

## Admin, LACO

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**Subject:** FW: Industry Response to Inquiry for VETiS

**From:** Warren Cluff [<mailto:warren@gtsw.com.au>]

**Sent:** Thursday, 20 July 2017 5:01 PM

**To:** Committee, Education & Health Standing

**Subject:** Industry Response to Inquiry for VETiS

Hi,  
I am an industry representative currently employing around 300 apprentices and I have employed many VETiS graduates.

I respectfully submit the following response to the VETiS inquiry.

There is a fundamental conflict between industry and VETiS.

VETiS does not meet industry needs.

The education system is designed for graduation. Thus it seeks educational outcomes – not industry outcomes. From the school point of view, VETiS is a vehicle to assist a student to graduate. The school is not focussed to use VETiS to increase industry outcomes.

Which is perfectly correct and understandable from a school viewpoint.

After all, their main goal historically is to graduate students.

Therefore, the system is fundamentally in conflict.

No doubt there are islands of quality in the VETiS system, where good industry outcomes are achieved.

But in a generalist system, there will always be conflicting priorities between education for graduation and training for industry.

Examples of specific issues:

1. It's degraded the "value" and "credibility" of qualifications for industry.

- Cert II and III in Business was once the preferred recruitment method for industry. Now industry views these qualifications as a school qualification rather than an industry qualification.

- Students graduating with a high level qualification like Cert IV in OHS (clearly with no credibility for industry)

2. It undermines the apprenticeship system.

There are far too many students that graduate with a qual higher than a Cert II, who then can't be employed as a trainee.

EG, The Business catch 22. The AASN will only approve traineeships where the occupation matches the qualification.

So if a student has achieved a Cert III in Business at school, the only business traineeship they qualify for is a Cert IV.

But a Cert IV requires a high level job description (such as senior payroll or supervisor) and very few companies would employ a year 12 graduate straight into a supervisory position.

Therefore, Cert III graduates are exempt from a business traineeship.

So the year 12 graduate with a Cert III is left with LESS career choices than if they had only completed a Cert II.

3. It undermines the quality of the VET system.

While there are clearly islands of quality, in a generalist system the general quality of the training is below par.

Without being judgemental because I actually don't know why, but for whatever reason, there seems to be an issue with quality of training in schools.

Many students are achieving qualifications, and when they are employed and they articulate to the next level of qualification it becomes clear that they lack underpinning knowledge.

This creates significant frustration to industry.

Particularly when we have an industry downturn, and industry needs every bit of productivity from their employees.

In this environment, employees that need "additional" training and mentoring are finding their employment at risk.

The current attrition figures in the apprenticeship system are testament to this view.

4. It robs students of the opportunity for valuable and credible training in pre apprenticeships and puts the pre apprenticeship system at risk  
With an influx of students graduating with a Cert II and above, the opportunities for those students to attend pre apprenticeships is zero.  
To my knowledge, every industry survey in the last several years has supported that industry sees credibility in pre apprenticeships.  
As the pre apprenticeships are a Cert II many students are unable to enrol in a pre apps post school graduation. So students are excluded from the very thing where industry sees value and credibility.  
As described above in item 2, there is also a real risk that industry will come to see the Cert II pre app as irrelevant.

5. The workplace learning component does not adequately support the learning.  
Training packages were originally designed with an integration training model in mind – where learning is implemented in a “real workplace” environment.  
Many units specified that required skills and knowledge be demonstrated in the workplace.  
Over time, many units workplace integration has been reclassified to accept a “simulated work environment” – which correctly recognises that it is impossible to assess every unit of competence in a workplace.  
However, the intent of the packages is that there should be sufficient workplace involvement to ensure skills are transferred to a practical application that is acceptable to industry.  
Clearly, VETiS has further diluted the rigour of the workplace application – anecdotally many placements are not relevant (in unsuitable workplaces) or insufficient in hours.  
By comparison a Cert II traineeship would receive around 210 days of full employment to ensure transference of 380hours of institutional training into a practical workplace application.  
A VETiS Cert II student would receive around 40 days placement. (less than 25% of a FT traineeship, and well short of a SBA/T)  
As such, it is basically impossible for a VETiS program to achieve the same level of competence as a FT traineeship – yet they are the same qualification.

In short, my view is that VETiS does not adequately prepare students for industry, industry outcomes are not being achieved, and VETiS students are often disadvantaged in the workplace.  
From an industry viewpoint, if you classify these VETiS graduates as students that have been trained with some vocational competence – then VETiS is very successful, and industry is being well supported.  
However, if you classify these VETiS graduates as being qualified to industry standards – then VETiS is a failure, students have been set up to fail, and industry is not well supported.

Cheers

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