



## From the President



Welcome to the next edition of A-news. The recent AVETRA conference *Renovate or Rebuild?: Exploring the architecture of VET* was an opportunity to hear from leaders in the vocational, education and policy fields about the impact and challenges of the changing VET sector. It was also an important forum for researchers and practitioners to discuss the learnings from research that might challenge us to think differently about how such knowledge can be translated into policies that will strengthen and maintain the relevance of VET in Australia. Congratulations to the organizing committee who I think we can all agree did an amazing job and to the award winners — Claire Rasmussen Geethani Nair, and Mutuota Kigotho. Thank you to all the people who came along and participated. The conference was also an opportunity to celebrate 20 years of AVETRA and is the start of a celebration that will extend over the year to promote the essential role of the association and its members.

At a national level, Innovation and Science Australia have released an issues paper (<https://industry.gov.au/Innovation-and-Science-Australia/Documents/2030-Strategic-Plan-Issues-Paper.pdf>) that seeks to guide investment in research into the future. The

challenges identified in the paper align well with essential research of the vocational education sector.

Challenge 1: Moving more firms, in more sectors, closer to the innovation frontier

Challenge 2: Moving and keeping government closer to the innovation frontier

Challenge 3: Delivering high quality and relevant education and skills development for Australian throughout their lives

Challenge 4: Maximising the engagement of our world class research system with end users

Challenge 5: Maximizing advantage from international knowledge, talent and capital

Challenge 6: Bold, high-impact initiatives

The task of creating a research investment strategy that supports a vibrant research environment and enables clever national responses to constant change (much of which is unknown or unimaginable to us today) is not only an important challenge for government but also for researchers, industry partners and community.

The research highlighted in this edition of A-News, the International Journal of Training Research and the recent AVETRA conference have important messages for each of the national challenges identified for Australia and I would argue for the broader region in which we live.

AVETRA's researchers know how to navigate complex systems and understand the constraints of working with a range of stakeholders. They have the ability to connect to the agendas that are driving investment and partnership in Australia. The priorities identified by Innovation and Science Australia all connect to and depend on innovative and informed research.

Our challenge is to identify and actively reach across knowledge boundaries to ensure that research is utilized and supported and has an impact. The articles presented in A-News provide an important link to the emerging research agendas nationally and internationally.

*Ruth Wallace, President of AVETRA, Northern Institute, 2017*

## A MINUTE WITH Gavin Moodie, Adjunct Professor, Department of Leadership, Higher, and Adult Education at University of Toronto, Canada



### Divides in tertiary education

In many USA states and Canadian provinces there is a sharp divide between what we may call 'training' and 'vocational education'. By 'training' North Americans often mean apprenticeships, certificates and programs used to upgrade or retrain lower and mid-level workers. What Australians may understand as 'vocational education' is what in North America is more commonly known as 'college education'. This comprises diplomas and associate degrees which are mostly transferrable to a baccalaureate degree.

'Training' and 'college education' in North America have different fees, funding arrangements, curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, quality assurance and government oversight. 'Training' is often funded and governed by federal governments in both the USA and Canada as part of national economic development strategies, whereas 'college

(and university) education' is governed and funded directly by states and provinces. Some 81% of 'training' in the USA is provided by for-profit providers, while 94% of 'college education' is provided by public colleges.

The division of 'training' from 'college education' in North America allows for much closer relationships between college and university post-secondary education (as it is commonly known in Canada), or 2-year and 4-year higher education (as it is commonly known in the USA). While college funding rates and fees are usually much lower than university funding rates and fees, states and provinces normally finance them in much the same way and offer similar, if not the same, grants and loans to college and university students. Curriculum, pedagogy, assessment and quality assurance for colleges and universities are clearly part of the same post-secondary or higher education system.

In contrast, Australia has little substantial difference between 'vocational education' and 'training'. Australian vocational education and training is like an amalgam of North American training and college education which possibly shares more characteristics with North American 'training' than its collegiate education. As a result, the big divide in Australian tertiary education is not between 'training' and vocational education, but between vocational education and training, and higher education.

Although the federal government has offered little detail yet, it seems that its Skilling Australians Fund announced in its 2017-18 Budget would drag vocational education and training further away from vocational education and towards training. The Skilling Australians Fund would replace the National Partnership Agreement on Skills reform, which expires in 2017. States and Territories and employers would bid for project funding from this new fund against the Commonwealth's priorities comprising 'apprenticeships and traineeships, pre-apprenticeships and higher level apprenticeships, occupations in high demand, areas with future growth potential, and rural and regional Australia'.

The Australian Government would further increase the divide between vocational and higher education with its proposal to remove the caps on public universities offering sub bachelor programs. The government announced its proposal in its *Higher education reform package* released on 1 May 2017, which apparently without irony includes a section on 'A more coherent tertiary sector'. The government really means a more coherent higher education sector.

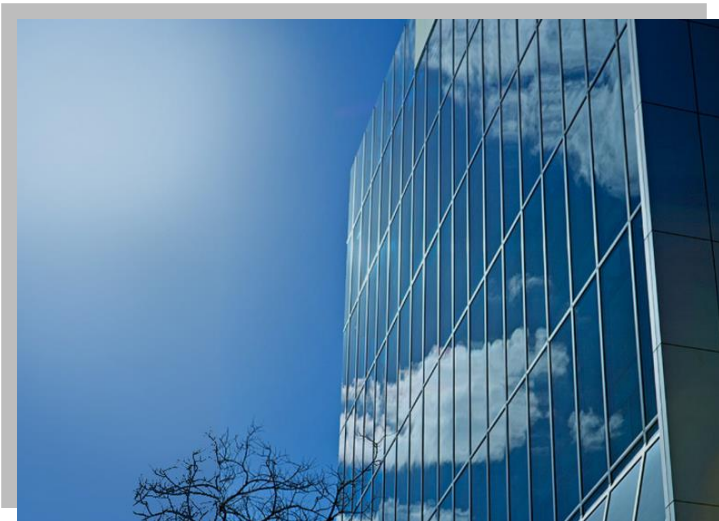
Uncapping university diplomas and associate degrees is likely to decapitate vocational education yet again. It will move the substantial interface that currently exists between vocational and higher education to lower levels in the qualification hierarchy. This will not be by system design but by the possibly perverse interaction of successive federal and state and territory government decisions about one sector without heeding the implications for the corresponding sector (especially the sector for which they have primary responsibility).

The interface will remain as difficult as ever for students, teachers, institutions and employers to negotiate because of the substantial inconsistencies between vocational and higher education in fees, curriculum, pedagogy, assessment, accreditation, quality assurance and government oversight. By continuing to treat the public TAFE institutes as private higher education providers the Australian Government will further weaken TAFE and further strengthen the reach of public universities.

You can read more about historical developments in the awarding of diplomas and degrees by tertiary institutions in Australia: Moodie, Gavin (2003) The missing link in Australian tertiary education: short-cycle higher education, *International Journal of Training Research*, volume 1, number 1, pages 44-63.

## NCVER has moved to new premises

In March this year NCVER moved its offices from 33 King William Street to 60 Light Square, Adelaide. The building overlooks the picturesque square where Colonel William Light is buried. Colonel Light was the first Surveyor General of South Australia. NCVER occupies the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> floors of the building. Below you can see the glass windows of western face of the building and the view of the square from the windows on the fifth floor. Look for the name **Sixty Light** on the front façade. 60 Light Square is across the street from the TAFESA Adelaide Campus



## AVETRA farewells Martin Riordan, former CEO TAFE Directors Australia



After 11 years at the helm of TAFE Directors Australia (TDA) Martin Riordan has hung up his boots as CEO. During his time, he has shown he is no novice to executive leadership, corporate communications, and advocacy. Prior to coming to TDA in 2006 Martin worked as a political journalist in the parliamentary press galleries of Canberra and Sydney, a media staffer for Prime Minister Howard (when in Opposition), and a principal speech writer for the then Department of Education, Science and Training. He has also held senior executive roles in News Ltd and worked in a variety of private enterprises at home and abroad. Martin is also a successful scholar, and has been awarded two highly prestigious scholarships—the Prime Minister’s Endeavour Asia scholarship, and the Fulbright Scholarship (Professional). He used the first to investigate new tertiary education trends in China, and the second to study the financial structures of 18 community colleges in the USA. His current PhD studies with the L H Martin Institute at the University of Melbourne are also in the area of funding and finance.

Martin has been a strong advocate for the government-funded TAFE system.

When he first took up the role of CEO at TDA he said to ‘Campus Review’ interviewer Alethea Mouhtouris ‘... we’re looking for a voice of an important provider—which is TAFE. And we’re certainly going to be providing that voice’. In 2017 almost a decade on he can say that he has done just that. He has worked hard to help promote the benefits of a TAFE education at home and overseas and to raise TAFE’s reputation as a key provider of VET. He has promoted the development of TAFE linkages with overseas education and training agencies and research centres, and throughout his 11 years at TDA he has never missed an opportunity to advocate for his members.

In November 2016 (at about the time he announced his impending retirement from the TDA role) he said to higher education reporter John Ross (from the ‘The Australian’) that TAFE was in ‘good shape’ even though its market share had dropped as a result of government funding decisions to further open up the market. During these latter years he has never ceased to bring to the attention of ministers and other decision-makers how important it was to secure the position of TAFE as the premier provider of VET in Australia. His efforts have been fruitful and today we see state and territory governments implement strategies to shore up the position of TAFE in their jurisdictions.

AVETRA farewells Martin and thanks him for his commitment and hard work in the sector, his sponsorship of the TDA/AVETRA scholarship, and wishes him well for the future. (Read the 2006 interview with Alethea Mouhtouris at [www.campusreview.com.au](http://www.campusreview.com.au) | 25.01 - 31.01.2006 | 15), and the 2016 interview with John Ross at <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/tafe-in-good-shape-says-departing-chief-martin-riordan/news-story/8211a1f0c59758e02bbd7134efdc39f5>

Read what the Chair of the TDA Board said to thank Martin and to wish him well

[http://www.tda.edu.au/cb\\_pages/newsletter\\_27\\_march\\_2017](http://www.tda.edu.au/cb_pages/newsletter_27_march_2017)

## **Avetra welcomes the new CEO of TAFE Directors Australia Craig Robertson**

Former Deputy Secretary of the Victorian Government's Higher Education and Skills Group, Craig Robertson is the new chief executive of the peak TAFE body. Craig has held a variety of senior leadership positions in VET and other social policy areas with the Federal Government.

In welcoming Craig to TDA the Chair of the TDA Board Mary Faraone said 'I am delighted that TDA has secured the services of such a highly-credentialed and capable person to lead the peak national body at such an important time. Craig has a wealth of experience across the broader education sector and, in particular, an intimate knowledge of the needs, priorities and trends shaping vocational education and training. He has played a pivotal role in many of the strategic and policy developments in the sector over several decades and is ideally placed to lead TAFE as it positions for a new era of growth and opportunity.'

[http://www.tda.edu.au/cb\\_pages/newsletter\\_27\\_march\\_2017](http://www.tda.edu.au/cb_pages/newsletter_27_march_2017)

Mr Robertson said he is keen to engage with stakeholders and work closely with TAFE institutes, and furthering TDA's role as a leader in tertiary education strategy and policy. In his interview with Campus Review journalist [James Wells](#) Craig signaled his intention to lobby for VET to be part of the Government's National Science and Innovation Agenda. He also noted that current changes to industry would mean that workers from declining industries would need to be re-skilled to enable them to find new jobs, and the training could be well-delivered by TAFE. He said 'A large majority of workers are trained in the vocational education and training area, at least equal to, if not more than, those people that are trained out of the higher education sector ... That also means that TAFEs, with their broad range of program offerings, their broad range of coverage of industry areas, are ideally placed to work with firms to implement innovative practices.'



In September Craig will host the TAFE Directors Australia Convention in Adelaide. Below is more about the conference.


### ***TAFE Directors Australia Convention 2017 - Networked TAFE***



The 2017 TDA Convention will be held at the Adelaide Hilton on Thursday 7 and Friday 8 September with the Welcome Reception at Adelaide Oval on Wednesday 6 September. The overarching theme is 'Networked TAFE', reflecting TAFE Institutes' connections with a network of individuals, communities, enterprises, industries and governments, both in Australia and overseas. Speakers and delegates will explore topics including, Working in the 21st century; Learning experiences and outcomes; Matters of leadership; Energy roadmaps; and What we can learn from other countries?

[http://www.tda.edu.au/cb\\_pages/tda\\_convention.php](http://www.tda.edu.au/cb_pages/tda_convention.php)

## Congratulations!!



AVETRA congratulates Dr Tom Karmel who on Australia Day 2017 became a Member of the Order of Australia (General Division). Membership of the Order of Australia (AM) is made for 'service in a particular locality or field of activity or to a particular group'. Dr Karmel was recognised for the 'significant contribution he has made to vocational education research and administration and to the community through public administration roles'. Dr Karmel has had a long history of working in these roles. He has worked in the Federal government in areas of education, employment, labour market research and the Australian Bureau of Statistics, mainly in senior roles. His research interests have centred on the labour market and the economics of education. He was Managing Director of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) for 11 years, and immediately prior to that worked in senior roles for the Commonwealth Department of Education (1995-2002). Currently an Adjunct Professor with the National Institute for Labour Studies (Flinders University), Dr Karmel is also a joint editor of the Australian Bulletin of Labour. He is a member of the council of the University of Canberra, and Higher Education Reference Group at the Grattan Institute. He has also been a Senior Research Fellow for the UNESCO Chair at the Hong-Kong Institute of Education. Dr Karmel has an honours degree in mathematical statistics (Flinders) a Master of Economics and PhD from the Australian National University. His doctoral thesis was on 'The impact of increasing education levels on the Australian workforce'.




## A world of tertiary education information at your fingertips: VOCEDplus and the Pod Network



Webinar

Thursday, 1 June 2017, 1:30 PM - 2:30 PM ACST



Need research and data on tertiary education fast? Instead of spending time trawling the internet, use VOCEDplus where we've done the searching for you. What's VOCEDplus? Join us to find out more about this valuable tool and how it provides you with quick access to a world of high quality national and international research and data on tertiary education. We'll demonstrate VOCEDplus' full capabilities plus the extensive Pod Network, showcasing practical scenarios on two key topics for the VET sector - Apprenticeships and STEM.

Kelly Frazer of NCVER will present the VOCEDplus webinar on June 1 2017 at 1.30pm – 2.30 pm ACST- <https://www.ncver.edu.au/about/news-and-events/events/webinar-a-world-of-tertiary-education-information-at-your-fingertips-vocedplus-and-the-pod-network>

## The Indigenous Advancement Strategy: Connecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people with Australian Government policies and programmes

The Indigenous Advancement Strategy first announced in 2014 was allocated a total of \$4.9 billion dollars over 4 years in the 2015-16 Budget. The aim was to bring together the 150 or so existing programs into five over-arching ones. Each of these were based on governments and communities working together to achieve program aims.

The five programs comprised:

1. Jobs, Land and Economy (aimed at: raising the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in actual jobs; training people for local community jobs; helping people move into Indigenous ranger jobs; advance claims for land and Native Title; and negotiate more of township leases)
2. Children and Schooling (aimed at: increasing rates of school attendance, especially in remote Australia; ensuring an increase in rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students meeting minimum literacy and numeracy standards; providing support to more ATSI students to complete year 12 (or equivalent), and to go on to higher education at TAFE or university)
3. Safety and wellbeing (aimed at: increasing the number of programmes and services available in local communities to reduce violence; assisting more organisations to provide Indigenous-specific alcohol and other drug treatment services; increase the availability of low aromatic unleaded fuel in more locations)
4. Culture and Capability (aimed at: fostering more support for a referendum on recognition in the constitution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; increasing the number of cultural projects and activities delivered; and increasing the number of organisations that are registered under the Corporations (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander) Act).
5. Remote Australia Strategies (aimed at: developing plans to address local community priorities; assisting more individuals in remote communities to own their own homes; and ensuring that individuals who rent their homes are on standard tenancy agreements)



Read more at: <http://www.indigenous.gov.au/indigenous-advancement-strategy>

The Prime Minister and Cabinet's Regional Network is made up of 12 regions and 37 offices. These are located in State and Territory capitals and across regional and remote areas; the network is also represented in around 75 communities. The aim is to provide a collaborative approach to identifying local needs and priorities and coming up with effective solutions.

Read more about the PMC network and the funding guidelines at <https://www.dpmc.gov.au/indigenous-affairs/grants-and-funding/funding-under-ias>



## Linda Simon interviews Professor John Polese

*Professor John Polese is Director of the Centre for Vocational and Educational Policy (CVEP), Associate Dean (International and Engagement), Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne. Here AVETRA Executive member Linda Simon interviews him about his views on inequality in education and training and the increasing drift to universities of students who might otherwise go to VET.*



**Linda:** Your keynote presentation to the April AVETRA Conference was entitled: 'VET, Inequality and the Lure of University'. What was the reason for this focus?

**John:** The real point of my presentation was to look at the data around why school completers are turning away from vocational education and training (VET). The 'On Track' data in Victoria, and we believe it is replicated in



other states and territories, shows that more students are applying for and gaining places at university, and that the proportion of students undertaking VET courses has dropped significantly. Young people from higher SES backgrounds are more likely to apply to university, but now so are those from lower SES backgrounds. This raises a question as to what the VET sector is now about? Does it just have a residual role catering for the lowest achievers and those from the lowest SES backgrounds?

**Linda:** You also argued for quality industry-based VET and a differentiation of tertiary provision in Australia. Would this help to clarify the role of VET?

**John:** There is no strong consensus amongst the social partners as to what the role of VET should be. Many in industry and government see VET as providing a direct path to employment and the workforce. However, data also shows that there is a poor match between the qualifications that VET students undertake and the jobs that they have. If this is the case, should there be a rethink as to the qualifications offered through VET? Those countries such as Denmark, Austria and Germany, that have strong VET systems, also have strong apprenticeship programs. We need to consider how we can expand apprenticeships in Australia, but for this we need a broad consensus between the social partners including educators, unions and employer groups.

On the other hand, there appears to be a need for more VET programs for marginalised groups, providing employment based skills strengthened with strong foundation skills, moving away from qualifications that only lead to a set of narrow learning outcomes.

**Linda:** There has been no review of vocational education and training, in the way that higher education has experienced through the Bradley Review and schools through the Gonski review. Do you think there should be a change to the current role of VET?

**John:** The relationship between higher education and VET needs to be addressed. Many university courses including engineering and law are very vocational in their structures and there is a need for the higher education sector to have a stronger focus on technical programs. This would allow TAFE Institutes in particular to redefine their role, either through stronger partnerships with the university sector or through a more overtly recognised role in foundation programs that would attract appropriate funding.

## Invitation to AVETRA members to submit book chapter proposals

### Teaching and Learning for Occupational Practice: A multi-disciplinary and multi-level perspective – Invitation for Chapter Proposals

This book, edited by Dr Sai Loo and Professor Erica Smith, sets out to provide a picture of the way in which occupations organise their occupational preparation and professional development. This book will examine both the formal arrangements for teaching and learning and the informal on the job learning associated with the occupation. In many but not all cases (and in many but not all countries) occupations have qualifications or other certifications associated with them. Such qualifications or certifications may be studied in the higher education sector, or may be studied in technical and vocational education and training. In some instances, in some countries, the qualifications or certifications may be required for practice, through regulatory or professional edicts. In addition, many occupations organise formal professional development opportunities, which may or may not be mandatory. Employers are also involved in the learning arrangements for occupations, by organising and encouraging workplace learning experiences.

Many stakeholders are involved in these diverse arrangements, and different personnel are involved in the planning and delivery of the teaching and learning activities. In this book we seek to understand the multiple perspectives and to draw out commonalities and differences among the different occupations.

We invite contributions focusing on particular occupations or on the topic more broadly.

Proposals are due on 30 June 2017. The formal Call for Abstracts for papers provides more information and is available from [sai.loo@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:sai.loo@ucl.ac.uk) or [e.smith@federation.edu.au](mailto:e.smith@federation.edu.au)



Have you visited the Educator Hub site recently? <http://avetraeducatorhub.org/just-like-avetra-this-hub-is-set-up-to-bring-australias-vet-research-community-together/> There are links to AVETRA research tools and other current research issues, a blog to discuss your research, and an opportunity to network with other researchers/inquirers in the VET sector. The Hub is free, so we hope you will involve yourselves (from Linda Simon, AVETRA Executive member)

## Stories making the news

### **Pay for and complete a bachelor degree and do the master degree for free**

When students pay for and complete a bachelor's degree in business management and accounting programs at the University of St. Joseph in West Hartford, United Kingdom, they are eligible to take a master's degree for free.

Source: The Australian - <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/two-degrees-for-price-of-one/news-story/84232dfde66093274dfac26c7477c09e>  
<http://www.usj.edu/>

### **The Skilling Australians Fund**

The Skilling Australians Fund was announced by the Australian Government in the 2017 Budget to provide funding for training for apprenticeships and traineeships in high demand occupations, especially those that depend on skilled foreign workers. It will also cover those occupations which have the potential for growth in the future, including in regional areas.

Source: <https://www.education.gov.au/skilling-australians-fund>.  
[Copy of the factsheet re Skilling Australian Fund](#)

### **Little new funding for VET under the Skilling Australians Fund says Linda Simon**

[Linda Simon. The future of VET remains uncertain!](#)

### **Payroll incentives for new jobs for young people, apprentices and trainees in Tasmania**

The Tasmanian Treasurer (Peter Gutwein) emphasized his government's priority in creating jobs for Tasmanians. He said that since the government was elected a total of 6,400 jobs had been created. The unemployment rate had been reduced and now Tasmania had the second lowest rate in the nation.

Source:  
[http://www.premier.tas.gov.au/releases/payroll\\_incentive\\_to\\_create\\_thousands\\_of\\_jobs\\_for\\_young\\_people\\_trainees\\_and\\_apprentices](http://www.premier.tas.gov.au/releases/payroll_incentive_to_create_thousands_of_jobs_for_young_people_trainees_and_apprentices)

### **'Enabling courses' may no longer be free**

Enabling courses are meant to prepare students for the next level of education. Students were not expected to pay for these courses. This is about to change for enabling courses preparing students to enter university with the government announcing that students may have to pay up to A\$3271 for these courses. The change was announced as part of the government's recent [higher education reform package](#). This fee may stop some students from entering such courses.

Source: The Conversation - <https://theconversation.com/programs-that-prepare-students-for-university-study-may-no-longer-be-free-77851>

### **United Kingdom's Baroness Alison Wolf of Dulwich says that it is folly to think that apprenticeships and higher education degrees can be equal. Parity of esteem is about celebrating the difference.**

According to Baroness Wolf these are two different types of qualifications and should be valued as such.

[Baroness Alison Wolf](#) Source: TES - <https://www.tes.com/news/further-education/breaking-news/baroness-wolf-apprenticeships-and-degrees-can-never-be-equal>

### **UNE introduces be-spoke courses for degrees**

The University of New England's 'Bespoke Courses' model enables students to select courses from a degree program without having to complete the whole degree. Source: <https://www.une.edu.au/bespokecourses>

## **Eligibility tests for income support made more stringent**

In the past students from regional areas who could show they had had lived independently for 18 months could access Youth Allowance and ABSTUDY Living Allowance; today the period is reduced to 14 months.

Source: The Australian - <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/work-test-for-income-support-shortened-by-four-months/news-story/79ff935cc5f0a63e8ed8ed9611692822>;  
<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/youth-allowance>  
<https://www.humanservices.gov.au/customer/services/centrelink/abstudy>

## **Measuring research impact**

A new government [pilot](#) program aimed at measuring the impact of research done in universities has been established by the Australian government. Minister for Education Simon Birmingham said the pilots will test 'how to measure the value of research against things that mean something, rather than only allocating funding to researchers who spend their time trying to get published in journals'. [New research](#) highlights some of the key issues that need to be addressed when deciding how to measure impact. Source: <https://www.education.gov.au/news/delivering-high-performing-research-sector-australia>;

The Conversation - <http://theconversation.com/five-things-to-consider-when-designing-a-policy-to-measure-research-impact-71078>

## **Females trade workers promote trade jobs for girls**

Females account for just 14.7 per cent of technicians and trade workers; this highlights the extent of the gender imbalance in the trades. A program in which female tradies teach young women how to use tools is being used to promote the trades as possible careers for females. This program is the Supporting and Linking Tradeswomen (SALT). This program was set up in 2009 by painter and decorator Fi Shewring. Source: <http://www.saltaustralia.org/about-us.html>;

ABC News - <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-01-13/female-tradies-promoting-trade-jobs-to-young-school-leavers/8134006>

## **The new robot revolution will take jobs from more highly skilled workers**

Dhaval Joshi, economist at BCA Research is of the view that advances in artificial intelligence are going to put at risk the highly paid rather than the lowly paid jobs in the service sector. He believes that it is not the cleaners, gardeners, carers, bar staff or cooks that will lose their jobs to robots, because but workers whose jobs are to apply complex algorithms and pattern recognition. For example, those who are most at risk work in jobs focused on 'calculating a credit score or insurance premium, translating a report from English to Mandarin Chinese, or managing a stock portfolio'.

Source: The Guardian - [https://www.theguardian.com/business/economics-blog/2017/jan/22/the-new-robot-revolution-will-take-the-bosss-job-not-the-gardeners?CMP=share\\_btn\\_tw](https://www.theguardian.com/business/economics-blog/2017/jan/22/the-new-robot-revolution-will-take-the-bosss-job-not-the-gardeners?CMP=share_btn_tw)

## **Universities Australia warns against university sector overhaul**

Cutting \$3.2 million from university funding is indefensible says University Australia. 'We need to see this spending for what it is – an investment in new jobs, new industries and a highly skilled workforce so Australians aren't left behind in an era of global uncertainty and rapid change. It's also an economic imperative to lift both productivity and national income from research breakthroughs. And of course, maintaining a world-class university system is essential to safeguard Australia's third largest export – the education of international students – which brings in more than \$20 billion'.

Source: <https://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/Media-and-Events/media-releases/ERA-OF-UNCERTAINTY-MUST-END--SAFEGUARD-UNIVERSITIES-IN-2017-BUDGET#.WlreqmccSUK>

## **WA plumbers and electricians earn top dollars**

According to [Service Seeking.com.au](http://ServiceSeeking.com.au) WA plumbers are the most expensive among the trades with electricians not far behind them. [Back in May](#) plumbers were still at the top and charging an average of \$87.67 an hour for a job; electricians came a very close second at \$87.33 per hour. Today plumbers are charging up to \$94.44 per hour with electricians still not far behind them at \$92.24. Source: WA today – <http://www.watoday.com.au/wa-news/wa-plumbers-top-the-tradie-rich-list-again-20170123-gtwpyw.html>

## AVETRA Conference 2017: Keynote speakers

Peter Noonan, Professorial Fellow, Mitchell Institute, Victoria University, addresses the 2017 AVETRA Conference on 'Tertiary Education: Challenges and Possibilities'



Bottom Left: Professor John Polesel, Director Centre for Vocational and Educational Policy (CVEP), and Associate Dean (International and Engagement), Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, addresses the conference on 'VET, Inequality and the lure of University'.

Bottom Right: Tim Rawlings, Head of Training Product Development, Price Waterhouse Cooper, Skills Service Organisation—Skills for Australia, addresses the Conference on 'Hoarders or minimalists: Is it time to spring clean Training Packages'.



## AVETRA awards 2017

Claire Rasmussen from Federation University holds up her **Berwyn Clayton Award for Distinguished Service to the education and development of VET educators and other professionals.**



Geethani Nair from TAFE NSW holds up the **AVETRA 2017 Best Conference Paper** award she and colleague Mutuota Kigotho from the University of New England, won for their paper titled 'Disturbing Effects of VET Reforms on TAFE Teaching Units'.



The considerable resources of the VOCEDplus data base can help you when you are starting up new research projects or literature reviews. VOCEDplus is funded by the Australian Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments and is endorsed by the UNESCO-UNEVOC International Centre in Bonn, Germany. It is produced by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER), based in Adelaide, Australia.

Click on the following link to start your search.

<http://www.voced.edu.au/>

## Upcoming Conferences



<https://www.ncver.edu.au/about/news-and-events/events/26th-national-vocational-education-and-training-research-conference>

### 26<sup>th</sup> National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference 'No Frills'

Register now for the [26<sup>th</sup> National Vocational Education and Training Research Conference 'No Frills'](https://www.ncver.edu.au/about/news-and-events/events/26th-national-vocational-education-and-training-research-conference), to be held 5 – 7 July 2017, at TasTAFE Drysdale Campus in Hobart, Tasmania.

Join the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) for an exciting program, featuring over 50 presentation and poster sessions addressing the theme **Skilling for tomorrow**, including:

- *Positioned for the ideas boom: where does VET fit in?* Francesca Beddie, University of Canberra & Linda Simon, Charles Sturt University
- *The leadership role of TAFE head teachers in a marketised VET sector*, Geethani Nair, TAFE NSW & Mutuota Kigotho, University of New England
- *Causes and consequences of being persistently Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) among Australian youth: new longitudinal evidence*, Cameron Forrest, NCVER

'No Frills' is a well-known annual national conference where researchers and those engaged in the VET industry come together to discuss key issues, and network in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

[Register now!](#)

## World TVET 2017, New Zealand



**13-14 September**, World TVET 2017, Queenstown, New Zealand. *'Building Successful Skills and Life Outcomes'*. See more at <http://www.worldtvvet2017.kiwi/>; <http://www.worldtvvet2017.kiwi/tvet-conference-september-2017/who-is-this-conference-for>; <http://www.worldtvvet2017.kiwi/PicsHotel/IVETA/Brochure/TVET2017-Why-You-Should-Attend.pdf>; <http://www.worldtvvet2017.kiwi/PicsHotel/IVETA/Brochure/TVET%20Prospectus%20Delegates%20FINAL.pdf>



<http://propelmatters.stir.ac.uk/2016/10/22/3rd-propel-conference-june-2017-in-linkoping-sweden/>

The 3rd International Professional Practice, Education and Learning Conference (ProPEL), which will be held June 14-16 in Linköping, Sweden, is hosted by Linköping University! The organisers say they have scheduled 75 exciting contributions from authors from all over the world and look forward to seeing you at the conference. Find out how to register and read about keynote presentations by Monika Nerland, Davide Nicolini and Tara Fenwick on our website <http://www.imh.liu.se/propel2017>.

The organising committee comprises: Professor Madeleine Abrandt Dahlgren, Professor Maria Gustavsson, Professor Andreas Fejes, Associate Professor Nick Hopwood, and Dr Ann Reich.



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## About AVETRA

AVETRA is the peak professional association for VET researchers. Its ability to be a sustainable and viable association depends on its membership. Members are urged to continue their membership and to encourage their colleagues to join AVETRA.

AVETRA services include:

- An annual VET international research conference
- Two editions of *International Journal of Training Research per annum*
- The AVETRA e-newsletter with the latest news in the VET sector as well as VET research twice a year.
- The new *Research Today* publication twice a year.
- OctoberVET workshops organised by AVETRA members in centres as widely spread as Perth, Darwin, Townsville, Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide.
- The AVETRA website with VET research links and information
- Awards for VET researchers including the joint award with TAFE Directors Australia, the Berwyn Clayton Award, The Ray Barker Award, and the AVETRA Best Paper Award.

HELP AVETRA help VET research and join now if you are not a member. Full **\$180** (GST inclusive) and Student memberships **\$90.00** including GST are available.

*If you are interested in providing leads or contributing to this newsletter, please contact Josie Misko - [josiemisko@ncver.edu.au](mailto:josiemisko@ncver.edu.au)*