



From the President

Greetings to all AVETRA members!

Colleagues

The approaching holiday season signals an opportunity for us to reflect on the year that has been and the outcomes that we have achieved during 2012.

This has been a particularly busy year for the new Executive and we have achieved a lot over the past eight months including the development of a new work plan with clear strategic goals and outcomes to work towards. In the New Year we will be undertaking a membership survey which we hope will become a bi-annual activity and a key way to stay in touch with the evolving needs of our members.

A-News and Research today have continued to thrive and we are looking forward to welcoming Roger Harris and Berwyn Clayton as the new editors of *the International Journal of Training Research* in 2013.

Along with our annual conference, OctoberVET continues to grow with more than a dozen events taking place this year right across Australia. After the success of our conference in Canberra we now look to Perth. This is shaping up to be an exciting event with significant efforts being made to engage with international VET researchers particularly from the Asia-Pacific region.

AVETRA has continued to support the NCVER's Community of Practice initiative with mentoring provided by experienced VET researchers during the year. A new round of Scholarships for 2013 has just been announced (see <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/opportunities.html>).

I would also like to extend my thanks to Doug Wiles and his colleagues at The Association Specialists who work hard with members of the Executive to keep the business of AVETRA ticking over with little fanfare.

On behalf of the Executive I would like to extend our best wishes to you all for the Christmas holiday season and we look forward to meeting as many of you as possible at our conference in Perth in 2013.



Michele Simons

President of AVETRA, University of South Australia, December 2012

OctoberVET 2012 update

OctoberVET has been a success in 2012, with events in every state and territory as well as two events in New Zealand. Fourteen events, attended by over 200 people, were hosted by TAFEs and universities, creating dialogue between researchers, VET practitioners and VET stakeholders. The events ranged in size from small, collegial gatherings to large, formal events.

The themes addressed by the events provide a unique snapshot of the issues that occupy VET practitioners and researchers:

- VET: the workforce of the future
- New Options for Professional Development & Skill Building
- Quality Teaching and Learning in a New Era
- Industry Currency and Competencies or Capabilities - Two Stories
- Increasing educational participation and outcomes for people who are geographically and/or socially disadvantaged
- The Value of VET
- Australia's Productivity Challenge: Why productivity matters, and when it doesn't
- Joining the dots: Exploring independent validation of assessment and quality
- Industry and VET - the Ultimate Partnership
- Remodelling VET: Scholarship and Competition
- Developing Skills for Sustainability through VET
- The Secondary-Tertiary Interface

The local convenors and organising teams make OctoberVET a reality, and a special thank you must go to the following people who generously gave their time to create and coordinate the events:

- Tracey Singh (Sunshine Coast Institute of TAFE)
- Alicia Boyle (Charles Darwin University)
- Annette Green and Wendy De Luca (Charles Sturt University)
- Anita Wesney (Canberra Institute of Technology)
- Jill Downing (University of Tasmania)
- Sue Thompson (Central Institute of Technology) and Llandis Barratt-Pugh (Edith Cowan University)
- Michele Simons (University of South Australia) and Sinan Gemici (NCVER)
- Kathy Picardi (Metropolitan South Institute of TAFE)
- Linda Simon (AVETRA)
- Mike Brown (LaTrobe University)
- Helen Smith and David McLean (RMIT)
- Colleen Young (Manaku Institute of Technology)

New branding was used in OctoberVET promotions this year, and so far responses to the design have been positive.

Reports, pictures and presentations from individual events will be made available on the AVETRA website in the OctoberVET pages.

The best ever line up is at AVETRA 2013!

VET Research at the Edge: Training for Diversity and Change

In journeying to WA for the first time, AVETRA moves to the edge of our continent. It is an opportune time, as it is an edge where major shifts within industry and the labour market are rapidly challenging and changing the patterns of learning, training and work across the country. Indeed, the future of VET is uncertain and edgy, as there are several potential pathways ahead for VET, with the emerging scenarios strongly influenced by global events outside our control. What does this mean for VET participants, VET facilitators and VET managers? How is our research illuminating the dilemmas, providing outcomes to influence change and preparing us for what may be diverse futures, and certainly different to what we have experienced in the past?

Keynote Speakers:

Etienne Wenger - In the past decade perhaps the most quoted works at AVETRA conferences have been the studies of Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger on Communities of Practice. We have been most fortunate to secure Etienne as our lead keynote speaker for this conference to reinforce how important the concept of communities of practice still is to our conceptualisation of workplace learning. Looking backwards and forwards from the 'edge of VET', how will what we know about CoP help in shaping our future VET learning community and how can we put such knowledge to work ourselves?

Colleen Hayward - As a senior Noongar woman and as the daughter of the first aboriginal Principal teacher in WA Colleen bring a depth of knowledge of indigenous policies, programmes and issues to our conference. Currently a Pro Vice Chancellor at ECU and an OA, Colleen has just been included in the 2012 Queens honour listing.

Rod McDonald - Two decades ago Rod co-authored the seminal paper "No Small Change" critiquing VET research in Australia, and then continuing to influence policy formation at the national level. Twenty years on, we invite Rod to look back from the edge at what has been achieved and is yet to be achieved.

Liz Harris - As the CEO of Challenger TAFE, Liz currently leads the organisation that won the Australian 2012 national large training organisation award. Challenger has developed programmes to respond the resources demands in WA while continuing to provide the skills that make Fremantle the unique port that marks the birth of WA. Liz also brings experiences of international educational management to the conference.

Stephen Billett - Last year Stephen gained the sole Australian Research Council four-year Future Fellowship award granted in the area of Education. This was both a significant achievement for Stephen and for the VET research discipline. We invite Stephen to reflect on his fellowship so far, and to explore for us what he sees as the future for VET and VET research.

Philipp Gonon - In the past decades Philipp has gained extensive knowledge about European and American VET policies and practices from his work at the University of Zurich. Philipp is well placed at the edge of our VET world to indicate how he perceives global trends in VET and their potential impact on VET within Australia.

Gavin Moodie - Most weeks we are able to read Gavin's commentary on recent VET and Higher Education policy and funding implications in 'The Australian' on Wednesdays. We invite Gavin to look from the edge and trace the discourses that are constructing VET, and will be constructing VET. To ensure that our research may make an impact on policy and practice, what influences should we be aware of?

Chris Evans - We have invited the Minister for our sector to open the first national VET conference in his home State, and remain hopeful that Chris Evans may be available to perform this role.

A MINUTE WITH David Gutteridge



David Gutteridge is Operations Manager at the Government Education and Training International office in Hobart, Tasmania. He has a background in financial planning, English teaching and corporate training. In his current role, he is responsible for the welfare of international students studying in Tasmanian Government schools, colleges and the Polytechnic.

I first got interested in VET research in my previous role at TAFE Tasmania; I had the opportunity to hear from researchers, such as John Mitchell, and was curious about how research could inform the practice of VET teachers. I was also involved in the coordination of some “Reframing the Future” projects and was inspired by the findings of the projects in Tasmania, as well as having the chance to run a Community of Practice myself.

Two people who inspired me most to conduct research

I will need to select more than two – John Mitchell’s publications about “Ideas for Practitioners” and “New leadership for innovative organisations” have helped me inform my own practice; Suzy McKenna and Wendy

Perry who were very involved in the “Reframing the Future” workshops always challenged my thinking; in my recent NCVET sponsored project, I was inspired and assisted by Leesa Wheelahan.

Two people who inspired me most to conduct research

I will need to select more than two – John Mitchell’s publications about “Ideas for Practitioners” and “New leadership for innovative organisations” have helped me inform my own practice; Suzy McKenna and Wendy Perry who were very involved in the “Reframing the Future” workshops always challenged my thinking; in my recent NCVET sponsored project, I was inspired and assisted by Leesa Wheelahan.

The areas of VET research that interest me most are student engagement in vocational education and training. In my current role, this relates mostly to international students, but I am also very interested in how the VET sector can continue to offer relevant programs for any students who are not suited to the more academic pathways on offer at Universities.

Methodologies that I have used are surveys – I am a big fan of SurveyMonkey as a quick, convenient and good value way to survey students and teachers.

The most interesting piece of VET research I conducted was my recently published NCVET paper on the community engagement of adult international students – it is available at <http://www.voced.edu.au/content/ngv52160>.

I am not currently researching anything specifically; however, as a recipient of a new researcher scholarship from NCVET, my appetite to do more research has been stimulated – who knows what I will do in the future!

Each edition of AVETRA News will feature a special interview with a VET researcher. If you are interested in being featured or you know someone who might – please get in touch with either Sarojni Choy or Sinan Gemici.

Communities of Practice

Are you a VET practitioner who is interested in learning about the research process, and undertaking a small research project relevant to your workplace? We encourage you to apply for NCVER's Communities of Practice research scholarship grant. Funding of \$4000 is available to novice researchers to conduct a small-scale research project relating to a workplace issue over 12 months. Applicants must have the support of their employer who must be willing to match funding. Participants are supported by a mentor and have a year to complete the project, starting in April 2013.

Applications open 26 November 2012, and close 8 February 2013.

Visit <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/opportunities.html> for more information and the selection criteria.

New Funding Round for NCVER PhD top-up scholarships

New funding rounds! Post-grad research papers and PhD top-up scholarships now open. Applications are now open for NCVER's new rounds of post-graduate research funding. For the first time, NCVER is offering \$5000 grants to existing post-graduate students for research papers on an aspect of their post-graduate research. Students set to start a PhD in 2013 are also eligible for one of several PhD top-up scholarships, on offer for the second year running and valued at \$5000 per year for three years. Be quick! Applications close Wednesday, 19 December 2012. For more information visit: <http://www.ncver.edu.au/research/opportunities.html>

The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Fellowship for 2013

Applications for the award of Fellowships in the 2013 round are now open. The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust was established in Australia in 1965 shortly after the death of Sir Winston to perpetuate and honour his memory by the annual award of Churchill Fellowships to Australian citizens. A number of Fellowships are offered for specific study topics. The trust exists to support Australian in all fields of endeavour whose expertise has progressed to the point where an overseas research project would be of value in improving their contribution to their field and the Australian community.

Applications can be downloaded from www.churchill.com.au or by calling 1800 777 231. Applications close on Wednesday 20th February, 2013.

The International Network on Innovative Apprenticeship (INAP) invites to its 5th Conference: *Apprenticeship in a Globalised World: Premises, Promises and Pitfalls*. Date: April, 23rd and 24th, 2013

The University of Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa in cooperation with the Manufacturing, Engineering and Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority (merSETA) and the European Research Network in Vocational Education and Training (VETNET) is organising an international conference which will address topics related to the principal theme apprenticeship in a globalised world.

Research Learning and Work Centre (RWLC) 8th International Conference on Researching Work and Learning, 19-22 June 2013, University of Stirling, U.K.

This international conference is concerned with such questions as:

- What knowledge, which actors, and what parts of the environment are most visible?
- What and who remains invisible?
- When do actors become aware of invisible infrastructures?
- And what research methods and analytical approaches can make the invisible visible?

Full details of how to submit proposals, along with further information are available at: www.stir.ac.uk/schools/education/researching-work-and-learning. If you have any queries, please contact RWL at: rwl2013@stir.ac.uk

Journal of Vocational Education and Training, 10th International Conference

We can confirm that the Tenth JVET Conference will be held at Worcester College, Oxford from the 5th to the 7th July 2013. The formal call for papers is at: <http://www.jvetconferences.co.uk/>

Executive Team Contacts

President

Assoc. Prof. Michele Simons
University of South Australia
Mawson Lakes Boulevard
MAWSON LAKES SA 5095
Ph: +61 8 8302 6427
michele.simons@unisa.edu.au

Vice President

Assoc. Prof. Ruth Wallace
Faculty of Education Health & Science
Charles Darwin University10
Ellengowan Drive
DARWIN NT 0909
Ph: +61 8 8946 6390
ruth.wallace@cdu.edu.au

Immediate Past President:

Dr Llandis Barratt-Pugh
Edith Cowan University
Pearson Street
CHURCHLANDS WA 6018
Ph: 0415 233 023
l.barratt_pugh@ecu.edu.au

Treasurer

Mr Kevin Heys
TAFE NSW - South Western Sydney
Institute
Cnr Hoxton Park & Banks Roads
MILLER NSW 2168
Ph: +61 2 9825 7322
kevin.heys@tafensw.edu.au

Editor Research Today

Assoc Professor Roslin Brennan-Kemmis
Charles Sturt University
Locked Bag 588
Boorooma Street
WAGGA WAGGA NSW 2678
Ph: +61 2 6933 2441
rbrennan@csu.edu.au

Co-Editor AVETRA News & Research Today

Dr Sinan Gemici
NCVER
PO Box 8288
Station Arcade SA 5000
Ph: +61 8 8280 8665
sinan.gemici@ncver.edu.au

Secretary

Dr Alicia Boyle
Social Partnerships in Learning
Research Consortium
School of Education
Charles Darwin University
DARWIN NT 0909
Ph: +61 8 8946 7267
alicia.boyle@cdu.edu.au

Awards & Scholarships

Ms. Linda Simon
VET Consultant
Sydney, NSW
lindasimon2@bigpond.com

OctoberVET Coordinator

Dr Steven Hodge
Deakin University
School of Education
Geelong Waurin Ponds Campus
Ph: +61 3 522 71489
steven.hodge@deakin.edu.au

Membership Secretary

Dr Annette Foley
University of Ballarat
Mt Helen Campus
PO Box 663
BALLARAT VIC 3353
Ph: +61 3 5327 9764
a.foley@ballarat.edu.au

Co-Editor AVETRA News

Dr Sarojni Choy
School of Education and Professional
Studies
Griffith University
Mt Gravatt Campus
176 Messines Ridge Road
MT GRAVATT QLD 4122
Ph: +61 7 3735 1108
s.choy@griffith.edu.au

AVETRA Secretariat

Mr Doug Wiles
PO Box 576
CROWS NEST NSW 1585
Ph: +61 2 9431 8607
avetra@theassociationspecialists.com.au



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 quarterly AVETRA e-newsletter with the latest news in the VET sector as well as VET research.
- 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 **\$160** (GST inclusive) and Student memberships **\$80.00** including GST are available.

If you are interested in contributing to this newsletter please contact either Sarojni Choy or Sinan Gemici.