

vision for the future

EXPLORATION

Re-Defining Competency: Time for a new approach

Michael Hartman




NATIONAL VET CONFERENCE
GOLD COAST 2021
#2021NVC



Re-defining Competency: Time for a New Approach

Velg Training's National VET Conference 2021

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Skills Impact is a not-for-profit, industry-owned skills standards organisation

We work with industry, training providers and government

- Track industry trends, skills opportunities and challenges.
- Manage Industry Reference Committees and publish Skills Forecasts.
 - Future skills needs and solutions.
- Skills standards and training package projects.
- Conduct research on issues we uncover.



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Industry is at the Core

12 Industry Reference Committees



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Industry leadership in VET

- ✓ Industry plays a key role in identifying skills requirements
- ✓ They're involved in the development of units of competency and qualifications
(Better described as vocational skill standards)
- ✗ They have limited influence over what, how and when training is delivered, and how it is funded



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Skills pipeline & industry involvement

Published in the Skills Organisations National co-design Discussion Paper – Sept 2019



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The Future of VET

- An important time to have a vibrant and flourishing VET sector.
- Unprecedented technological advancement changing the way work is done.
- Stakeholders are being asked their views.
- Every person in the room is contributing to VET.
- The VET sector is critical. We could all deliver so much more, with changed policies and systems.



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Not a 'Training Package'

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Units = Swiss army knife for VET?

- Units are not training standards.
- They are skills standards.
- There are problems with using them for regulation.
- We need to redesign these documents.



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Instrument of economic and social policy

Represent occupations

Vehicle for industry leadership of VET

Used to regulate training

Publicly accessible

Guide learning design

Supply employers with relevant skills

Equip students with relevant skills

Support consistency of assessment

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A training package doesn't describe *how* an individual should be trained.

It is not a curriculum.

It outlines industry work skills standards.

Not a 'package of training' at all.

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VET system works with a definition of competency that is very difficult to achieve without workplace-based practice

Definition from ASQA's website

"The consistent application of knowledge and skill to the standard of performance required in the workplace. It embodies the ability to transfer and apply skills and knowledge to new situations and environments."

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Competency now takes on a new meaning

- Many participants exit the VET sector with basic skills and up-to-date knowledge, but they are not competent to workplace standards.
- They are safe to start practicing in a workplace, to continue the journey to competence.



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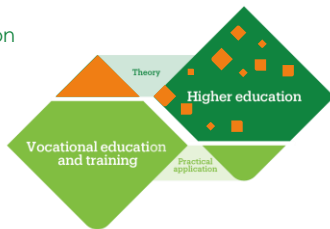
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Vocational Education and Training

A system based around competency.

Learners are on a journey: From not being able to carry out the work, to competency.



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Institutionalised learning is a critical contribution, but...

You need knowledge and supervised workplace practice to develop real competency.

System redesigned to support:

- RTOs to do what they do best
- Enterprises (workplaces) to do what they do best.



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Competency is a journey and not a destination





Both RTOs and industry should have a role in competency

- Units of competency could be redesigned to identify:
 - the areas RTOs can deliver and assess and
 - the parts people learn by doing in enterprises.
- Support materials created for both RTO-based training delivery and workplace practice and evidence.



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A solution will require improved training products

National Skills and Training Materials (or national curriculum or training standards)
(based on units of competency) define what an RTO is responsible for delivering.

Industry Work Skill Standards
provide enterprise guidance on delivering relevant workplace practice and evidence of competency, similar to ISO and ANZSO standards.



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Under this model, RTOs deliver, in collaboration with enterprises, a minimum acceptable standard of vocational training



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RTOs deliver formal training and assessment.
Focus on knowledge and basic skills/safety.

Best positioned to assess know-how



Workplaces provide real life practice and feedback.
Focus on can-do.

Best positioned to assess proficiency

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Expectation



Framework for industry and training providers to work together supporting people on their competency journey

Reality



Only a few examples of RTOs and industry successfully doing this

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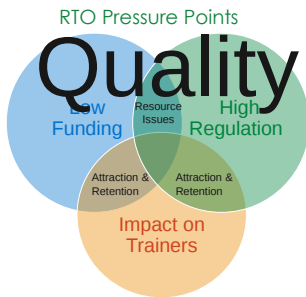
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RTO Delivery Challenges

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RTO delivery challenges

- Training is consolidated to areas where delivery is viable and not in areas of greatest industry need.
- Current framework places unreasonable quality demands on RTOs.
- Forcing them towards areas of higher student numbers and lower cost – to improve their viability, reduce risk and improve quality.



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Cost and visibility of student numbers

It is not possible for RTOs to deliver quality in areas where funding is low and capacity of students or industry to pay is low.

Funding does not reflect the additional costs associated with high-quality delivery in rural, regional and remote areas.

This also applies to delivery of complex technical skills.



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Thin markets & high costs

- \$ Low ratios of student to trainer, access and safety issues.
- \$ Highly technical skills and/or expensive materials and machinery.
- \$ Learners spread across large geographical areas.

Cost is often 2 to 5 times higher than situations without the above factors.



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Factors in an RTO's decision to add or remove a qualification or unit

Availability of skilled and qualified trainers	88%
Availability of equipment, infrastructure, or other resources	87%
Demand for the training from employer	88%
Availability of prospective students	90%
Changes in industry priorities	84%
Ability to meet ASQA compliance requirements	87%
WHS or other risks associated with delivery	82%
Access to public funding to support delivery	72%
Cost of course design and/or materials	74%
Geographical spread of students and/or workplaces	59%
The ability to deliver the desired elements in your institution or a workplace	80%

Source: Griffith University 'Learning, Training, and Competency Survey' Preliminary Findings, June 2020

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Skills Impact research

Surveyed over 600 industry and VET stakeholders

- Support for a system that involves enterprises and RTOs in the assessment of skill proficiency.
- Seeking views on the appropriateness of the VET sector's current competency paradigm.
- Underpinned by concepts such as the Dreyfus and Dreyfus model of skills acquisition.
- Griffith University is our research partner and is managing the survey process.



Interviews and discussions



Literature review and data analysis



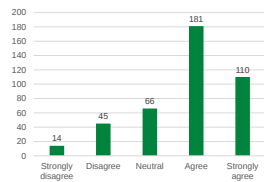
Survey

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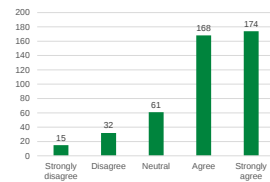
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71% of respondents agree that workplaces should have an expanded and direct role in training



76% support a developmental approach to competency (recognise different stages of learner performance)

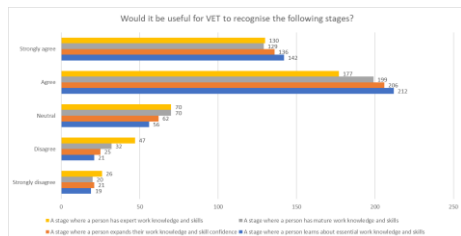


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Would it be useful for VET to recognise the following stages?



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Keeping Vocation in VET

- Vocational focus is about building peoples' capabilities and practical skills.
- Theory is important but not the priority.
- Real vocational practice occurs in real workplaces.
- Simulation helps but doesn't deliver competency.
- Work skills are learned by repetition, feedback and coaching, on the job.



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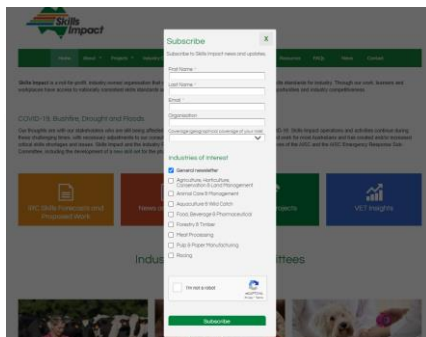
In Summary

- The current system can be improved.
- Competency standards are not training packages and not effective as multipurpose tools.
- We need purpose-built tools, searchable online with unlimited flexibility to use.
- Australia's skill system is more than RTO enrolments and institutionalised delivery.
- On-the-job learning has been engineered out of the system. It needs to be built back in.



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COMING UP NEXT:

2.00 - 3.00PM



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GOVERNMENT / REGULATOR	TRAINING & STUDENT ENGAGEMENT 1	COMPLIANCE	VET IN SCHOOLS	TRAINING & STUDENT ENGAGEMENT 2
ASQA Session 2 ASQA Representative	Cognitive Load Theory: Principles for application in the classroom and virtual environment Tony Kirton	How to Rectify Non-Compliances Following an Audit Kevin Ekendahl	Apprenticeships and Traineeships of the Future Cassandra Hoult	Principles of Adult Learning for the Future Chermine Sinson
