially or fully) in work and or study (15-74 years):

- 71% of men were fully engaged in work and/or study.
- 50% of women were fully engaged.

More women (16.8%) than men (14.6%) were enrolled in study (again 15 to 74 years) and notably of those enrolled in non-school qualification, more women than men studied in degrees (Bachelor Degrees 39.7% women to 38.3% men; post graduate degrees 20.6% women to 16% men) and diploma/advanced diploma levels (12% women to 11.6% men) with more men (27%) studying at Certificate III and IV level than women (17.8%) This gendered segregation is even more pronounced when one considers that overall there is a relatively even split between men and women with a non-school qualification (between the ages of 15-74 – 63.1% men and 63.3% women). Interestingly of all people with education:

- Women aged 15-74 hold more bachelor degrees than men – 35.2% women to 28.8% men
- Men aged 15-74 years hold more certificate/Diploma/Advanced Diploma (32.7% men) than women (26.6% women)

What is also powerful to understand through the ABS release is that the education of women is not translating through to well-paid, secure work. We can see this in through the Labour force status by non-school qualifications.

- Women with Bachelor level more likely to work part time (26.1% women to 11.4% men), are more likely to not be in the labour force (19.1% women to 13.1% men)
- Women with qualifications “below bachelor level (AQF 3 4 and 5 to 6) are much more likely to work part time than men (32.3% women to 11.2% men) and are much more likely to not be in the labour force (25.6% women to 17.3% men)

The gendered segregation of participation in study is also reflected in the field of study where we note that:

- Men overwhelmingly study in engineering and related technologies (20.4% to 2.7% women); architecture and building (9.3% men to 1.9% women) and in information technology (6.3% men to 1.6% women)

<sup>7</sup> ABS, Education and Work, Australia (May 2022) <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/education/education-and-work-australia/latest-release>

- Women are overwhelmingly overrepresented in health (22.4% women to 1.6% men), education (10% women to 3.5% men) and society and culture (27.5% women to 14.9% men)

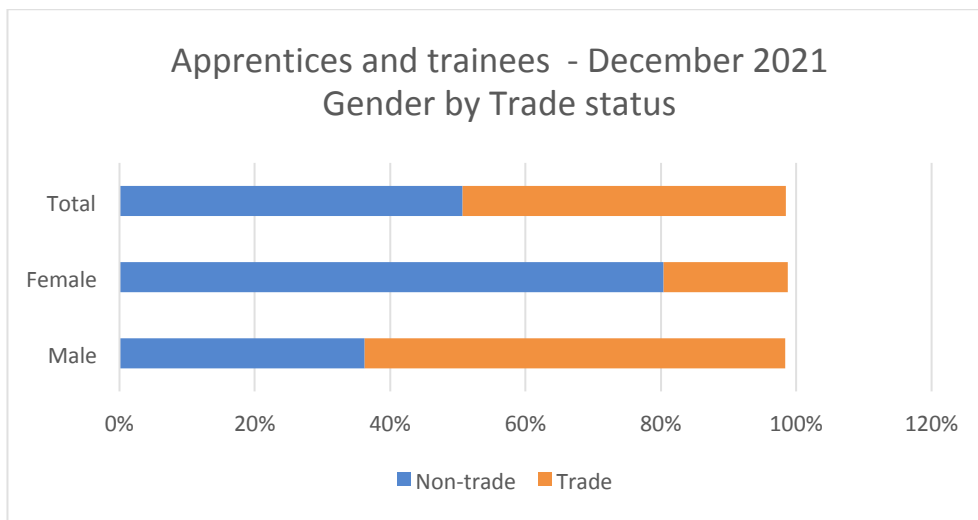
The ABS also notes that “442,000 people were studying for a non-school qualification in a science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) field. Almost three-quarters (73%) of current STEM students were men.” Further that “While 82% of architecture and building students were men, reflecting the overall STEM trend, 73% of all students studying for a non-school qualification in health were women.”

In addition to this, the ABS release also noted that of the 297,00 people “aged 15-74 years were employed as apprentices or trainees (including school-based apprentices or trainees) 75% were male”.

### Australia’s Skill System reflects, reinforces and reproduces our gendered workforce

The recent submission provided by WAVE and Gender Equity Victoria to the Senate Inquiry into Jobs and Skills Australia highlights evidence about how our skills system perpetuates inequity and our gendered segregated labour market.

On the latest NCVET figures we can see that men overwhelmingly occupy “trade” qualifications:



**FIGURE 1 NCVET APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES - DECEMBER 2021 x GENDER x VOCSTATS**

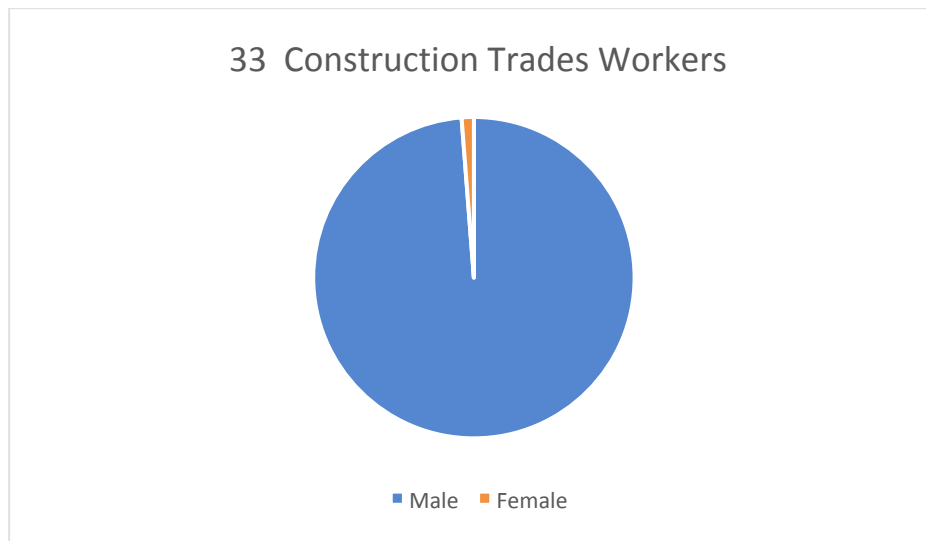


FIGURE 2 NCVER APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES - DECEMBER 2021 (OCCUPATION (ANZSCO - NTIS) GROUP BY GENDER - 33 CONSTRUCTION TRADES VIA VOCSTATS

And women in the Carer and Aide courses:

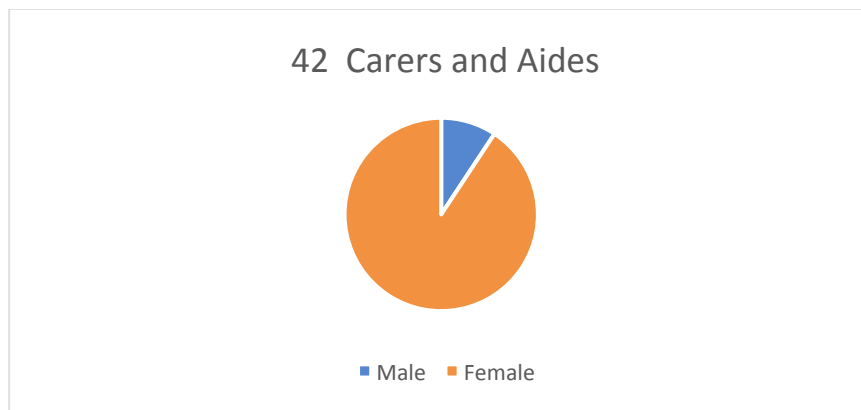


FIGURE 3 NCVER APPRENTICES AND TRAINEES - DECEMBER 2021 OCCUPATION (ANZSCO - NTIS) GROUP BY GENDER 42 CARERS AND AIDES

These both reflect the prevailing industry and occupational job segregation as reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics where Health care and social assistance had the highest proportion of women (77.9%) whereas Construction had the highest proportion of men (87.3%).<sup>8</sup> In addition the following graph shows the **percentage of women and men employed in two of the most gendered industries** – Health care and social assistance (feminised) and Construction (male-dominated) over the last 5 years. By reading the data with a gender lens, we can compare how segregated the sectors are, noting the intransigence in this segregation over that time period.

<sup>8</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (current), *Gender indicators*, Canberra: ABS website. <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/gender-indicators-australia/latest-release#key-series-and-indicators>

## Percentage Comparison of Male vs Female Employment: Construction and Health Care & Social Assistance Sectors 2016-2020

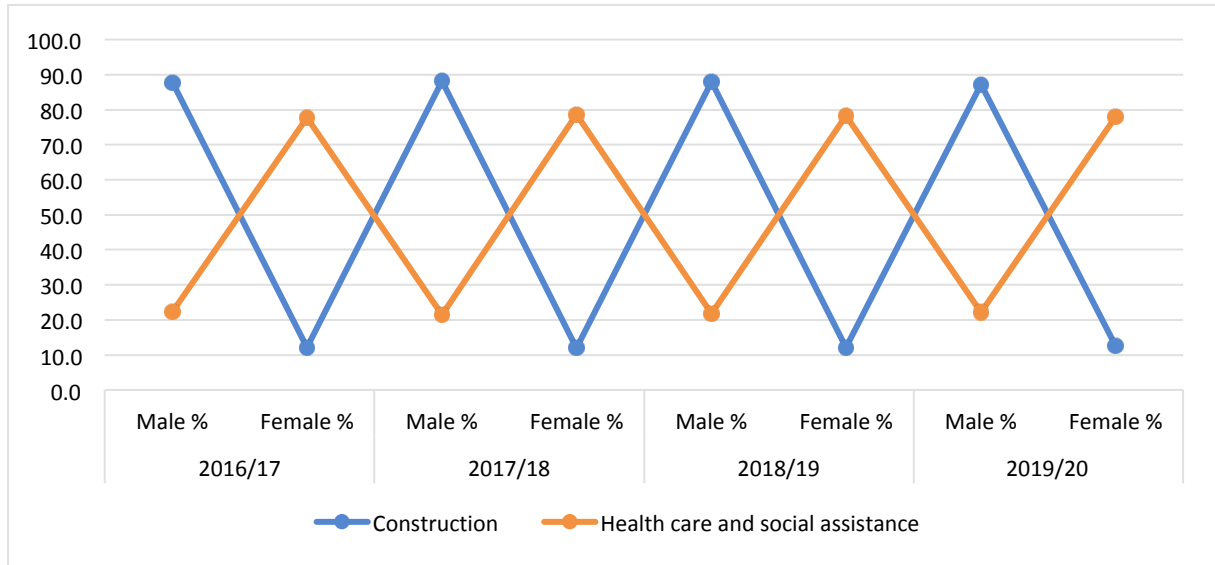


FIGURE 4 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY. TAKEN FROM ABS - CONSTRUCTION SECTOR AND HEALTH CARE & SOCIAL ASSISTANCE SECTOR.<sup>9</sup>

## Experiences of learning and work - Driving perception of VET

### Women in Trades

The learning and workplace experience for those people whose gender is the minority of a sector/industry perpetuates inequality.

For instance – women in male dominated trades do not experience safe, equitable workplaces or learning pathways.

The Western Australian 2022 Report into Sexual Harassment in the FIFO workforce in the WA Mining Sector<sup>10</sup> tells stories of:

- A woman while working for a contractor had a near-miss incident with a haul truck she was driving. She informed us the site supervisor told her he would make the safety investigation 'go-away' if she had sex with him. This same woman says she was told she would have to 'get on her knees' if she wanted to get 'her shirt' – this meant a permanent job with the mining company.

<sup>9</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (current), *Gender indicators*, Canberra: ABS website.

<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/gender-indicators-australia/latest-release#key-series-and-indicators>.

<sup>10</sup> Western Australia Parliament Legislative Assembly (2022). *Community Development and Justice Standing Committee, Report 2 'ENOUGH IS ENOUGH' Sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry*. Perth: Western Australia Parliament.

[https://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Parliament/commit.nsf/\(Report+Lookup+by+Com+ID\)/EF1DF1A3F5DF74A848258869000E6B32/\\$file/20220621%20-Report%20No%202.pdf](https://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/Parliament/commit.nsf/(Report+Lookup+by+Com+ID)/EF1DF1A3F5DF74A848258869000E6B32/$file/20220621%20-Report%20No%202.pdf)

- One woman told how she was knocked unconscious in her donga and awoke to find her jeans and underpants around her ankles. ‘I felt sick, ashamed, violated, dirty and very confused’, she said.
- Another told that a man forced his hand down her top numerous times in front of other workers and no one did anything.
- One woman told of a supervisor telling her of sexual jokes and comments being made about her by others. She became upset and the supervisor’s response was to force himself on her, kissing and hugging her.

From RMIT 2020 Report for the Victorian Government on Women in Construction<sup>11</sup> we know that the attitudes to female workers in construction are negative and discriminatory. The report quotes from the lived experience of women and cites their voices including:

“Being asked to give an opinion and then having it dismissed.”

“Customers thinking you don’t know what you are doing.”

“I wouldn't be able to make it and that I should get a 'girls' job” ,

“Belittling, assuming I know nothing.”

“Often people will address a male in my presence, even when I’m superior to that worker and that worker cannot answer anyway.”

The RMIT report also tells of female worker describing how information relevant to the progression of her role was withheld because she was female, and that she was not an accepted member of the workplace:

“I've walked up to someone I didn't know very well and he's kind of a guru. He had more tickets and more qualifications than anybody in our depot. There was this tricky piece of equipment, so I walked up to a small group of them and I said, ‘What's this?’ I was curious as to this new equipment that we were installing. His response was ‘Secret men's business’.”

The broader evidence of women in male dominated trades constantly tells us of the “hostile environment”<sup>12</sup> and prevailing culture that is a significant barrier to retention. The Australian Sex Discrimination Commission identified that gendered workplace violence is a major reason why women leave these male dominated sectors along with “targeting and victimising women who raise complaints about these incidents”<sup>13</sup>

### Mistreatment of Female Apprentices

Similarly, discrimination and harassment of female apprentices is prevalent.

Not only do significant number of women in male dominated trades experience harassment but also, young women. The Fifth National survey on Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces tells us that

<sup>11</sup> Holdsworth, S., Turner, M., Scott-Young, C.M., & Sandri, K. (2020). Women in Construction: Exploring the Barriers and Supportive Enablers of Wellbeing in the Workplace. RMIT University, Melbourne. <https://researchrepository.rmit.edu.au/esploro/outputs/report/Women-in-Construction-Exploring-the-Barriers-and-Supportive-Enablers-of-Wellbeing-in-the-Workplace/9921970128201341>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

disproportionately young people experience harassment at rates significantly higher than the total population. Whereas 33% of the total population experiences harassment, for those 15-17- 47% have experience sexual harassment – and 18-29 - 46%.<sup>14</sup>

RMIT’s report identifies a consistent theme in its research that the persistence of consequence-free behaviour results in the mistreatment of female apprentices<sup>15</sup> and cites research from 2017 that demonstrates the connection between “male dominated industries” and “tolerance of bullying, particularly apprentices”<sup>16</sup> and from 2009 that spoke of the need to improve support and “responsiveness to complaints about workplace discrimination are considered essential for enabling tradeswomen to succeed in their careers”.<sup>17</sup>

We know from feedback to TWA, that there is a need to make the workplace/site safer for apprentices, particularly women<sup>18</sup>. Key stakeholders and members advise that, apprentices do not feel safe in their work due to:

- Risk to losing job if they have to take extended time off – particularly for parental or care requirements (a particular risk to women) It was noted that construction industry and project plans are often based on a minimum of 50 to 60 hours of work per resource per week. This expectation and norm of work hours alienates 51% of the potential workforce to this sector.
- Poor behaviours on the worksite where, often, bullying and harassment is more than common, it is condoned and encouraged through unconscious bias
- Persistent sexual harassment in the workplace and poor recognition that a healthy respectful environment is good for all workers.

In January 2022, the Queensland Training Ombudsman provided a report to the state’s Minister for Employment and Small Business and, Minister for Training and Skills Development *on support provided Apprentices and Trainees, with a focus on female apprentices in male dominated occupations*. This review included an analysis of existing literature on the matter and found that “trade occupations are traditionally the domain of males” and “the percentage of women in these occupations has remained relatively unchanged since 1988”<sup>19</sup> further, the analysis identified a set of key challenges consistent with symptoms of gendered drivers of inequity driven by gendered stereotypes of work and skill. These include:<sup>20</sup>

overcoming societal and cultural norms

lack of female role models

lack of engagement through familial and social networks

<sup>14</sup> Australian Human Rights Commission 2022 *Time for respect: Fifth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces*

<sup>15</sup> Holdsworth, S 2020 p7

<sup>16</sup> Jones et al 2017 in Holdsworth, S. 2020 p 14

<sup>17</sup> Shewing 2009 in Holdsworth, S. 2020 p18

<sup>18</sup> Feedback to Consultation undertaken by Tradeswomen Australia and National Association for Women in Construction (NAWIC) in preparation for their submission to the Australian Government, for “Australian Apprenticeship Support Services”.

<sup>19</sup> Queensland Training Ombudsman *Review of support provided to Queensland Apprentices and Trainees, with a focus on female apprentices in male dominated occupations 2022*

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*



despite numerous STEM programs on offer, there is a view that school curriculums do not encourage female participation in trade-based classes or work experience

employers that are resistant to employing female tradespeople

workplace cultures that support and condone workforce bullying

lack of or ineffective human resource policies and practices to respond to workplace bullying

lack of appropriate facilities on worksites

The report also goes onto identify the segregation of male and female apprentice completion rates across different sectors.

### Negative Perceptions of Men in Care Work

Similarly, we note a 2019 study of men’s participation in early education and care work,<sup>21</sup> where researchers discovered two key stereotypes that men in these care settings are subject to: “the possible perpetrator” or “the fun guy”. This examination of gender specific stereotypes as applied to men found that when men work in non-traditional jobs, negative gender stereotypes get activated.

This reality is further supported by research into male participation into broader feminized workforces where the discriminating effect of bias and stereotypes result in:<sup>22</sup>

- Hiring managers discriminating against men in feminized workforces;
- Men discriminating against themselves from working in roles that they consider feminized;
- The lower pay provided to women’s workforces reinforcing this gendered discrimination; and
- Creating the “glass elevator/escalator effect” whereby men have noticeably faster career advancement in feminized workforces but also are impacted by stigma due to gender stereotypes for undertaking frontline roles (see the discussion on the glass escalator effect later in this analysis).
- To be clear, these symptoms of inequality, and gendered stereotyping are strongly influencing the public’s perception of VET pathways.

*We can see the impact of these gender stereotypes that drives the perception of participation in our workforce, and also, participation and perceptions of VET.*

*Australia’s highly segregated labour and skills systems put in place structures and systems that punish learners for working in jobs that are counter to the prevailing gender stereotypes.*

## Terms of Reference (TOR)

We note that:

<sup>21</sup> Hedlin, M., Åberg, M. & Johansson, C., 2019. Fun guy and possible perpetrator: an interview study of how men are positioned within early childhood education and care. *Education Inquiry*, 10(2), pp. 95-115.

<sup>22</sup> Williams, C. L., 1992. The Glass Escalator: Hidden Advantages for Men in the "Female" Professions. *Social Problems*, 39(3), pp. 253-267.

*The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training will inquire into and report on the perceptions and status of vocational education and training (VET), and Commonwealth supported information on VET available to students, and how they impact:*

- *education and training choices of students, particularly those who lack the necessary foundation skills, or experience other disadvantages; and*
- *employer views and practices in relation to engagement with VET.*

The inquiry will focus on the Commonwealth Skills and Training portfolio and include consideration of:

1. information available to students about VET qualifications and related career pathways along a student's journey through secondary schools, vocational education, higher education, and work transitions, with a focus on how this combines with other sources of advice, including informal advice, to influence student choices, and how Commonwealth funded information for students about VET may be improved;
2. perceptions and status of the VET sector and how this may be impacting student enrolment choices, employer engagement, and recruitment and retention of the VET educator workforce, and how perceptions and status of the VET sector can be improved. International best practices in relation to VET perception and qualifications status should be examined;
3. successful partnerships between VET providers and employers that have demonstrably created career pathways and secure employment opportunities for students, considering the best practice elements of these successful partnerships, and how more partnering may be encouraged among VET providers and employers; and
4. Commonwealth programs which could influence the above, and intersections with state and territory, industry, and philanthropic efforts, including any structural barriers to improvement.

Having made the above points, WAVE will focus its submission on TOR 1 and 2.

# RESPONSE TO TERMS OF REFERENCE

TOR 1. Information available to students about VET qualifications and related career pathways along a student's journey through secondary schools, vocational education, higher education, and work transitions, with a focus on how this combines with other sources of advice, including informal advice, to influence student choices, and how Commonwealth funded information for students about VET may be improved.

Navigating information about work-related education and training and so opportunities available through VET for learning pathways and career planning is a highly complex task. We know that the traditional education-work pathways are changing. No longer do Australians follow a traditional three stage pathway of “education – career- retirement”. Rather we dip in and out of education and training throughout our post-school life to meet our individual needs and ambitions. Career pathways are not linear either. Rather, over our lifetime, we build a portfolio of skills and knowledge, transferring this learning to new roles and new industries.<sup>23</sup>

**Recommendation 1.1:** Access to information about VET must be streamlined, regularly updated and easily accessible via a well-publicised single portal for potential users at every stage of their lifespan.

Consequently, career pathways need to show the vast array of opportunities that are available to students as they make subject choices in secondary school. To do that effectively, students need to understand the inter-relationship between the VET sector and the higher education sector. Importantly, subject choices in senior secondary schools are the first step in the career planning and where the perceptions of VET are firmly embedded and often persist well into adulthood. The choice should not be either/or, rather focussed on the student's strengths and how they complement the expectations of an industry cluster.

The primary influencers of career choice for school students are their parents.<sup>24</sup> Parental advice is influenced by a number of factors, including their perceptions of vocational education and their aspirations for their child. If parents have poor perceptions of the VET sector, then their advice is more likely to encourage their child into career choices that don't involve the VET sector.

**Recommendation 1.2:** that the focus of Commonwealth funded information about VET for the school sector and young Australians be targeted to addressing parental perceptions of the VET sector and that any information campaign be supported by social research into understanding parental perceptions.

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<sup>23</sup> Jobs Queensland (2019) *The Future of Work Literature review*. Ipswich: Queensland Government

<sup>24</sup> Nolan, T. (2012) *“They just want me to be happy”: a study of how Year 10 students in Queensland choose subject pathways for their senior secondary studies*. Melbourne: Australian Catholic University (unpublished)

Career advice within the school system is largely provided by teachers who may not have experience or qualifications in this area. There is a significant shortage of qualified career advisers with only 2,100 in Australia.<sup>25</sup> The workforce is largely feminised (75%).<sup>26</sup> When advice is given, it is many cases, gendered advice. Female students are often channelled into feminised occupations such as hairdressing (an apprenticeship) or administration (a traineeship) while males may be encouraged to consider an engineering apprenticeship or an IT traineeship.<sup>27</sup> There is a need for teachers and career advisers to be better informed of the career pathways available to all students, regardless of gender. The Queensland Government’s Gateway to Industry Schools program provides all stakeholders opportunities to learn about industry career pathways available to students.<sup>28</sup> Increasing the knowledge of the opportunities that can be offered through a VET pathway to industry has the potential to reduce the number of young people currently classified as Not in Employment, Education and Training (NEET).

**Recommendation 1.3:** that the Australian Government work with the relevant State and Territory governments to encourage greater school-industry collaboration to improve the knowledge of contemporary industry career pathways to ensure that career advice is non-gendered and relevant.

For students, another source of information on career pathways is through VET in School (VETiS) programs and School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships (SATs). Both these programs provide secondary students with the opportunities to engage with their industry of choice (a “Try before you buy” option). Data from one Catholic Education diocese in Queensland in 2022 indicates the success of these programs with over 87 per cent of students graduating with one or more VET qualifications as part of their Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE).

**Recommendation 1.4:** that the Australian Government commission research to understand the effectiveness of programs such as VETiS and SATs in increasing students’ and parents’ awareness of VET career pathways and occupational outcomes for secondary school students.

Initial post-school education provides entry into the world of work and is an integral part of an individual’s lifelong learning journey. Vocational education and training, both accredited and non-accredited and delivered either through formal or informal channels, uniquely provides career pathways for marginalised cohorts. Unlike both the school education and higher education sectors, it provides practice-based learning with the additional focus on developing foundation skills<sup>29</sup>. These

<sup>25</sup> Labour Market Insights (2023) *Occupational profile – Career advisers*. Canberra: Australian Government <https://labourmarketinsights.gov.au/occupation-profile/careers-advisers?occupationCode=272111> (accessed 26 February 2023)

<sup>26</sup> Labour Market Insights (2023) *Occupational profile – Secondary School Teachers*. Canberra: Australian Government <https://labourmarketinsights.gov.au/occupation-profile/secondary-school-teachers?occupationCode=2414> accessed 26 February 2023)

<sup>27</sup> VOCSTATS (2022) *Apprentices and trainees, in training, Oct – Dec 2021*, Adelaide, NCVER. (Accessed 25 February 2023)

<sup>28</sup> Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (2023) *Gateway to Industry Schools program*. Brisbane: Queensland Government. <https://desbt.qld.gov.au/training/employers/gateway-schools#:~:text=The%20program%20builds%20partnerships%20between,outcomes%20for%20students%2C%20local%20communities> (accessed 26 February 2023)

<sup>29</sup> Language, literacy, numeracy, digital literacy, and employability skills.

skills are key to supporting engagement in lifelong learning which is necessary for successful ongoing engagement in employment and education.<sup>30</sup>

There is limited research into how students in other education sectors obtain career advice. Anecdotal evidence points to a variety of sources depending on the pathway that the individual is taking. For example, workers may be encouraged by their employers to undertake a particular qualification to gain a promotion. NCVER's Annual Student Outcomes surveys provide some evidence of this within the VET sector. However many employers and individuals report that they find the VET system complex and confusing which increases their less than favourable impressions of the system beyond their initial qualification experience. Understanding what influences career choices post-initial VET or higher education qualification and the pathways that exist to support these is needed to support access to lifelong learning and ongoing engagement in work.2.5 picks up on para on p.

Increasingly employers are seeking workers with both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Understanding the relationship between VET and higher education (and indeed secondary schooling) is also important in supporting transitions between the sectors. The lack of clearly defined and accessible pathways between the sectors remains a barrier to successful transitions.<sup>31</sup> To this end WAVE supports the proposal by TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) that as part of the reviews of both National Skills Partnership and the Universities Accord, the principle of a more integrated tertiary education be embraced.<sup>32</sup>

**Recommendation 1.5:** that both the Universities Accord and the National Skills Partnership embrace the principle of a more integrated tertiary education sector that will deliver better outcomes for all students.

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<sup>30</sup> Jobs Queensland (2020) *Lifelong Learning: the foundation of future work*. Ipswich: Jobs Queensland

<sup>31</sup> Wheelahan, L., Leahy, M., Fredman, N., Moodie, G., Arkoudis, S. and Bailey, E. (2012) *Missing links: the fragmented relationship between tertiary education and jobs*. Adelaide: NCVER.  
<https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/publications/all-publications/missing-links-the-fragmented-relationship-between-tertiary-education-and-jobs> (accessed 26 February 2023)

<sup>32</sup> Dodd, J. (2023) Rare moment in time for an integrated tertiary education sector, *TDA newsletter*, 20 February. Canberra: TAFE Directors Australia.

TOR 2. Perceptions and status of the VET sector and how this may be impacting student enrolment choices, employer engagement, and recruitment and retention of the VET educator workforce, and how perceptions and status of the VET sector can be improved. International best practices in relation to VET perception and qualifications status should be examined.

Sandwiched between debates about university deregulation and private vs public school funding, vocational education all too often is regulated to forgotten child status, struggling to gain the media attention required for the public to understand VET's unique abilities and ambitions.

Nicholas Wyman, CEO, Skilling Australia Foundation 2017<sup>33</sup>

Associated with delivering both economic and social outcomes for the nation, for communities and for individuals, the contemporary Australian VET sector is highly complex, dynamic, widely dispersed, fragmented and as such is difficult to understand. This contributes to the range of perceptions of VET, many of which are partial, time specific and less than positive.

**Recommendation 2.1:** that the Australian Government clearly define the VET sector along with its purpose and social and economic benefits, highlighting access points and learning pathways in and across all education sectors.

Across Australia, industry stakeholders recognise the key role that the VET sector plays in ensuring that Australians have the skills and capabilities to contribute to our economic and social development. It provides a pathway from school to work for many young people and supports the upskilling and reskilling of those in the labour force to find, retain and change employment to meet economic needs.

Despite this recognition, VET is publicly viewed as a “second choice” option. Vocational qualifications are considered inferior to higher education qualifications even within the VET workforce itself. Despite all VET trainers and assessors at a minimum holding dual qualifications (an industry-relevant qualification and a teaching qualification), there remains a perception that VET trainers and assessors are less qualified than people holding a teaching qualification.

There are many misconceptions about VET which contribute to the poor status in which the sector is held.<sup>34</sup> Despite multiple media campaigns and funding programs promoting the value and opportunities that VET provides, statistics around graduate incomes and employment outcomes, these misconceptions persist.

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<sup>33</sup> Wyman, N., McCrindle, M., Whatmore, S., Gedge, J. & Edwards, T. (2017). *Perceptions are not reality: myths, realities & the critical role of vocational education & training in Australia*; Melbourne: Skilling Australia Foundation <https://cica.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Perceptions-are-not-Reality-May-2017.pdf> (accessed February 26 2023)

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

There are numerous contributing factors that could be underpinning these misconceptions, such as the name of the sector. “Vocational education” implies that a person engaging in a VET qualification has a “calling” or “purpose” to that occupation and therefore it is not a career or profession. Australia is one of the few countries globally that uses the term ‘VET’. Internationally, the preferred terminology is Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET).<sup>35</sup> In the current global economic and social climate, this terminology draws attention to the increasing need for individuals to have both technical skills as well as vocational capabilities such as “a strong feeling of suitability for a particular career or occupation”.<sup>36</sup>

**Recommendation 2.2:** that the Australian Government along with states and territories adopt the terminology “Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)” as part of a campaign to raise the status of the sector and to bring Australia into line with international best practice.

Another contributing factor to the public perception of VET in Australia is that for many people the term is synonymous with TAFE, the public training provider. This perception is often reinforced in public policy and programs, including the recent establishment of the Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) Consultative Forum. The Forum has only one VET representative and that is TAFE Directors Australia (TDA).<sup>37</sup> There is no representation from education experts, equity experts, private and enterprise training providers, VET in schools/secondary schools or the Adult and Community Education (ACE)/Adult learning sector, all of whom are integral contributors to vocational education and training in Australia.

In 2021, TAFE accounted for just 29 per cent of all vocational education and training delivery in Australia. Schools accounted for a further six per cent while only 0.03 percent of students enrolled through the higher education sector which has several dual registered institutions. Private training providers and the ACE sector accounted for the remainder of training enrolments in 2021.<sup>38</sup>

#### TVA program enrolments 2015-2021

##### Provider type by Program enrolments, Year and Location of training delivery

##### Counting: Program enrolments

Program enrolments	Program enrolments		
Year	2021		
Location of training delivery	Domestic	Overseas	Mixed
Provider type			
TAFE institutes	797145	21785	5

<sup>35</sup> Butler, E. & Ferrier, F. (2023), *A fair go for all? Equity frameworks and landmark documents in Australian vocational education and training*, VET Knowledge Bank, Adelaide: NCVER.

<https://www.voced.edu.au/vet-knowledge-bank-landmark-documents-equity-access-historical-overview>

<sup>36</sup> Oxford Languages (2023) *vocation* Oxford University Press.

[https://www.google.com/search?q=vocation+meaning&rlz=1C1VDKB\\_enAU1039AU1039&oq=vocation+&aqs=chrome.1.69i57j0i22i30j0i22i30i625j0i22i30j0i22i30i625l3j69i61.4644j1j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8](https://www.google.com/search?q=vocation+meaning&rlz=1C1VDKB_enAU1039AU1039&oq=vocation+&aqs=chrome.1.69i57j0i22i30j0i22i30i625j0i22i30j0i22i30i625l3j69i61.4644j1j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8) (accessed February 26 2023)

<sup>37</sup> Jobs and Skills Australia (2023) *Consultative Forum*. Canberra: Australian Government

<https://www.jobsandskills.gov.au/about/consultative-forum> (accessed February 27 2023)

<sup>38</sup> VOCSTATS (2023) *TVA program enrolments 2015-2021*. Adelaide: NCVER (accessed February 27 2023)



<b>Universities</b>	75248	277	0
<b>Schools</b>	154407	0	0
<b>Community education providers</b>	94268	222	0
<b>Enterprise providers</b>	49135	27	0
<b>Private training providers</b>	1576337	2589	5
<b>Total</b>	2746538	24901	3

NCVER VOCSTATS (2022) *Total VET activity 2021*, Adelaide: NCVER.

**Recommendation 2.3:** that the Australian Government clearly defines the VET sector in Australia to enable clear differentiation of the sector from the public provider.

**Recommendation 2.4:** that the Australian Government ensure that all provider types within the sector have equal representation in VET decision making forums such as the JSA Consultative Forum.

**Recommendation 2.5:** that the Australian Government ensure that representation on all key VET decision making bodies such as but not restricted to the JSA Consultative Forum is balanced and inclusive of the range of stakeholders including education experts, equity experts, community and learner voice representation.

Ever recurring Machinery of Government changes both at federal and state and territory level also serve to undermine the status of VET. For stakeholders, the lack of surety as to which government department is responsible for VET policy and the fact that across most jurisdictions, VET is referred to as “skills and training” further undermines the image of the sector as it dismisses as irrelevant the education component of VET. Policy issues such as the VET-FEE HELP program also has had a significant impact on the public perception of VET.

**Recommendation 2.6:** that the Australian Government undertakes a risk assessment as to the impact on the perception of the VET sector of all its activities (current and future).

There is also a need to address significant issues within the VET workforce. In 2019, the VET workforce was estimated at approximately 250,000 of which only 29 per cent were trainers and assessors. Just over half were employed full time and a third were employed on a casual or sessional basis. Three provider types reported a much higher proportion of part-time and casual staff with TAFE reporting over 60 per cent of trainers and assessors were part-time. This has implications for the quality of training and assessment and therefore impacts the status of vocational education and training in stakeholders’ minds. The sector also has a large number of volunteers (177,596) of which less than five per cent were directly involved in the delivery of training and/or assessment.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>39</sup> Knight, G., White, I. and Granfield P. (2020) *Understanding the Australian vocational education and training workforce*. Adelaide: NCVER <https://www.ncver.edu.au/research-and-statistics/publications/all-publications/understanding-the-australian-vocational-education-and-training-workforce> (accessed February 27 2023)



2016 Census data reveals that the VET workforce is largely female with an average age of 50. More than half of the workforce regularly work overtime or extra hours. With a median hourly rate of \$47 per hour<sup>40</sup> and largely insecure work in an industry sector that is largely undervalued by key stakeholders, the sector struggles to recruit quality workers.

**Recommendation 2.7:** that all jurisdictions work with training providers to support the conversion of part-time, particularly casual and sessional positions to more secure employment. This will contribute to improving the quality of VET outcomes and lifting the status of VET in Australia.

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<sup>40</sup> Labour Market Insights (2023) *Occupational Profile – Vocational Education Teachers*, Canberra: Australian Government. <https://labourmarketinsights.gov.au/occupation-profile/teachers-vocational-education?occupationCode=2422> (accessed February 27 2023)

# WAVE GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>When we say...</b>	<b>What we mean is...</b>	<b>What we don't mean is...</b>
<b>Vocational and Adult Education</b>	<p>The products, services and policies that underpin vocational skilling of people in Australia through education and/or training. This is inclusive of vocational education that occurs in secondary schools, the vocational education that is delivered in universities, adult education that occurs in community settings and also foundation skills, literacy and numeracy education for adults.</p> <p>What draws this together is the enabling effect that these pathways of learning have on jobs and employment of women</p>	<p>We do not include in our definition university degrees or vocational pathways delivered by training providers in locations outside of Australia.</p>
<b>The national vocational education &amp; training system</b>	<p>1) "The national training system is the Australian system for Vocational Education and Training (VET). It provides people with work-ready skills and qualifications..." <a href="https://www.australianindustrystandards.org.au/national-vet-system/">https://www.australianindustrystandards.org.au/national-vet-system/</a></p> <p>2) "The extent to which state and territories and the Commonwealth of Australia governments come together to agree on policies and programs to deliver and fund vocational and adult education. It is inclusive of state/territory and commonwealth funding programs, regulatory frameworks and policies and nationally agreed policy structures such as training packages, industry advisory mechanisms, and agreements". <a href="https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2022/child-care-education-and-training/vocational-education-and-training">https://www.pc.gov.au/ongoing/report-on-government-services/2022/child-care-education-and-training/vocational-education-and-training</a></p>	
<b>Technical Vocational Education &amp; Training (TVET, VET)</b>	<p>Technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is understood as comprising education, training and skills development relating to a wide range of occupational fields, production, services and livelihoods. TVET, as part of lifelong learning, can take place at secondary, post-secondary and tertiary levels and includes work-based learning and continuing training and professional development, which may lead to qualifications. TVET also includes a wide range of skills development opportunities attuned to national and local contexts. Learning to learn, the development of literacy and numeracy skills, transversal skills and citizenship skills are integral components of TVET (UNESCO: 2016, 2022)<sup>4</sup>.</p>	
<b>Gender Equity and Gender</b>	<p>WAVE uses these two terms - deliberately and not interchangeably</p>	



<p><b>Equality</b></p>	<p>Drawing from the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) we recognise that:</p> <p>Equality between women, men and gender diverse peoples (gender equality): refers to the equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of all genders. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that human rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men and gender diverse people, are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men and gender diverse people. Gender equality is not a women’s issue but should concern and fully engage men, gender diverse people, as well as women. Equality between people of all genders is seen both as a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centred development.</p> <p>While the term gender equity was determined by the CEDAW committee in its General Recommendation 28 that all parties will use the term “equality”, in Australia the term “equity” has gained some traction with gender mainstreaming professionals for its recognition that people have different needs and power and that these differences should be identified and addressed in a manner that rectifies the imbalances between genders WAVE uses this term in the full recognition that in the past it has been used to perpetuate stereotypes.</p>	
<p><b>Gender</b></p>	<p>Drawing upon the definition of UN Women, WAVE defines gender as:</p> <p>The social attributes and opportunities associated with being male and female and the relationships between women and men and girls and boys, as well as the relations between women and those between men. These attributes, opportunities and relationships are socially constructed and are learned through socialization processes. They are context/ time-specific and changeable. Gender determines what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man in a given context. In most societies there are differences and inequalities between women and men in responsibilities assigned, activities undertaken, access to and control over resources, as well as decision-making opportunities. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context. Other</p>	

	important criteria for socio-cultural analysis include class, race, poverty level, ethnic group and age.	
<b>Empowerment of women</b>	<p>The empowerment of women concerns women gaining power and control over their own lives. It involves awareness-raising, building self-confidence, expansion of choices, increased access to and control over resources and actions to transform the structures and institutions which reinforce and perpetuate gender discrimination and inequality. The process of empowerment is as important as the goal. Empowerment comes from within; women empower themselves. Inputs to promote the empowerment of women should facilitate women's articulation of their needs and priorities and a more active role in promoting these interests and needs.</p> <p>Empowerment of women cannot be achieved in a vacuum; men must be brought along in the process of change. Empowerment should not be seen as a zero-sum game where gains for women automatically imply losses for men. Increasing women's power in empowerment strategies does not refer to power over, or controlling forms of power, but rather to alternative forms of power: power to; power with and power from within which focus on utilizing individual and collective strengths to work towards common goals without coercion or domination. Drawn from the European Institute for Gender Equality.</p>	
<b>Intersectionality</b>	<p>Intersectionality is a way of seeing or analysing the dynamics of power and social inequality in our society. It can be described in different ways: as a theory, an approach, a lens, a framework and so on. What is essential to the idea of intersectionality is the recognition that inequalities are never the result of any single or distinct factor such as race, class or gender. Rather, 'they are the outcome of different social locations, power relations and experiences' (Hankivsky, 2014 in Multicultural Centre for Women's Health <i>Intersectionality Matters: A guide to engaging immigrant and refugee communities in Australia</i>. 2017</p>	
<b>Gender transformative</b>	<p>When we are gender transformative, we are addressing the "causes of gender-based inequalities and work to transform harmful gender roles, norms and relations. They challenge both normative and structural inequality."</p> <p>Drawn from Our Watch <i>A guide to help you work out how gender transformative your initiative is</i>  <a href="https://handbook.ourwatch.org.au/leadership-resource/a-guide-to-help-you-work-out-how-gender-transformative-your-initiative-is">https://handbook.ourwatch.org.au/leadership-resource/a-guide-to-help-you-work-out-how-gender-transformative-your-initiative-is</a></p>	
<b>Gender Specific</b>	"...Approaches acknowledge gender inequalities and	

	<p>consider women’s specific needs, but do not transform norms and practices.”</p> <p>Drawn from Our Watch <i>A guide to help you work out how gender transformative your initiative is</i>  <a href="https://handbook.ourwatch.org.au/leadership-resource/a-guide-to-help-you-work-out-how-gender-transformative-your-initiative-is">https://handbook.ourwatch.org.au/leadership-resource/a-guide-to-help-you-work-out-how-gender-transformative-your-initiative-is</a></p>	
<b>Gender sensitive</b>	<p>These approaches acknowledge but do not address gender inequalities.</p> <p>They are not harmful, but they don’t make sustainable changes to society that lead to long-term and significant reductions gender inequality</p> <p>Drawn from Our Watch <i>A guide to help you work out how gender transformative your initiative is</i>  <a href="https://handbook.ourwatch.org.au/leadership-resource/a-guide-to-help-you-work-out-how-gender-transformative-your-initiative-is">https://handbook.ourwatch.org.au/leadership-resource/a-guide-to-help-you-work-out-how-gender-transformative-your-initiative-is</a></p>	
<b>Gender insensitive</b>	<p>These approaches ignore gender norms and inequalities, can minimise efforts to address gender inequality, and risk contributing to the gendered drivers of violence through implicit support of existing norms.</p> <p>Drawn from Our Watch <i>A guide to help you work out how gender transformative your initiative is</i>  <a href="https://handbook.ourwatch.org.au/leadership-resource/a-guide-to-help-you-work-out-how-gender-transformative-your-initiative-is">https://handbook.ourwatch.org.au/leadership-resource/a-guide-to-help-you-work-out-how-gender-transformative-your-initiative-is</a></p>	
<b>Traineeship</b>	<p>A traineeship is a formal training arrangement between an employer and a person who undertakes structured on-the-job training in health, care, support work, infrastructure, engineering, business, IT, digital marketing, hospitality and events for a period of 12 months to two years full or part time. The trainee is paid while they train, with set base rates, including full allowances and entitlements. The qualification can vary from a Certificate II to an Advanced Diploma.</p>	
<b>Apprenticeship</b>	<p>An apprenticeship is a formal training arrangement between an employer and a person who undertakes structured, on-the-job training focused on trades in automotive, electrical, mechanical, bricklaying, plumbing, and carpentry for a period of three to four years, full or part time. The apprentice is paid while they train, with set base rates, including full allowances and entitlements. The qualification can vary from a Certificate II to an Advanced Diploma.</p>	