TASKFORCE ON PATHWAYS IN EDUCATION AND TRAINING

REPORT

VICTORIA
APRIL 1992
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28 April 1992

The Hon. Neil Pope
Minister for School Education

The Hon. Tom Roper
Minister for Employment, Post-Secondary
Education and Training

Dear Ministers

We have pleasure in submitting to you the Report of the Taskforce on Pathways in Education and Training. The Report responds to the terms of reference set by the Minister for Education and Training, in October 1991.

The Taskforce has been greatly assisted in the preparation of the Report by the cooperation we have received from government and non-government education training and employment agencies and interest groups. We wish to record our appreciation for the efforts of those who contributed to the debate on the issues.

Yours sincerely

Ivan Deveson (Chairman)
Concetta Benn
Jean Blackburn
Laurie Carmichael
Tom Doyle
Bob Herbert
Pat Robinson
Jarlath Ronayne
TERMS OF REFERENCE

A Ministerial Taskforce on Pathways in Education and Training will accelerate the development of links between the education sectors and between education and industry. This Taskforce will report on the following matters:


2. Ways of supporting vocational pathways in the VCE and strengthening the links between schools and industry.

3. The provision of work education in schools in the light of the current and emerging patterns of choice in the VCE and the present provision for work education in Years 7-10.

4. Ways to strengthen the links between the VCE, training, higher education and further education, including arrangements for credit transfer and course articulation.

5. Ways of promoting advanced technical training in TAFE and promoting the widest community recognition of the value of training.

MEMBERSHIP

Chairman: Mr Ivan Deveson - Chairman of the Seven Network, Director of the Commonwealth Bank; Chairman of the State Training Board; Chancellor of the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Professor Concetta Benn - Chairperson of the Adult Community and Further Education Board; former Head of the School of Social Work, the University of Melbourne.

Dr Jean Blackburn - Chairperson of the State Board of Education.

Mr Laurie Carmichael - Chairman of the Employment and Skills Formation Council, National Board of Employment, Education and Training.

Father Tom Doyle - Director, Catholic Education Office of Victoria.

Mr Bob Herbert - Director, Victoria Metal Trades Industry Association (MTIA). Joint Chairperson Engineering Skills Training Board; Director of TAFE National Centre for Research and Development.

Ms Pat Robinson - Principal of Sandringham Secondary College.

Professor Jarlath Ronayne - Vice-Chancellor of the Victoria University of Technology.
FOREWORD

Like many involved in education and training, I am motivated by the strengthening community focus on learning. Record levels of school retention, strong university participation, and an emerging recognition of the value of training, show that we may soon achieve the new learning culture needed for our future. But we must do more. In particular we must develop the linkages between the education and training sectors.

The Taskforce review of these linkages or "pathways" has highlighted the significant potential that exists to provide students of all ages with a better education and training experience. Despite some cooperative arrangements, the sectors of our education and training system operate too much as separate worlds. This separateness, coupled with some industrial, cultural and financial rigidities, fails to fully use valuable community resources.

Change is needed within the sectors as well. The Taskforce report recommends a strengthening of the vocational focus of the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), to assist young people to develop the skills needed for employment in an increasingly sophisticated workplace. It also argues for a training sector which builds on the base of high achievement in school to develop leading edge skills in our workforce. Developments like these will depend upon the capacity of our education and training institutions to respond and the ability of our teachers to take on new educational challenges. Recent industrial developments in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) opening scope for more enterprise based approaches are heartening, but need to be extended within TAFE and to other sectors. Given the massive growth in universities compared to the low rates of growth in training of recent years, no one can deny the need for the training system to expand. This requires an improved image for TAFE and training, greater appreciation of the type of training available, enhanced quality in some courses, and improved articulation with schools and universities.

The Taskforce worked in parallel with the Carmichael Report, and reached many of the same conclusions. The demands of the global economy require international standards of knowledge and skill to be achieved. An understanding of the world of work, and the related vocational training, must be developed in the early stages of education. There is a key role for industry to provide input. The need to develop curriculum, assess future skill needs, understand new technology and work organisation and provide training places in employment all require a much closer relationship between educators and industry.

We do not need change for the sake of change, but we need change in education and training to achieve international competitiveness. None of us should lose sight of the objective to serve the customer - that is, the student - as we try to strengthen the system by strengthening its linkages.

There is evidence that the various sectors of education and training are prepared for and capable of strengthening linkages, but this will need special coordination, at least in the early stages of reform. While the strengthening of vocational training in schools is a key recommendation of this report, it is not intended to dilute the academic emphasis of education. Nor should the strengthening of the training sector be at the expense of support for our universities. Both sectors should be better linked but remain complementary and different. The changes recommended in this report will not occur without additional resources, resource re-allocation and a willingness by all to "blur" distinctions between education and training sectors.

I would like to record my appreciation to Taskforce members, the Secretariat, former Minister Barry Pullen who Initiated this report, and the many dedicated Victorians who provided input and counsel.

IVAN DEVESON
Chairman, Taskforce on Pathways In Education and Training
April 1992
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SUMMARY

1. The Taskforce on Pathways in Education and Training was established in October 1991 to examine ways of developing a range of pathways for Victorians through post-compulsory education and training to work and careers. It conducted consultations in early 1992. The report presents the Taskforce findings and proposals.

2. The Taskforce conducted its work following the release of the Australian Education Council's *Review of Young People's Participation in Post-Compulsory Education and Training* (the Finn Report) and in parallel with the Employment and Skills Formation Council's study of vocational certificate-level training (the Carmichael Report) and the Mayer Committee's work on key employment related competencies.

3. Education and training experiences help to shape a person's life. They are part of a range of influences including the family, local communities, the media and society at large. Education and training systems and institutions sit in the middle of all of this and are often buffeted by changing social values and conflicting priorities and demands.

4. While the broad social purpose of our education and training institutions needs to be stressed, their preparatory role for work and careers is equally crucial. People move from school, college or university into the workforce. Increasingly they will return for further education and training. They are likely to change jobs several times through their career. Education and training institutions must pay heed to the skills and knowledge required for participation in the workforce. This workforce will increasingly be made up of adaptable people. They will formulate and solve problems quickly, anticipate the need for action, work as part of a team, make judgements, and integrate thinking and knowledge with manual dexterity and physical tasks.

5. There is now a widespread conviction that our education and training systems must be geared to enable all Australians to make a productive contribution to the community. Developing and integrating education and training provided in the final years of school, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) and private training institutions, adult and further education providers, industry and universities are central to this endeavour. These concerns are not new, but they have taken on a sense of urgency given:

- a recognition that the nation's productivity and international competitiveness depends, in large part, on the skills of its people
- a belief that a broadly based education, incorporating a mix of theoretical and applied learning, provides the basis for active membership of the modern community
- high and growing levels of participation in the full span of secondary schooling, coupled with strong demand for places in post-school education and training
- growing industry demand for advanced workforce skills, reflecting industry and workplace changes
the parlous state of the job market

Major Issues

6. The Taskforce recognises that a range of career pathways already exist for Victorians, some better developed and accorded higher status than others. It believes that the past emphasis which has conferred high status on only a few areas of study, namely the pathways to a professional career through university, has been unbalanced. Applied and technical studies leading to a variety of careers are often as intellectually challenging as academic studies and must be recognised as such. This concern has led the Taskforce to concentrate on strengthening links between post-compulsory school, training and the workplace.

7. The Taskforce did not attempt to cover all aspects of education and training beyond Year 10. The Victorian and Australian education and training systems have been well studied, agreed approaches have been developed in many areas and reforms are underway. The main areas of Taskforce investigation and analysis concerned:
   . the balance of post-compulsory education and training provision, especially the university-training sector balance, and the comparison of Victoria's approach with international practice
   . the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) curriculum mix, with special attention to its vocational dimension
   . the capacity of schools and school systems to provide a diverse and comprehensive VCE curriculum
   . the new reform challenges for the training sector
   . the need to strengthen the foundation for lifelong learning for all young people and adults who have had their education and training interrupted
   . the links between universities and the training sector

Major findings

8. There is a need to develop a more balanced and coherent post-compulsory education and training system. It should offer a diverse set of choices for its clients, underpinned by high quality studies, providing the necessary knowledge and skills for productive employment in the modern workforce. Linked through a set of transfer arrangements, it should assist movement across the post-compulsory spectrum. To achieve this, Victoria must develop a range of accessible post-compulsory institutions, different in focus and mission, equally recognised and equally committed to quality.

9. The development of this system should proceed from high levels of secondary
school achievement. This will require continued reform in all schools and school systems and on-going development of the VCE curriculum to ensure quality provision and relevance to future education, training and career opportunities. Sustained high retention to Year 12 and community recognition of the value of post-compulsory schooling will depend upon these processes.

10. Post-school institutions will also need to change and provide challenging employment-related programs for Year 12 graduates as well as adults seeking further education and training.

Ten key proposals

11. The Taskforce found that several key reforms are needed to assist the development of the balanced and coherent post-compulsory education and training system it seeks. These reforms should be pursued along with work arising from the Finn and Carmichael Reports. In addition, work on the development of employment-related competency frameworks by the Mayer Committee and the National Training Board (NTB), and work on the recognition of training by the Vocational Education, Employment and Training Advisory Committee (VEETAC) should be considered in conjunction with these reforms. While the report makes 34 recommendations, the Taskforce’s findings lead to 10 key proposals. These are summarised below.

* That a planning framework embracing all sectors of post-compulsory education be developed to shape growth over the next decade (Recommendation 1). This framework should seek to:

  - increase overall education participation and achievement in line with the national targets for growth agreed by State and Commonwealth Governments, and supported by industry
  - build on a sustained high level of Year 12 attainment
  - substantially increase participation in training for all age groups
  - maintain young people’s participation in university level study and increase adult participation in these programs
  - increase entry to degree programs from the training sector

* That, within the VCE framework, student programs of study be further developed and promoted in a range of broad industry areas (Recommendation 2). These programs should enable a student to acquire both broad employment related knowledge and skill, and specific knowledge and skill of direct application in the workplace. They should be developed in areas wide enough to encourage breadth of study, but sufficiently defined to enable a student to move on to further specific vocational training or to the workplace. These programs must enable, indeed encourage, further education and training in both universities and the training
That schools and school systems improve their capacity to deliver a full range of VCE programs and ensure that such programs are accessible to all students (Recommendations 3-6). This is likely to require:

- re-organisation of schools (both government and non-government) to ensure breadth of program provision within a district or region
- development of "senior colleges", concentrating on VCE provision in a separate setting from junior secondary school
- vastly improved cooperation between schools and training providers to enable the full and efficient delivery of VCE programs, especially in relation to industry and occupation-related study. Such cooperation may take a variety of forms ranging from occasional access to training sector facilities or teachers, to substantial arrangements between schools and training providers
- development of a framework for such cooperation between schools, school systems and training providers which includes resourcing and industrial arrangements

That the standing of school and training sector programs be strengthened through three important initiatives (Recommendations 9, 10 and 14):

- joint recognition of VCE and vocational training programs by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board (VCAB) and the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB), building on the credit transfer arrangements developed so far
- strengthening the input of community, industry and post-school education and training systems to the work of VCAB, particularly through its Board and committees
- developing a Statewide Education Industry Strategy to promote school, training sector and industry cooperation

That teacher education enhance teachers' understanding of Industry and the workplace and the education and training pathways available to young people (Recommendations 11-13). Students in Years 11 and 12 will have more diverse needs and expectations than those formerly in senior school. Their post-school ambitions will encompass a range of options. Teachers in schools and the training sector must be able to promote learning related to all of these.

That the training sector be geared to deliver growth in both certificate-level and advanced vocational training programs for both young people entering from Year 12 and adults (Recommendations 16-22). This will require:
reforms to broaden, make more accessible and improve the quality of both certificate-level and advanced vocational programs

developing more flexible training providers

further developing a strong, high status public and private industry training sector

balancing the demands of Year 12 graduates and adults in the workforce seeking entry to training programs

establishing a central application and admission framework for training sector programs

That further work be undertaken to accredit adult, community and further education programs (Recommendation 26). Many young people and adults outside the formal system will return to education and training through programs provided in the community. Their prospects are enhanced when they receive recognised credit for their learning and use this to proceed to the next stage of their education.

That credit transfer between the training sector and universities be supported and developed (Recommendation 31). In particular, as part of a strategy to increase adult entry to degree programs, universities should establish a special category for training sector entrants in the development of their student profiles. Expanded school leaver access to training and the reduction in the number of 15-19 year olds over the rest of the decade should enable universities to both maintain the level of youth access to degree programs while increasing adult entry.

That there be a major expansion of two year programs for school leavers and adults in both the training sector and universities (Recommendations 32 and 33). Major growth in these programs should be in industry-related advanced vocational training provided through training sector institutions. Some growth in generalist two year programs should take place in universities, especially those universities which have a TAFE component or a close relationship with the TAFE sector.

That a high level implementation committee be established by the Ministers for School Education and Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training to ensure that the Taskforce’s proposals are pursued in a timely and coordinated manner (Recommendation 34). The Taskforce proposals necessarily cross the sectors of post-compulsory education and training. Recent ministerial changes now mean that this report’s proposals cross portfolio boundaries. The proposals must be addressed in a coordinated way across the sectors. Further, the terms of reference did not raise the question of funding and the Taskforce has not especially addressed it. However, the implementation committee should, as a priority, address the resource implications of this report, together with those arising from the Finn and Carmichael Reports. This is particularly important given the Commonwealth’s
already strong and increasing interest in post-compulsory education and training.

Overview of the report

12. The report moves from a survey of the future possible shape of post-compulsory education and training in Victoria (Chapter 1) through a consideration of issues arising from each of the Terms of Reference: strengthening the vocational dimension of the VCE (Chapter 2); school-industry links (Chapter 3); new challenges for the training sector (Chapter 4); restructuring interrupted pathways (Chapter 5); and links between universities and the training sector (Chapter 6).

13. Chapter 1 argues that the growth in education and training established during the 1980s must be sustained during the next decade. Development must occur across all parts of the post-compulsory system, with the objective of placing Australia at the top levels of international achievement in education and training. Chapter 2 stresses the need to develop, promote and deliver a range of student programs of study within the VCE framework, to enable students to move into diverse post-school education, training and work opportunities. The following chapter emphasises the importance of links between schools and industry to enable schools to better introduce students to workplace issues. It also discusses the need for teaching and learning about work to be integrated into the school curriculum. Chapter 4 points out that further reforms are needed in the training sector to respond to the new demands from Year 12 graduates and adults seeking further training. Chapter 5 argues that a range of measures is required both to assist young people to finish their schooling and support adults re-entering education and training to improve their knowledge and skills. The final chapter points to the need for a greater number of students to be able to move from the training sector to study in university. More importantly it argues for the balanced development of high quality two year qualifications in both the training sector and universities to meet industry skill requirements and the demand for advanced post-school qualifications.
RECOMMENDATIONS

The Taskforce recommends:

Chapter 1: The Future Shape of Post-Compulsory Education and Training in Victoria

1. That the Department of School Education and the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training establish a planning framework for post-compulsory education and training, which incorporates forecast and agreed:
   . retention to and completion of Year 12 at school, including regional variations
   . participation and attainment in vocational certificate-level training programs by key age groups
   . participation and attainment in advanced vocational training programs by key age groups
   . participation and attainment in degree-level programs by key age groups
   . transfer between sectors required to achieve these appropriate levels
   . regional goals and targets required to achieve these appropriate levels
   . age and gender participation goals to ensure broad access to the full range of programs
   . priority areas for growth, by broad industry and/or field of study category

Chapter 2: Strengthening the Vocational Dimension of the Victorian Certificate of Education

2. That the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board (VCAB) further develop and promote Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) student programs in a range of industry areas under the five main curriculum categories of Arts, Business, Humanities, Sciences and Technology, to be fully implemented by 1995, and which provide a student with:
   . generic knowledge and skills required for effective entry into a broad range of occupations and industries
   . specific knowledge and skills of direct application in the workplace
   . a recognised basis for entry to the workforce and further education and training in both universities and the training sector
flexibility to enable movement between various education and training options and pathways

3. That schools and school systems develop an implementation strategy for the delivery of VCE student programs developed by VCAB. This strategy should:
   - extend schools and school system reorganisation to ensure the delivery of a full range of VCE student programs
   - explore models for the delivery of the post-compulsory curriculum, especially cooperative arrangements between senior secondary colleges and training sector institutions, including an examination of the "senior college" concept proposed in the Carmichael Report

4. That the Department of School Education and the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training develop a framework, including resourcing and industrial arrangements, to enable schools and school systems to utilise the capacity of TAFE colleges, private training providers and industry in the delivery of VCE student programs.

5. That VCE student programs, incorporating a structured mix of study and exposure to work, be developed and piloted in metropolitan and rural Victoria in 1993, including programs which:
   - offer credit for part-time employment where learning in the workplace relates to work requirements and assessment in the VCE
   - focus on workplace competencies in both real and simulated settings

6. That schools and school systems promote and assist the provision of VCE programs for part-time students.

7. That credit transfer and articulation arrangements being developed by VCAB and the State Training Board (STB) be enhanced by:
   - the training sector giving a clear indication of the outcomes required for VCE programs to link with training programs
   - completing credit transfer arrangements in all industry areas as a priority
   - promoting credit transfer arrangements among school/TAFE teachers and administrators as a high priority

8. That students beginning the second year of their VCE be permitted to provisionally enrol in a TAFE course, subject to an appropriate VCE program of preparatory studies, and take up a place on completion of their VCE, subject to achieving a defined standard of performance.
9. That VCAB and the Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board (VETAB) give joint recognition to VCE and vocational certificate training programs, enabling a student successfully completing a VCE program to achieve:

- the VCE and
- a vocational certificate at the appropriate level, or substantial credit towards the achievement of a vocational certificate

and enabling a trainee successfully completing a vocational certificate to achieve:

- a vocational certificate at the appropriate level and
- the VCE or substantial credit, additional to that granted on adult entry, towards the VCE

10. That VCAB advise the Minister for School Education on ways to strengthen community, industry and post-secondary education and training sector input by considering:

- appropriate changes to the structure of the Board and committees, including the option of incorporating significant representation from industry and the community
- ways in which VCE programs address industry recognised competency standards as they are developed from the work of the Mayer committee and the National Training Board (NTB)

Chapter 3: Strengthening School Industry Links and Improving Work Education

11. That teacher education courses enable students to develop a sound understanding of:

- industry, where possible by taking part in industry placements
- education and training pathways for young people
- strategies for increasing the capacity of schools to address workplace perspectives

12. That lecturers in teacher education courses be involved in industry through a range of activities such as long-term industry placements, assisting with the development of curriculum materials with a workplace orientation and on-going contacts with industry.

13. That full-time, limited tenure positions be funded in each Victorian university with a teacher education faculty to promote and coordinate links between the teacher education faculties, education and training providers and industry.
14. That the Department of School Education and the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training, in conjunction with industry, develop a statewide Education Industry Strategy that incorporates:

- a range of in-service activities to ensure that teachers acquire information about education, training and employment pathways for students and the means to implement these at the school level
- education industry exchange schemes, including the Teacher Release to Industry Program, for all schools
- independent research that documents examples of best practice in school, industry and training sector links and analyses factors that make these successful
- the publication and promotion of initiatives where education industry cooperation is significant
- mechanisms for both statewide and local consultation and implementation

15. That, following the decision that Australian Studies be optional in the VCE:

- a structured study of work be introduced within the curriculum in the compulsory years, with particular attention to Years 9 and 10
- teaching and learning about the world of work be integrated into the curriculum in a rigorous manner
- trade unions and employers be closely involved in providing advice on work education curriculum
- materials providing examples of best practice in work education be published and promoted
- professional development programs on work education be conducted to assist teachers

Chapter 4: Growth and New Reform Challenges In the Training Sector

16. That the STB advise on ways to increase the flexibility of TAFE colleges, including the development of enterprise bargaining in the TAFE system and college employment of teaching staff.

17. That the government endorse the reforms to certificate-level training outlined in the Employment and Skills Formation Council report on a Vocational Certificate Training System.
18. That vocational certificate-level training be promoted to young people and adults as a program of education and training which:

- takes place in schools, TAFE colleges, private training providers, industry and in cooperative arrangements between providers
- enables a person to gain dual recognition as outlined in Recommendation 9

19. That the STB commission quality reviews in three key areas of advanced vocational training to be completed by mid 1993 and conducted in cooperation with industry.

20. That the STB advise on the development of "key centres" or "institutes" of advanced vocational training within the training system which would:

- be established in industry areas of strategic significance to the Victorian and Australian economies
- be leading edge vocational training centres for the development of high level technical skills for Industry
- be involved in both the teaching of these high level skills and their practical application through the provision of consultancy services to industry
- be involved in cooperative relationships with relevant areas of university teaching and research

21. That the STB, in consultation with Industry Training Boards, review both the entry requirements for and the certification of advanced vocational training to establish:

- entry to advanced certificate and associate diploma programs to be post-Year 12 or the vocational certificate-level equivalent
- a system of diplomas.

22. That the STB develop a central application and admissions framework to be established in time for the 1993 student intake with the following characteristics:

- a genuine capacity to provide Year 11 and 12 students with information about post-school training options
- a capacity to manage admissions at the regional and local level
- liaison with the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) to ensure that applications for both university and training sector courses can be processed in a similar timeframe
- a clear indication of training sector admissions policy and pre-requisites
a capacity to process and record provisional enrolments as recommended in 8 above

23. That the Job and Course Explorer (JAC), including Jobs Illustrated (JILL) systems be enhanced to:

- develop a capacity to relate education and training course outcomes and occupational destinations to the emerging "key employment related competency" and Australian Standards Framework competency frameworks
- integrate community, industry and private training programs into their data bases
- extend coverage to provide information on potential education, training and employment outcomes from VCE programs proposed in Recommendation 2 above

Chapter 5: Restructuring Interrupted Pathways

24. That effective strategies used by schools in the Students At Risk Program form the basis of statewide action plans.

25. That a statewide Service Agreement be developed between Community Services Victoria, the Department of School Education and the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training to ensure access to education and training for disadvantaged young people. This Agreement would identify:

- the target group
- individual support, packages of support and Support Services
- curriculum approaches, programs and access
- accountability mechanisms

26. That the Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Board, in conjunction with VCAB and the STB undertake work on the further development of accreditation for adult, community and further education programs as a matter of urgency.

27. That the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission (VPSEC), in conjunction with the ACFE Board develop and promote a consistent framework for adult entry provision across all universities.

28. That the ACFE Board undertake a nationally significant study of adult, community and further education outcomes and pathways.

29. That as part of the Statewide Education Industry Strategy:
an Industry Education Partnership Program be established to support disadvantaged groups to participate in education and training

pilot projects which provide re-entry to education, employment and training for particularly disadvantaged groups, be set up under the Industry Education Partnership Program

30. That the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training in conjunction with the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training design and promote innovative information and counselling strategies to encourage disadvantaged groups to re-enter education and training.

Chapter 6: The Links Between Universities and the Training Sector

31. That support be given to articulation arrangements and credit transfer to and within universities with a significant TAFE component.

32. That expansion of two year programs in universities and the training sector be a key priority for post-school planning.

33. That the bulk of two year programs in advanced vocational training be provided by TAFE colleges and industry, and the bulk of two year below-degree generalist programs be provided in universities, particularly those with a TAFE component.

Implementation

34. That the Ministers for School Education and Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training establish a high level implementation committee to ensure work arising from the report is coordinated, resource implications are examined and that clear priorities and a timeframe be established for the introduction of the reforms proposed.
1. THE FUTURE SHAPE OF POST-COMPULSORY EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN VICTORIA

Major developments of the 1980s

1.1 Victoria has entered the 1990s with unprecedented pressure on its education and training institutions. Major concerns include the curriculum of secondary schools, the queues of school leavers without university or training places and the funding of post-secondary education. These are due to three important developments in post-compulsory education and training.

1.2 First, within the space of a decade, a near universal system of post-compulsory schooling has been established. In 1981, only a third of young people who began secondary school six years earlier remained to Year 12. Now at their most senior and specialised levels, schools are exposed to the whole student population. As a consequence, the protection which the school system once offered universities through its sifting function and low retention is gone.

1.3 The second development, still far from complete, is the consolidation of the old network of TAFE colleges into a post-school sector of advanced vocational training which includes not only TAFE colleges, but also a growing number of private, community and industry providers. No longer a refuge for students who do not successfully finish school, the training system draws increasingly on clients who have completed their secondary education. Whether it will offer places for all young people, including the most talented, in competition with the universities or whether it will concentrate on providing alternatives for those who cannot find a place at university, remains to be seen.

1.4 Thirdly, the rapid growth in school leaver participation in universities appears to be over. Although in recent years school leavers have increased their share of university places at the expense of adults, the proportion of Year 12 students entering university is now falling. To reverse this tendency in the face of mounting retention would impose further penalties on adults and deny resources to other post-school providers and essential activities in the universities themselves, such as post-graduate study and research.

Challenges for the 1990s

1.5 In February 1992, retention to Year 12 exceeded 85 per cent. There has been strong growth in vocational training amongst older teenagers, but a decline for 15-17 year olds. If the present recession affects apprenticeship commencements in the same way as the 1982-83 recession, access for younger teenagers will be permanently reduced. There is now record demand from school leavers for post-school places. Adults have substantially increased their participation in vocational training, but not in undergraduate degree programs.
1.6  All of these trends show the growing demand for education and training. Some of this demand is undoubtedly a function of a depressed job market, but there are signs that a shift has occurred in the community's attitude to learning. A new learning culture involving a commitment to lifelong learning may be emerging.

1.7  But are all population groups able to meet their needs? Are programs appropriate and accessible? In satisfying a multiplicity of individual needs, can Victoria's system of education and training also become more closely attuned to industry and employment requirements? Major challenges have to be faced across the post-compulsory education and training system.

1.8  For schools, these include:

. the need to strengthen the vocational dimension of the VCE, especially through closer links with the training sector and industry

. the failure of a significant, though declining, number of young people to complete Year 12

. the problem of uneven retention rates, inadequate program delivery and lack of subject choices, arising from geographical, gender and socio-economic differences

. the marked regional disparities in scholastic achievement

1.9  For the training sector, these include:

. the reform and development of certificate or entry-level training

. the development and targeting of advanced vocational training

. the delivery of the advanced skills required by industry and the community

1.10 For universities, these include:

. the need to increase adult access

. the entry of TAFE students to degree programs with advanced standing

. the maintenance of an appropriate level of school leaver access

. the need to redress regional imbalances in access

. the need to expand post-graduate studies
Scenarios for the future

1.11 The Taskforce Discussion Paper and Information Paper outlined three ways in which Victoria's post-compulsory education could grow through the 1990s. The models were designed to focus attention on the issue of balance between and across the sectors and on certain key "leverage points" in the immediate post-compulsory years, namely school retention and post-school transfer to university and the training sector. Retention and transfer to university have been important in the State Government's education and training policy goals for several years. The question of balance is crucial and is currently the subject of major work.

1.12 These models provided a useful focus for debate. A wide range of views was expressed and each model drew strong support during consultations. While no model was designed to be a single prescription for the future shape of post-compulsory education, the Taskforce agrees with the dominant view expressed during consultations that its Model B - the trend retention model - is the most appropriate one, although more detailed work suggests modifications are necessary.

1.13 The Taskforce's favoured approach has these major features:

- further growth in retention to Year 12 at school to a sustained high level, probably in the order of 85-90 per cent statewide with some regional variation
- reduced direct transfer from Year 12 to university, maintaining the level of youth participation in degree-level studies and increasing adult participation
- increased transfer from Year 12 to, and increased adult participation in, training

1.14 The point was made during consultations that the models were partial, concentrating as they do on school retention and school leaver flows. The Taskforce agrees and further work needs to be carried out to integrate adult participation into planning models. As part of its strategic planning work, the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission (VPSEC) subjected the Taskforce models to further analysis, including consideration of the need for growth in adult participation in degree-level studies. That analysis suggested that the levels of school leaver entry proposed by the Taskforce in its Model B (45 per cent direct, 5 per cent delayed) were still too high to allow enough room for needed adult growth given likely resources. Therefore there is a need to increase training sector opportunities for school leavers, and expand university places for a substantial number of those who wish to enter university after initial training or work.

1.15 These conclusions raise the need to reconsider the government's key education and training goals. The most recent clear retention goal is for at least 80 per cent, as stated in the Victorian Government submission to the Finn Committee. Current transfer goals are 50 per cent for university and 25 per cent for training. The Taskforce conclusions differ on all counts. But more importantly, the Taskforce is not convinced that goals of this sort are now useful, at least not as major goals for the future.
Goals, targets and the need for a planning framework

1.16 The government's retention and university transfer goals have undoubtedly assisted in achieving high levels of school and university participation in recent years. A new framework to shape growth in the next decade is now needed. This planning framework must embrace all sectors of education and training and it must focus more on attainment in education and training than on flows between sectors. Flows between the sectors must take place of course, but they should be the process by which broader goals are achieved. Furthermore, the framework will inevitably cross sectoral boundaries and must be agreed to and addressed by all sectors. As a consequence of this, both state and commonwealth governments need to be involved. Finally, and most importantly, the framework must seek to improve Victoria's education and training attainment against the measure of the best international standards.

1.17 The Finn and Carmichael reports have outlined several national education and training targets, set in terms of attainment by age group against the Australian Standards Framework (ASF) of competency standards.

1.18 The Taskforce agrees with an approach which focuses on attainment, but notes that in the short term at least the ASF standards have not been fully developed in many areas and cannot apply to all sectors of education and training. In addition, several other targets have been set or are being considered within various sectors, which appear to lead in the general direction of the Finn targets, but are expressed differently. For example, the State Training Board (STB) seeks to raise participation in TAFE to 10.4 per cent of the adult population by the year 2000. VPSEC is considering a target of 38 per cent of the population by age 30 years having commenced a degree program. The Taskforce considers there is an urgent need to integrate the range of goals and targets into a single set of goals for Victorian post-compulsory education and training.

1.19 These broad goals should be framed in terms of attainment and participation in recognised programs, such as degrees, vocational certificates or the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE). When appropriate they should be able to be expressed in terms of the competency frameworks being developed through the ASF and the Mayer Committee. A major advantage of using these competency frameworks, when developed, will be the focus on the achievement of outcomes rather than on the sector of provision. To support these goals, key strategic targets will have to be set. An obvious example of this would be the setting of a school-to-training transfer target, in order to boost participation in training.

1.20 The Taskforce considers that a critical role for both state and commonwealth governments is to outline a vision for the development of post-compulsory education and training - not a rigid plan, but a framework to enable planning and delivery to take place.

Recommendation 1: That the Department of School Education and the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training establish a planning framework for post-compulsory education and training, which incorporates forecast and agreed:
. retention to and completion of Year 12 at school, including regional variations

. participation and attainment in vocational certificate-level training programs by key age groups

. participation and attainment in advanced vocational training programs by key age groups

. participation and attainment in degree-level programs by key age groups

. transfer between sectors required to achieve these appropriate levels

. regional goals and targets required to achieve these appropriate levels

. age and gender participation goals to ensure broad access to the full range of programs

. priority areas for growth, by broad industry and/or field of study category

The international standing of Victoria's education and training system

1.21 The Taskforce found widespread agreement with its contention that "education and training systems cannot be immune from the need to contribute to Australia's competitiveness and to strive for world best practice". International comparisons are able to give an indication of Australia's place in education and training. These comparisons may help to set the key goals that must form a basis of the planning framework referred to above.

1.22 By international standards, Australia's workforce is poorly qualified. On 1988 figures, 41 per cent of Australian males and 55 per cent of females had failed to complete a full secondary education. Half of the sixteen OECD countries looked at in a recent study had higher levels of school achievement.

1.23 Figure 1.1 (p.21) shows Australia's ranking in post-school education and training. It indicates that Australia ranked ninth out of sixteen in achievement of degrees and third in the achievement of below-degree programs (for example vocational certificates and diplomas). Australia's 1988 standing at the below degree-level reflects the past strength of apprenticeships. However attainment of these qualifications is likely to have slowed since 1988, as a consequence of the decline of the apprenticeship system.

1.24 Recent growth in retention to Year 12 in Australia, and especially in Victoria, has outstripped that of all other OECD countries. The growth in university participation is likely to improve Australia's international standing, although it will take some time to make up the historical backlog. The related shift of qualifications to degree-level improves our standing on degree-level studies. These trends are likely to produce national benefits in the longer
term if they can be sustained.

1.25 Figure 1.2 (p.23) shows changes in national educational attainment for 15-24 year-olds in post-secondary programs since 1988 and indicates the situation in Victoria in 1991. The recent growth in retention and university participation is not fully reflected. These changes have been among young people, and given that the vast majority of those in today's workforce will still be working at the turn of the century, it is likely that the nation will appear to be lagging by international standards for some time.

1.26 Three important conclusions can be drawn from the figures. First, it is essential to maintain high levels of secondary school achievement. Secondly, the recent growth in degree-level participation must be sustained, with a special emphasis on increasing the level of attainment among adults, especially of prime working age. Thirdly, as there is likely to have been significant slippage in the relative attainment of post-secondary qualifications below degree-level, this area should be boosted.

The structure of Victoria's post-compulsory education and training system

1.27 Post-compulsory education and training in Victoria was traditionally provided through a parallel system comprising full-time academic studies leading to university predominantly, and part-time employment-based vocational training. The main factor behind the decline of this system has been the deferral of entry to apprenticeship and other certificate-level training. Apprenticeship, for example, now typically begins from Year 11, and over one fifth of commencing apprentices have at least attempted Year 12.

1.28 Parallel and segregated provision has now been replaced by a general system of school education which accommodates over 80 per cent of an age group till the final year of secondary school. Although some important institutional changes underlying this transition occurred during the late 1960s and 1970s, the big change in levels of student activity has taken place since 1983.

1.29 Significantly, not all post-school provision has adjusted as quickly. Increasing diversification of the post-compulsory school population has not been matched by alternative post-school provision of comparable standards of intake and prestige. This, in turn, has affected the school system. For in the absence of competitive alternatives to university, the incentive to program diversification at upper secondary level articulating to these alternatives has been weak.

1.30 There are consequently two major changes which need to occur before the old system of "academic" versus "vocational" training is finally buried. First, post-school provision needs to be diversified from the dominant 3-4 year full-time degree model. Secondly, upper secondary programs need to be diversified within the integrated framework of the VCE to assist entry to all post-school options. These changes are mutually dependent. Failure to establish non-university post-school courses which offer distinctive advantages will blunt the impulse to program development within the VCE. Conversely, failure to achieve a real mix of VCE student programs will tend to focus post-school demand around universities. It will also provide an inadequate basis for students to
develop their educational and career strategies.

1.31 To highlight the changes and the challenges, it is useful to compare Victoria’s emerging system of post-compulsory education and training with some other national systems.

**Employment-based versus multilateral school provision**

1.32 European systems display two major approaches to provision. Separate academic education and vocational training characterises countries such as Germany and Switzerland, where apprenticeship is very widely established and recruits the majority of the age-group following completion of compulsory school. In these systems, there is a comparatively early sorting process, with students streamed early in their secondary education into courses in separate institutions that lead either to full-time school or apprenticeship plus part-time school. Multilateral provision, on the other hand, involves program differentiation within schools or between schools, and accommodates on a full-time basis the majority of the post-compulsory student population. Examples of countries with multilateral provision are Sweden, France, Spain, Italy, Belgium, and Greece.

1.33 The basic difference between separate and multilateral provision is the extent to which vocational training is established in the workplace. In those countries where vocational training is provided primarily in the workplace and is established on a wide
industry basis, the school system tends to be more sharply differentiated as an academic stream (even though many students as graduates eventually undertake vocational training through the "dual system" or in advanced technical colleges or schools).

1.34 In Germany a parallel system of post-primary schools divides the school population into academic and vocational streams. On completion of compulsory schooling, most young people begin work, with on-the-job training and off-the-job education of around eight hours per week in vocational school. This "dual system" of apprenticeship and part-time school is based upon high levels of youth employment and exploits the enterprise (especially small to medium sized firms) as the major point of delivery. A minority of the age-group enters the academic school and prepares for university.

1.35 Multilateral schooling, on the other hand, places reliance on full-time school not only for academic-preparatory courses, but also to contribute a major share of vocational training as well. This has led to the creation of various streams of access, unequal prestige and outcomes. With changes in industry structure, international trading competition, and mounting youth unemployment, streaming from the early or middle years of secondary school has become increasingly counter-productive, restrictive and frustrating. The tendency over the last decade has been to delay sorting into streams until the final years of secondary school, to establish bridging mechanisms between streams, and to reduce the number and the rigidity of the divisions that do remain. Selecting an elite through precocious streaming within school and rigid parallel "tracks" has given way to attempts to exploit the diversity of young people’s strengths through flexible program structures, based on higher general levels of attainment.

1.36 In the French system, most young people complete their junior secondary education and move into either senior high school, which offers a variety of general and technical baccalaureates or vocational senior high school, which delivers the vocational baccalaureate as well as two and three-year vocational certificates.

1.37 Most young people enter senior high school to complete a general or technical baccalaureate. This is a three-year program with a common foundation year which includes French, history, geography and social studies, a modern language, mathematics, natural and physical sciences, and physical education and sport. In their second and final years, most baccalaureate students must take French, a modern language, and, except in one sub-stream, mathematics. In addition, they specialise within one of eight major streams (which are currently being simplified):

- Humanities
- Economics and Social Science
- Mathematics and Physical Science
- Mathematics and Biological Science
- Mathematics and Technology
- Industrial Technology
- Laboratory Technology
- Business Administration

1.38 The major streams of the French baccalaureate divide into sub-streams, based on
FIGURE 1.2


degree

Cert. or Dip.

Trade

Other

Year 12

<Year 12


particular options, for example, paramedical sciences and health administration, and the arts. The humanities stream divides into literature and mathematics, literature and the arts, and literature and languages. Industrial technology covers fields such as mechanical engineering, optics, electronics, electrical engineering, energy and equipment, and biochemistry. The vocational baccalaureate covers manufacturing industry as well as the services sector, and involves a substantial work placement.

1.39 Not all multilateral school systems are formally stratified. Streaming may occur on a more informal basis, as in high schools in the United States, where the existence of "tracks" is implicit. While this approach leads to high levels of school completion, it also tends to reduce the level of effort and attainment expected of many young people. This in turn affects post-school education, particularly the community colleges which have to compensate for the lack of a more structured and explicit management of differences within high schools.

Diversification of post-school provision

1.40 In multilateral school systems, unlike the "dual system", there is no full-time employment buffer between schools, on the one hand, and universities and higher technical institutes, on the other. Growth in post-compulsory school, particularly in times of economic downturn, quickly converts into growth in demand for various forms of higher
education. In these circumstances, the organisation of higher education becomes critical. An important trend in Europe has been the development of the non-university sector of higher education.

1.41 The German system places full-time employment and training for the majority of young people between compulsory school and higher education, and secondly operates a system of "short cycle" technical and business education for those entering higher education from work.

1.42 In Germany, specialised technical schools enrol both older and younger workers, who study full or part-time for qualifications as foreman-supervisor or technician. From here they can enter the non-university sector of higher education, (the advanced technical colleges or polytechnics), where they are joined by graduates from the small sector of secondary technical schools and also from the academic stream studying in the grammar school. The polytechnics provide 2-3 year programs in such areas as engineering, business and public administration, social work and industrial design.

1.43 While in Germany, full-time employment and training for the majority of young people occupies the middle ground between compulsory school and higher education, in France this middle ground is the system of stratified, full-time education and training in school. Almost all young people who pass their baccalaureate enrol in some form of higher education, but higher education is also stratified into a selective, elite "closed sector" and a non-selective "open sector". Competition for entry to the "closed sector" is high, including to its two-year advanced training programs.

Implications for Victorian post-compulsory education and training

1.44 Multilateral school provision, with its large and diverse student population and consequent high demand for further education and training, places pressure on post-school institutions. The expansion and diversification of post-school institutions must keep pace with changes to the school system. In turn schools themselves must prepare students for a range of post-school destinations.

1.45 The need for diversity and choice at all levels of post-compulsory education and training to provide quality offerings for all students requires a departure from old forms of curriculum, program design and teaching methods. Post-school education should diversify beyond the dominant 3-4 year full time degree model, to provide offerings for a wider range of students. Equally, school provision must meet the twin objectives of broadening the range of programs and lifting academic demands across all programs, to avoid passing on the problems of uneven attainment and motivation to post-school education and the labour market.

1.46 Victoria has established the curriculum framework for multilateral school provision with the VCE, but both the management of student retention within this framework and the diversification and funding of post-school education and training require major efforts.
Employment related competencies

1.47 The work of the Mayer Committee on the development of "employment related key competencies" and the National Training Board (NTB)\(^9\) on the Australian Standards Framework (ASF) is at the forefront of education and training reform and parallels developments throughout the world. It is exciting, challenging and, as participants are now finding, exceedingly difficult. The work is at an early stage in both areas.

1.48 The development of agreed competency frameworks potentially offers a range of benefits to "strengthen the links between the sectors, improve flexibility of movement between pathways and provide for nationally consistent credit transfer arrangements"\(^{10}\). This is at the heart of the Taskforce's concerns.

1.49 The Taskforce has identified three important levels of employment related competency, drawing from the work of the Vocational Education, Employment and Training Advisory Committee's (VEETAC) Working Party on Recognition of Training\(^{11}\). These are:

- **key competencies** - generic competence which is required for effective entry to a wide range of occupations and industries - being developed through the Mayer Committee

- **industry-specific and cross-industry competencies** - competencies that have a direct relationship to specific production and service delivery processes in an occupation or set of occupations in an industry or related set of industries - being developed through the NTB.

- **enterprise-specific competencies** - competence required for work in an enterprise or set of enterprises

1.50 Together, key competencies and the industry competencies provide the basis to define structured vocational education and training for the modern economy and workforce. Vocational education and training curriculum, no matter where it is delivered, must address both types of competency. The balance between generic competencies and more specific industry related competencies will vary between programs.

1.51 In general, consistent with the objective of post-compulsory schooling providing a broad basis from which to pursue further education, training or work, school programs will place a strong emphasis on the development of key competencies. Nevertheless, it is not sufficient for school programs to address these alone. In the Taskforce's view, a post-compulsory school program should have an element of industry and/or occupational focus.

1.52 In general, consistent with the main role of the training sector being the provision of high quality education and training relevant to industry needs and standards, certificate-level training programs will place a strong emphasis on developing ASF competencies. The Taskforce agrees with the view that certificate-level training must broaden beyond its current, narrow focus on a relatively few trade skills and occupations. The incorporation of key competencies into training curriculum is an essential part of the necessary broadening.
1.53 The government's submission to the Finn committee and Minister Pullen's *Pathways to Success* statement set a goal of having "50 per cent of VCE students undertaking programs which incorporate agreed work-related competency standards and which can lead into programs of further study"\(^\text{12}\). This goal has no meaning under the interpretation of vocational education and training outlined above. Under that interpretation all VCE students should be studying in programs which address work-related competency standards.

1.54 The 50 per cent goal sought to address the need for more students to be studying in programs which develop the skills required in the workplace or enable a student to enter further study in the training sector. In the Taskforce's view, these needs are better achieved through a wider range of programs in the VCE, the speedy implementation of credit transfer and articulation arrangements between the VCE and the training sector, the setting of goals to increase participation in training programs and improving transfer rates between the sectors. These issues have been discussed earlier. When completed and agreed, the work of the Mayer Committee and the NTB will give a common currency or language of competencies to understand the pathways between the sectors.

**General and vocational education**

1.55 Within the school sector the introduction of the VCE and the amalgamation of former government high and technical schools into secondary colleges are based upon a broad agreement that a general education consists of both theoretical and applied learning. Describing a similar concept but using different terms, the Finn and Carmichael Reports refer to a convergence of general and vocational education. Increasingly vocational education emphasises higher order understanding while general education is concerned with problem solving in the real world. This convergence is a very important feature of contemporary change in work organisation as well as in education and training. It focuses on broadening the range of skills needed for the performance of occupational tasks and values the knowledge base underlying the application of the skills. A common understanding and description of concepts across the sectors is essential. While there is currently a confusion of terms, what is clearly being sought by all in post-compulsory education and training is a mixture of theoretical and applied learning. The problem for current school and training sector curriculum is that both concentrate too heavily on one to the relative exclusion of the other and they each need to change.
2. STRENGTHENING THE VOCATIONAL DIMENSION OF THE VICTORIAN CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION

The new relationship between school and work

2.1 In the early 1980s, only a minority of young people depended on successful completion of school to secure their access to post-school destinations. Today, the great majority of young people rely on successful completion of schooling for all post-school destinations, including employment. The result is that the curriculum now stands in a direct relationship with work in all its diversity. Further training in universities or colleges leading to professional labour markets, was once the major bridge between the senior secondary curriculum and work. But in the 1990s there will be few full-time jobs for young people who have not successfully completed school. Apprenticeships - currently the largest single source of full-time employment for young people - are now the preserve of Year 11 and Year 12 graduates, and there is a growing tendency for them to favour the more highly schooled group.

2.2 In short, the more young people extend their use of school to gain access to employment, the more the curriculum is being brought into a relationship with work which touches all industry sectors and all occupations.

2.3 Today the vocational imperatives acting on the curriculum have never been clearer. Students now need to plan their paths into employment, based on informed use of school. They need to explicitly invest in skills, some of which are specific to jobs or groups of jobs which will thus make young people immediately productive in the enterprise. They also need to balance the acquisition of specific skills against a broad foundation. And finally they need to lay the ground for future specialist training and re-training, whether in universities, TAFE colleges, or industry.

2.4 Planning career paths, investing in a personal skills base, and building a broad foundation for future training are tasks which have to be accomplished by most young people during post-compulsory schooling. These tasks cannot be deferred or ignored by early entry to work as there are too few jobs, and those that are available provide are unlikely to exist in the future. Nor, given the enormous pressure on university and TAFE places, can young people any longer afford the luxury of deferring career planning and skills development till after a place is obtained. Post-compulsory school has become the decisive stage for all young people and its curriculum must achieve a vocational dimension for all.

The VCE framework

2.5 The VCE has several important elements which provide a framework for a range of education and training options. These include:

- a commitment to linking theoretical and practical study
2.6 The VCE provides the curriculum framework within which the key challenges facing the delivery of post-compulsory schooling can be tackled. The challenges are to develop and deliver education and training within that framework. There are three major challenges: program access, program quality, and program outcomes.

2.7 The most important issue is access. Schools should provide a sufficient range of VCE programs to meet diverse student needs which have arisen through high retention.

2.8 Secondly is the related question of program quality. All programs should challenge and extend young people. Intellectual stimulation, the broadening of horizons, and practical as well as theoretical orientations should not be confined to certain programs while others function as easier options. Quality relates to the balance students should achieve in their VCE.

2.9 The third issue for students is that of program outcomes. Now that participation in the full span of secondary schooling is widespread, it is essential that programs be designed to articulate with a variety of post-school options in education, training and the workplace.

2.10 Many young people look for work after completing Year 12 and do not undertake further study immediately. To assist them in finding work and in being able quickly and effectively to exploit the opportunities that they do find, they should be able to acquire through post-compulsory schooling some production or service-delivery knowledge and skills which are directly applicable in the workplace. These skills ought to relate to an occupation, set of occupations, industry or set of industries. In addition, students completing Year 12 are more likely to combine work with part-time training in a TAFE college or with a private provider if their VCE studies link with a training course. The vocational dimension of the VCE can be strengthened both through incorporating vocational skills in student programs and articulating VCE programs with courses in the training system.

2.11 The fact that a significant number of young people currently remain at school in default of finding a job adds to the urgency with which this goal should be pursued. Again the goal of delivering vocational skills through school is not a matter of "vocationalising the VCE". The VCE already has the capacity to provide a vocational orientation, but its effectiveness greatly favours those young people who can put a university degree or TAFE award between the VCE and their future vocation.
2.12 The task now is to ensure that those young people who do not take an immediate post-school education or training program can also translate their VCE into a career, but through a direct and productive transition into work. In part, too, the vocational question is about preparing for post-school training options through a more planned and integrated approach in which the VCE initiates a cycle of training.

Delivering vocational skills - a program approach to the VCE

2.13 Strengthening the vocational dimension of the VCE will also be achieved by utilising the workplace to deliver specific work-related competencies. However the VCE itself will not be strengthened by creating a segregated stream as occurred in the past to accommodate the vocationally-minded student. The community will not satisfy training needs by reverting to models which in fact correspond to antiquated industry structures.

2.14 To ensure that the whole age-group is able to gain vocational outcomes from schooling and that all young people have vocational training options on completion of school, it is essential to take a whole program approach to the VCE in which the full range of learning objectives is represented.

2.15 A whole program approach, such as outlined in the State Board of Education’s Programs for the VCE, means that a broad industry or career focus can be used as the basis for planning VCE choices, and also that all curriculum areas (not simply technology) can be strengthened through the incorporation of work-related competencies and articulation with the training system. Finally a whole program approach ensures balance in learning objectives, so that “vocational” does not replace and exclude “intellectual”, “academic” or “general”. The VCE framework can accommodate a student program approach and one Victorian Curriculum Advisory Board has commenced work to develop it. While the Taskforce acknowledges this work, it believes that this can be taken further.

2.16 Program access within the VCE needs to cover the five main curriculum areas of Arts, Business, Humanities, Sciences, and Technology. However, in strengthening the vocational dimension of the VCE, the development of student programs should employ an industry frame of reference which relates to the delivery of training programs, such as the industry sectors covered by the Industry Training Accreditation Boards based on Victoria’s Industry Training Board structure. At present these include Human Services, Building and Construction, Primary Industry (Agriculture, Horticulture, Forestry and Fishing), General Manufacturing, Business Services, and Engineering Industries. Such an industry frame of reference has been employed in the development of Sweden’s 16 preparatory and vocational “national education programs” and in the Western Australian development of vocational pathways of study for Years 11-12 students in the following areas:

- agriculture/natural resource management
- applied sciences
- art design
- business systems
- health/social and community services
- hospitality/food/tourism
Western Australia plans to fully develop and implement these pathways by 1995$^3$.

2.17 To ensure that long-term growth in retention would be achieved through a variety of challenging and productive programs which extended the skills and horizons of young people (rather than simply keeping them at school) the *Ministerial Review of Post-Compulsory Schooling* (Blackburn Report)$^4$ recommended what can now be seen as a modest participation target based on major improvements in program mix and delivery arrangements.

2.18 Without real choice of programs at the point of delivery, intellectual challenge in each program, and a broad vocational dimension, continual increases in retention would only tend to exacerbate the major weaknesses in the curriculum as identified by the Blackburn committee in 1984-85. More and more young people would be enrolled in programs which were either excessively specialised or poorly organised and lacking in challenge or connection with post-school options. The evidence examined by the Taskforce suggests that prior to the implementation of the new VCE, much of the growth in retention was in fact accommodated in this way.

**Program structure under the former Higher School Certificate**

2.19 During the early 1980s, senior secondary students had very limited access to the benefits of structured programs. Indeed these tended to develop outside of the traditional Higher School Certificate (HSC) curriculum rather than within it. The main examples were the Schools Year 12 and Tertiary Entrance Certificate (STC), Tertiary Orientation Programs (TOP) and the Technical Year 12 Certificate (T12). In addition to STC, other whole programs (or "Approved Study Structures") were accredited as HSC courses, but not widely diffused. Within the HSC the trend was towards an accumulation of subjects, rather than towards the establishment of distinctive, widely-available, and planned combinations of subjects. This is not to suggest that there was no program structure within the HSC, only that it was very limited.

2.20 In the last years of its operation, the HSC had to cope with burgeoning retention rates. In 1990 the old certificate had to provide for as many as 40,000 young people attempting a full Year 12 course (as well as nearly 5,000 adults). A further 5,000 young people were enrolled in TOP, and T12.

2.21 The lack of a defined program structure within the HSC, aggravated by delivery constraints across the state, meant that in 1990, a large number of students was accommodated within loose combinations of subjects which lacked specific articulation with tertiary courses, had limited or no vocational dimension, often included no mathematics of any sort, and rarely included a modern language other than English.

2.22 These weaknesses do not reflect on the educational value of the individual subjects selected by HSC students. Rather the issue is how these were combined, the range and
balance of skills acquired across all subjects, and the effectiveness of the links between the subject combinations and places offered in TAFE colleges and universities.

Lessons from the HSC

2.23 Subject-choice patterns under the former HSC suggest that while growth in retention was rapid, it was poorly accommodated in curriculum terms. Unless close attention is paid to program structure, two of the major weaknesses of the HSC as it had evolved by 1990 will simply be carried over into the new certificate.

2.24 First, the vocational dimension will be equated with studies which have the most overt "vocational" label, and these in turn will be operated as a relegation stream for "non-academic" students. Schools which offer vocational studies will be treated as second class and the past division between high schools and technical schools will be restored, if not in name then in practice.

2.25 Secondly, the great mass of students will be accommodated in a general area of humanities and human development, poorly defined and poorly articulated, a kind of buffer between the most academic subjects and the male-dominated vocational stream.

2.26 Without reform, the pressures and imbalances which are currently being experienced in post-school provision and which flow from the huge growth in students at Year 12 level into largely unstructured programs, will thus continue unabated.

Student programs in the VCE

2.27 Strengthening the vocational dimension of the VCE requires establishing the program structure to support this. Program structure provides the framework for ensuring that all students have access to vocational skills within post-compulsory school, as well as the breadth of education, the intellectual challenge, and the depth of studies which the VCE is intended to deliver.

2.28 Student programs need to incorporate a vocational dimension, while not weakening the VCE requirement for breadth of studies. At present, VCE requirements stipulate that students must select at least four units from maths, science, and technology, and at least four units from all other studies outside this group (as well as four units of English). These rules do not require a student to take mathematics. Nor is the study of society, whether historical or contemporary, a required part of any program. Nor is a language other than English. The Taskforce believes that the vocational dimension of the VCE cannot be strengthened across all student programs without strengthening these requirements. From the perspective of other national systems, it is remarkable that a young person in Victoria can complete a two-year program of post-compulsory schooling without having studied mathematics at this level, a modern language, or a branch of the humanities concerned with the evolution of institutions and ideas. All VCE student programs should seek to achieve a balance including a combination of these disciplines.
2.29 As well as providing cultural understanding in its broader sense, these disciplines are a major source of vocational skills. Consequently the rules of breadth should be refined to place appropriate emphasis on these disciplines in the construction of any student program. Mathematics should be separately identified from the science and technology group, so that its role in a wide variety of intellectual disciplines, including the humanities, can be stressed. Those humanities which are specifically concerned with developing an understanding of economic and social institutions in their historical setting and with the growth of knowledge and ideas, should also be grouped to distinguish them from studies concerned with personal and biological development, including physical education. These distinctions are important for achieving appropriate balance in student programs.

Recommendation 2: That VCAB further develop and promote VCE student programs in a range of Industry areas under the five main curriculum categories of Arts, Business, Humanities, Sciences and Technology, to be fully implemented by 1995, and which provide a student with:

- generic knowledge and skills required for effective entry into a broad range of occupations and industries
- specific knowledge and skills of direct application in the workplace
- a recognised basis for entry to the workforce and further education and training in both universities and the training sector
- flexibility to enable movement between various education and training options and pathways

Exemplary program delivery of the VCE

2.30 The VCE is now in the first full year of its operation. Schools have begun to develop a program approach to delivery in which students choose from a "menu" of integrated programs of study, each of which has a broad industry focus. In consultation with course and career advisers, students are free to design their own individualised programs, provided these meet VCE rules.

2.31 Doveton Secondary College offers ten VCE student programs. These include Biological Sciences; Business and Computers; Electrical/ Electronics; Health, Recreation, Outdoors and Leadership; Hospitality and Catering; Information Technology; Metals Technology; Studio Arts, and Wood Technology. Additional programs are intended to be offered for students beginning their VCE in 1993.

2.32 The Doveton programs lead in each case to a variety of career pathways. For example, Biological Sciences prepare for nursing, medical records administration, paramedical occupations, animal technology, laboratory technology, and information science writing, to name a few. Students are able to plan their VCE by examining the career pathways, the credentials, and the providers connected with particular programs.
2.33 Sandringham Secondary College offers 15 VCE programs to over 700 students at its senior campus. Young people, including returning students, welcome the mature environment. This suits an institution with close links to Monash University and which operates cross-accreditation arrangements with TAFE colleges. The program range is impressive and offers:

- Art and Design
- Graphic Communication
- Drama-Theatre
- Drama-Performing Arts
- Business-Accounting
- General Business-Computing
- Humanities
- Personal Development
- Science (Environmental)
- Science (Physical-Engineering)
- Social Science
- Technology (Electronics-Mechanical)
- Technology (Foods-Catering)
- Technology (Textiles-Fashion-Fabrics)
- Technology (Wood-Metal-Plastics).

2.34 The great majority of the 44 VCE studies are available at Sandringham, with multiple classes in many studies. Many teachers at the senior campus take only senior classes and are VCE specialists, for a 3 year period.

2.35 A program approach to the VCE enables secondary colleges to develop a broad industry focus in their curriculum, without locking students into particular fields or tertiary destinations. For example, Hobsons Bay Secondary College, which has a close association with the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, offers programs in Sports Sciences, Marketing and Retail, Hospitality and Tourism, as well as programs in Technology, Art and Design, Business Studies, Electronics or Mechanics, Humanities, and Applied Science. Flexible timetabling arrangements enable students to meet family or employment commitments while continuing in study.

2.36 At Forest Hill Secondary College, students have the option of planning a personal program around a core of units or alternatively selecting from a set program. The set programs include Food and Hospitality, Technology (Building Construction), Technology (Electrical or Electronic), Technology (Engineering), Early Childhood Development. The 40 VCE studies available at Forest Hill include four modern languages - Chinese, French, German, and Modern Greek.

2.37 The program approach to VCE delivery exemplified by these and other colleges provides the opportunity to extend students in curriculum areas which they might otherwise not have chosen. For example, each program offered by Doveton Secondary College requires a student to do at least two units of mathematics, and makes provision for doing more. Moreover, every program provides students with some specific vocational skills, for example, business management, graphics, food technology, information processing, wood
or metals technology, or articulates with a TAFE award or other training course, for
example, through TAFE-accredited units in Systems and Technology (Electronics), Art and
Technological Design and Development (Foods).

2.38 Box Hill Technical School is another example of a state secondary college which, by
taking a program approach to VCE delivery, has been able to specialise in certain fields,
while still offering breadth of choice. The Art program, for example, combines studies in
Art, Materials and Technology (Art), Studio Arts, and Technological Design and
Development (Photography) over the two years of the VCE, and leads to careers in graphic
art, photography, fine art areas, printing, display, and interior design.

2.39 In the north of Melbourne, Geoghegan College offers programs in the Arts,
Business, Humanities, and Maths and Science. Two modern languages - Italian and
Japanese are available. It is possible for students entering the school from feeder colleges
such as Therry College or Sancta Sophia College to continue to receive on-campus
instruction in one of these languages during their VCE, and thus to strengthen the
vocational dimension of humanities or business studies or other VCE combinations. At
Salesian College in Sunbury, students taking units 3 and 4 level Agriculture are able to
combine this with Studies for the Owner's Certificate for Wool Classing at the College of
Textiles.

2.40 Eltham College offers programs which articulate with TAFE award courses.
Students taking Technology Studies, Human Development, Business Management,
Accounting, and a branch of mathematics gain major credits into Hospitality courses.
Vocational skills are developed through Technology Studies (Food), which strengthens this
area as a pathway either to employment or to TAFE. Tintern Church of England Girls'
Grammar School, which ran a very successful Approved Study Structure course in Small
Business Management from 1985-1991, is now establishing a VCE program approach
linking with TAFE and industry which will provide vocationally-oriented pathways for
students taking Art, Graphic Communication, Information Technology, and business studies
subjects.

Program design in the humanities and social sciences

2.41 Of the five main curriculum areas in the VCE - Arts, Business, Humanities, Sciences,
and Technology - the humanities appear to be least well-served at present by specific,
vocationally-oriented programs. To be competitive in graduate careers markets, for
example, administrative traineeships in social service departments, humanities students
need to broaden their skills base.

2.42 As some traditional areas of larger scale employment have narrowed, above all
teaching, it is essential that a more multi-disciplinary and multi-skills approach be taken
during post-compulsory schooling to open up other avenues of training. History,
geography, politics, economics, and literature can be drawn on in different ways to
construct a variety of humanities and social science programs in which research methods,
report writing, computing and statistical analysis, and graphics as well as the more
traditional skills of textual and logical analysis should be central.

34
2.43 In other national systems, the study of modern languages is viewed in vocational terms. In some systems it is compulsory in all senior secondary streams. One approach to strengthening the vocational dimension of VCE humanities programs would be to incorporate a modern language as a highly recommended option.

2.44 Recommending modern languages from a vocational motive does not imply that the only good reason for learning a language is to get a better job. But unless this dimension enjoys at least as much prominence as more traditional or pragmatic arguments, then young people will often have difficulty in building a modern language into programs which today must have a vocational orientation.

2.45 By focusing more explicitly on the vocational skills which are developed through the humanities, it should also be possible to restore the place of subjects such as history, which are central to understanding our culture and our institutions, but which have experienced a seemingly irreversible slide in student interest. History provides the most generous setting for the acquisition of skills such as statistical reasoning, which are notorious for their dryness and remoteness, thanks to the disciplines in which they are usually taught.

Technology studies

2.46 The vocational dimension of the VCE needs to be strengthened across the curriculum, rather than through emphasis on particular subject areas, such as business studies or technology. The transition from segregated to multilateral provision will be incomplete and ineffective if access to traditional vocational areas is markedly uneven and participation rates are low. The evidence available to the Taskforce indicates that this continues to be the case with technology studies, despite improvements in recent years.

2.47 In 1991 Materials and Technology at units 1 and 2 level (Year 11) attracted 14 per cent of all VCE students, Systems and Technology attracted 6 per cent and Technological Design and Development, 8 per cent. Materials and Technology subsumes a variety of studies formerly offered under different certificates (for example, textiles, wood and metals), so the enrolment rate is high when compared to Systems and Technology and Technological Design and Development.

2.48 Units of technology are often combined with Graphic Communication, so the program base is broader. But combining studies within the area still only occurs amongst the minority of students. Only 27 per cent of students taking Materials and Technology combine this with Graphic Communication, 24 per cent with Technological Design and Development and 31 per cent with Systems and Technology. Although more integrated than the business studies area, technology is much less significant as far as overall enrolments are concerned and has a more limited provider base. Figure 2.1 (p.37) compares the percentages of Year 11 students taking technology and business in their VCE in 1991.

2.49 To judge from patterns apparent under the former HSC, it is likely that enrolment
rates in technology will fall as the first cohort of VCE students enters Year 11. Statistics on units 3 and 4 level studies were not fully analysed at the time of preparing this report. However, if the HSC trend were to continue under the VCE, it would imply that for many young people the study of technology in post-compulsory school really brings to an end the cycle of their general studies in compulsory school, rather than initiating a new and more specialised cycle of training. Such a pattern in which subjects are dropped because they are seen as belonging to a general foundation rather than laying a path into further education, or even because they distract a student from concentrating on high scoring subjects, (technology is rarely a university pre-requisite) is not unique to technology. Modern languages, music and the arts more generally also suffer from this displacement at the beginning of Year 12, (or earlier).

Access to technology studies at point of delivery

2.50 Levels of provision of technology studies tend to reinforce the attitude that like languages, they can be experimented with during the junior secondary years, either for the sake of completeness or to test for student interest, but cannot be taken further without diverting young people from the straight and narrow path to university.

2.51 Figure 2.2 (p.39) describes point of delivery access to a range of VCE studies at units 1 and 2 level according to school size. Within the technology area, Materials and Technology is taught in up to 70 per cent of all schools which enrol more than fifty Year 11 students. But less than 40 per cent of schools with fewer than 50 students at this level offer the study. The other technology studies are taught in 40 to 50 per cent of schools, again other than in small schools, where the rate is about one in five. Most schools have classes in Graphic Communication, but the majority of small schools do not offer this subject (see Figure 2.3, p.41).

2.52 While the difficulties faced by smaller schools in delivering the full range of technology studies are highlighted by this chart, it is also clear that only about half of medium to large schools offer Technological Design and Development and Systems and Technology. Size is not the only issue here. Curriculum policy, system expectations on program mix, trained staff and facilities are also pertinent.

Access to modern languages, the arts, and history

2.53 Languages other than English (LOTE) are taught in less than 40 per cent of schools with fewer than 100 Year 11 students. This figure is conservative, for it includes schools whose students take modern or ancient languages externally, through the Correspondence School or the Victorian School of Modern Languages. Art is taught in 60 to 90 per cent of schools, depending on size, while Studio Arts is offered in about 60 per cent of schools (see Figure 2.3). The remaining arts studies are not widely available.

2.54 In 1991, the study of history in Year 11 was affected by the need to take Australian Studies as one of the common studies at units 1 and 2 level. The availability of history differed greatly according to school size from nearly 80 per cent with 200 Year 11 students
or more to around 15 per cent of small schools. While this situation may alter with the change to the Australian Studies requirement, other factors have contributed to the declining place of history. The Taskforce reiterates its concern that the more traditional humanities be promoted through a program approach which gives them a "vocational floor" (for example, a modern language, statistics) and permits them to compete effectively for student interest.

2.55 Lack of access to the arts and modern languages undoubtedly reflects the difficulties of integrating the former dual sectors of high schools and technical schools. Moreover, this has had to be achieved during a relatively short period of time, characterised by rapidly rising retention in recent years.

2.56 However, these pressures and historical constraints only serve to underline the need for a flexible and broadly based approach to delivery of the VCE. The dual system of academic education and vocational training divided secondary high schools not only from technical schools, but also from TAFE colleges. Seen in this historical context, the creation of a multilateral system must aim to achieve as close a relationship between schools and TAFE as has traditionally existed between secondary schools and universities.
Developing school system capacity to deliver VCE student programs

2.57 Exemplary practice in VCE program design and delivery often comes from schools which have years of experience in meeting the challenge of student diversity at the senior school level. For them, the proximity of school and work has always been close. The curriculum could not be sheltered under university entrance requirements, but required ongoing adjustment to local employment and industry training options. The slow development of such approaches across school systems as a whole indicates the need for a concerted effort from system authorities to promote these approaches.

2.58 The combination of high retention and limits on further growth in university places means that all schools, irrespective of their past history and roles, now have to face the same challenge, though in different ways, depending on local intakes and on training and employment opportunities.

2.59 System initiatives are needed to help schools respond effectively to the new context. Authorities need to work closely with schools to ensure that a range of VCE student programs under each of the five main curriculum areas is accessible at the point of delivery. These programs need to be widely available and recognised. VCE programs are a mechanism for raising intellectual demands on students through the incorporation of curriculum requirements which, at the senior level, are new to many students (for example, through mathematics and modern languages), through the operation of a broad range of assessment practices, and through a more explicit focus on learning outcomes. Thus programs, their specific requirements and their typical outcomes, need to be distinct and publicly understood.

2.60 Parents need to be confident about program access, irrespective of locality. Teachers need to know where the junior secondary curriculum leads, irrespective of the school. Employers need to know where work experience or an accredited work placement fits in a program if they are to invest time and effort in making this provision available. Students and their families need a stable planning framework to support the greater efforts required of them when success at school has become mandatory for the great majority.

2.61 For all these reasons, the development of VCE student programs cannot remain a purely local affair. The VCE is a curriculum framework capable of generating a range of programs, but central education authorities must play a major role in developing and recognising programs and in ensuring that schools are adequately resourced and have appropriate policies for delivering them.

2.62 Current delivery arrangements in many schools are inadequate for a program approach to the VCE in several major areas or streams of the curriculum such as technology, the arts, and modern languages. History and social education are fields where student demand is weak, and is likely to remain so until attractive, vocationally-oriented and challenging programs are designed. Programs in each curriculum area should contain options, for example the choice of a modern language, choice from a range of materials in technology, choice from history studies.
FIGURE 2.2

PROPORTION OF SCHOOLS OFFERING LOTE, PSYCHOLOGY, HISTORY AND TECHNOLOGY, UNITS 1 OR 2, BY SIZE OF YEAR 11 COHORT, 1991

Source: VCAB
2.63 Schools are often too small to provide adequate program access and choice. The former segregated system of high schools and technical schools divided the total amount and the different kinds of resources, both human and material, invested in post-compulsory schooling. The dismantling of this system and reorganisation to improve program access has generally been slow, although in recent years significant achievements have been made in the government school sector.

2.64 Because the restructuring of post-compulsory schooling in Victoria has rested so strongly on locally-achieved agreements, a high proportion of teachers, even in senior campuses, also teach at lower secondary levels. They are also more likely to have academic, rather than industry orientations and expertise, reflecting past professional experience at senior secondary levels. The high degree of curriculum planning which the VCE requires of teachers, and the need to augment their employment-related expertise among teachers point in the same direction. Both suggest the need for a specialised teaching force at the post-compulsory level, and for diverse backgrounds among teachers at this level. Senior colleges employing specialist teachers, whether on a permanent basis or on secondment from other schools or colleges, have additional advantages. They greatly reduce presently demanding moderation requirements; they provide a surer basis for assessing and comparing student learning; and they give a less custodial orientation towards students and a more adult atmosphere as well as wider study choices.

2.65 The District Provision Policy and reorganisation of schools in the government system has significantly increased the potential to broaden the provision of VCE programs. Data on the provision of programs in some of the larger government secondary colleges examined by the Taskforce confirm this. The Taskforce is aware of important developments in the non-government sector also.

2.66 These matters, which were stressed by the Blackburn Report, have been raised again in the Carmichael Report. The Taskforce supports the concept of "public and private senior colleges, separate from the secondary years 7-10, providing mature learning environments" for the delivery of Year 11 and 12 programs in cooperation with TAFE and the first year of degree programs in association with universities as outlined in the Carmichael Report.

2.67 Significant support for the "senior college" arrangements as one of a number of school/TAFE cooperative models was forthcoming during Taskforce consultations.

2.68 In endorsing the "senior college" model, the Taskforce cautions against the establishment of anything that resembles another sector of education and training. Essentially these colleges must grow out of the school system as it looks to the training sector and universities in the post-compulsory years. Senior colleges should seek cooperative arrangements with TAFE colleges, not in an administrative sense, but organised around the delivery of a diverse and comprehensive curriculum.

2.69 Continued reliance on the secondary school system alone, even one organised into senior secondary colleges, is unlikely to be enough in all circumstances. From the perspective of a young person who has completed compulsory school or is returning to school, program access in an appropriate environment is the key issue. The distribution of
FIGURE 2.3

PROPORTION OF SCHOOLS OFFERING ARTS, UNITS 1 OR 2, BY SIZE OF YEAR 11 COHORT, 1991

Students In Year 11

Source: VCAB
resources between local secondary colleges and TAFE colleges - both suppliers of the VCE - is an artefact of the segregated system which was formally abolished in the 1980s.

2.70 While the Taskforce is not advocating a return to the early 1980s when TAFE colleges and many technical schools acting on their behalf delivered separate preparatory programs which competed with the HSC (little support was received for this during consultations), there is a clear rationale for secondary colleges to utilise training sector institutions to deliver the VCE where conditions favour combining resources. Country Victoria and the growth corridors of Melbourne are examples where segregation or duplication of resources between schools and TAFE has as little justification as it does between TAFE colleges and universities.

2.71 The Taskforce was consistently told during consultations that such cooperation was made extremely difficult and at times impossible by the funding disputes that seem to be endemic to most attempts at inter-sectoral cooperation. TAFE colleges, and presumably also private training institutions, seek "fee for service" payments to resource any delivery of VCE programs. Schools point out that they have no funds to meet such costs. The Taskforce is aware that after two years of experimentation at the local level with the Schools-TAFE Integrated Program that resources were redirected towards the establishment of the current statewide articulation arrangements which will apply to all schools. Nevertheless it is concerned that there appears to be no system-wide supported schemes for expanding the capacity of schools and the training sector to improve program access within this new framework. The Taskforce finds it difficult to accept that such problems cannot be overcome. Clearly schools or school systems which seek training sector services for the delivery of VCE programs should pay for them. The Taskforce considers the failure of school and training systems to establish adequate resourcing arrangements in this area in the two years since the implementation of the Providing Pathways policy to be a reflection of the low status given by both systems to strengthening the vocational capacity of the VCE.

2.72 The Taskforce notes that an Evaluation of School Reorganisation has recently been announced by the Minister for School Education and that the purpose of this evaluation is to assess the curriculum benefits gained from school reorganisations which have taken place so far. As a matter of priority, this evaluation should address the issue of the capacity of schools to deliver vocational education and training within VCE programs as part of its considerations.

Recommendation 3: That schools and school systems develop an implementation strategy for the delivery of VCE student programs developed by VCAB. This strategy should:

- extend schools and school system reorganisation to ensure the delivery of a full range of VCE student programs
- explore models for the delivery of the post-compulsory curriculum, especially cooperative arrangements between senior secondary colleges and training sector institutions, including an examination of the "senior college" concept proposed in the Carmichael Report
Recommendation 4: That the Department of School Education and the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training develop a framework, including resourcing and industrial arrangements, to enable schools and school systems to utilise the capacity of TAFE colleges, private training providers and Industry in the delivery of VCE student programs.

Developing a structured mix of work and study in VCE programs

2.73 Developments overseas and in Australia have raised the importance of including structured work experience in post-compulsory schooling. It is unlikely that Australia will be able to achieve the recent Swedish commitment to all post-compulsory school students under which they are required to spend 15 per cent of their time in a workplace. However, the Taskforce considers that with the assistance of industry, major improvements can be made in the linking of studies with work.

2.74 The Finn and Carmichael Reports stress the importance of better integration of study and work. In particular, options for full-time study, incorporating relevant part-time work and part-time work and study, feature strongly as a means of diversifying and expanding the post-compulsory experience. In addition, the Taskforce wishes to see a shift in emphasis from current approaches to work experience which emphasise observation of the work process to structured work experience in cases where employers are keen to pursue such an approach. Critical factors in structured approaches to work experience are their clear curriculum focus (usually involving competency-based learning and assessment) and a recognition framework which ensures links to both school and vocational training sector credentials.

2.75 The Taskforce has been able to consider two current programs involving, in different ways, a structured mix of work and study. These are the New South Wales Training for Retail and Commerce (TRAC) program and the Victorian School Work Pilot programs.

2.76 TRAC involves students spending one day a week in a work placement in the retail and commerce industry over a year. During the placement, students work through a set curriculum, developed by the industry, which comprises the learning of 93 skills relevant to this industry. Training comprises elements of general education and personal development (such as mathematical skills, communication skills and human relations), as well as broad industry knowledge skills (such as industry awareness, safety and industrial relations) and skills that are more job-specific (such as cash and credit card handling, product knowledge, marketing and promotion). The training is provided by industry employees, known as "TRAC assistants", and coordinated by the TRAC Project officer. As well as workplace training, students participate in group projects focused on the needs of the shopping centre where the program operates.

2.77 The TRAC program could not simply be transported unchanged from NSW into the VCE. Adjustments would have to be made in line with the commitment of the program originator, the Dusseldorp Skills Forum, to adapt the program to local needs and conditions. Nevertheless its key ingredients should remain in any Victorian adaptation.
In 1991 the Department of Labour provided funding to the Victorian Ministry of Education and Training to pilot a school work placement program. The program was located under the auspices of the Coordinated Area Programs in the Western, Southern and Ballarat regions. The Victorian pilot project differs from TRAC in a number of respects. It did not have a set curriculum, was not focused on training, and involved a range of industries. The participants were Year 11 students, particularly those at risk of not completing school, who spent one day a week or a block placement in a workplace. Students, employers and teachers negotiated an agreement that allowed students to undertake VCE work requirements relevant to their industry placements. The emphasis in this program was on developing strong links between school and work, emphasising the connections between them and thereby increasing the relevance of school to work and often, the need for further study. The pilot scheme's primary aim was to demonstrate how the VCE could be used flexibly.

Recommendation 5: That VCE student programs, incorporating a structured mix of study and exposure to work, be developed and piloted in metropolitan and rural Victoria in 1993, including programs which:

- offer credit for part-time employment where learning in the workplace relates to work requirements and assessment in the VCE
- focus on workplace-related competencies in both real and simulated settings

In addition to the development of structured work experience within VCE programs and in order to assist young people who wish to combine study with employment, schools and school systems should promote the opportunity for part-time completion of the VCE.

Recommendation 6: That schools and school systems promote and assist the provision of VCE programs for part-time students.

VCE-TAFE credit transfer arrangements

Significant progress has been made in the last two years in building the vocational outcomes of the VCE through credit transfer arrangements with TAFE award courses. In 1991-92 a range of studies within the VCE was accepted for credit in TAFE courses covering five fields - Engineering; Hospitality and Tourism; Electrical/Electronics; Art and Design; and Office and Secretarial. Arrangements are in progress and should be finalised soon in Building and Construction; Automotive; Textile, Clothing and Footwear; and Agriculture and Horticulture.

Credit transfer arrangements reflect a curriculum and recognition framework in which partial overlap between competencies achieved in different sectors is acknowledged and can be exploited in student planning. But there is a big step from central curriculum authorities establishing formal credit transfer arrangements to designing and delivering...
programs in the VCE.

2.82 From the TAFE side also, significant development needs to occur. The current approach to credit transfer is new, and has some unique features which need to be consolidated in practice:

- application of credit is dependent on a student being accepted into the relevant TAFE course
- credit is guaranteed once a student is accepted (one exception to guaranteed credit is in Art)
- the arrangements are statewide
- secondary colleges are encouraged to teach the key outcomes required by TAFE, and TAFE will accept the reporting of secondary colleges

Forty secondary colleges piloted the credit transfer arrangements in 1991. The tasks now are to develop programs which incorporate these arrangements and to promote these programs as widely and as quickly as possible. Many examples of good work notwithstanding, more needs to be done.

2.83 While some schools have taken the initiative and integrated credit transfer arrangements within their formal program profiles, there appears to be limited recognition of the opportunities within the school and training systems as a whole, despite official advice from VCAB and the Office of the State Training Board. More disturbing is the lack of a system-wide expectation that programs based on these arrangements should be offered in all secondary colleges, or at least be available within a district. It has been left largely to individual schools to develop programs which incorporate credit transfer to TAFE and training. This seems an inadequate basis for substantially improving the post-school options open to VCE students.

2.84 The slow progress in developing the credit transfer arrangements at the system level and their translation into recognised programs accessible at the school level only reinforces the concern of the Taskforce about the need for concerted action to ensure adequate program mix in all schools. But it also underlines the need for more broadly-based delivery arrangements.

2.85 Credit transfer arrangements promote the opportunity for a closer relationship between schools and TAFE colleges. The development of a program approach in the VCE should result in a far greater number of Year 11 and 12 students developing an interest in training and employment in the industry sectors covered by credit transfer. These are strategic reforms which need to be developed still further by providing a clear bridge between VCE studies and further vocational training. An implicit bridge already exists with the university sector - students in Year 12 are encouraged to see their future in degree-level studies - and this is further developed by the promotional work carried out by the universities and advice given by the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC).
2.86 Clearly, similar information and promotional activity for the training sector is important and is discussed in Chapter 4. In addition, the Taskforce believes that students commencing Year 12 studies should have the opportunity to signal their intention to pursue further study in the training sector and have a training place guaranteed upon successful completion of the VCE and subject to meeting course entry requirements. Such a system would offer a mechanism for sponsoring a rapid increase in transfer from the VCE to the training sector. This proposal received a sympathetic reception from some TAFE colleges during Taskforce consultations. The system could begin in TAFE, but could be expanded to include interested private training providers.

Recommendation 7: That credit transfer and articulation arrangements being developed by VCAB and the STB be enhanced by:

- the training sector giving a clear indication of the outcomes required for VCE programs to link with training programs
- completing credit transfer arrangements in all industry areas as a priority
- promoting credit transfer arrangements among school/TAFE teachers and administrators as a high priority

Recommendation 8: That students beginning the second year of their VCE be permitted to provisionally enrol in a TAFE course, subject to an appropriate program of preparatory studies, and take up a place on completion of their VCE, subject to achieving a defined standard of performance.

The VCE as a selection mechanism

2.87 The pressure placed on the VCE to act as a selection mechanism to high-status and high-demand courses in university, such as medicine and law, was the subject of much comment during consultations. Attainment of the VCE signifies completion of secondary schooling. It should not principally be a sorting mechanism for university entry, although clearly VCE results are an important consideration in this. The pressure to play this sorting role places a restriction on the VCE curriculum and the choices made by students. It is in the interests of schools, school students, the training sector and ultimately the universities themselves to loosen the direct link between VCE results and selection to high status university courses.

2.88 One option proposed to the Taskforce is for universities to select students into high-status courses after the completion of a first-year program such as general science, social science, economics or humanities, rather than on the basis of school performance. These first-year studies could count towards the completion of the final degree. School performance would still be the basis for entry to university, but to a wider stream of first year programs, not to the narrower high-status courses.

2.89 The Taskforce understands that such a practice is common in the United States and
is being pursued in South Australia, Western Australia and NSW. The Taskforce was unable to investigate this proposal in depth. However, it has strong attractions and should be investigated by the universities, perhaps in cooperation with VCAB.

Recognition of VCE and training programs

2.90 The credit transfer arrangements agreed to so far provide the basis for a more substantial achievement, namely the joint recognition of VCE and vocational certificate programs by both the VCE and training sector accreditation authorities. This has been given a further boost with the recent VCAB recognition of the first set of TAFE programs for credit towards VCE. The Taskforce believes it is essential that the knowledge and skills gained through any course of education and training be recognised. Ultimately the sector of provision does not matter, provided the course is of sufficient quality to enable knowledge and skills to be gained. Joint recognition is an important step in achieving this. In the longer term, this process may lead to a merging of recognition processes for all post-compulsory education and training. However in the short to medium term, joint recognition is the most practical approach.

Recommendation 9: That VCAB and the Vocational Education and Training Board give joint recognition to VCE and vocational certificate training programs, enabling a student successfully completing a VCE program to achieve:

- the VCE and
- a vocational certificate at the appropriate level, or substantial credit towards the achievement of a vocational certificate

and enabling a trainee successfully completing a vocational certificate to achieve:

- a vocational certificate at the appropriate level and
- the VCE or substantial credit, additional to that granted on adult entry, towards the VCE

2.91 This Chapter proposes several major developments within the VCE framework, including:

- strengthening the vocational orientation of the VCE
- developing a system-wide student program approach in the VCE
- broadening the scope of student programs to embrace a wide range of industry and occupational areas
improving delivery of VCE student programs through school re-organisation and integrated delivery through schools, the training sector and industry

introducing a structured mix of study and work in particular industry settings within the VCE

strengthening the relationship between the VCE and the training sector by further developing credit transfer between the VCE and TAFE and improving recognition arrangements

2.92 All of these developments will bring VCE curriculum development, accreditation and delivery into a closer and more explicit link with the post-school labour market and education and training. Given the changes in the relationship between school and work outlined at the beginning of this chapter, this closer link is appropriate. The Taskforce believes it is essential that VCAB, the organisation charged with developing and accrediting the VCE, also reflects this changing and closer relationship between school, work and further education and training. A key to this must be substantial input from the community, industry, education and training areas into which young people move on the completion of their VCE.

2.93 VCAB has established consultative arrangements to assist with the development of the VCE studies. These efforts are appropriate, but now need to be extended if VCE development is to keep up with the new vocational and employment-related demands suggested in this report and supported during Taskforce consultations. The best way to achieve this is to draw community, industry and education and training sector input through its Board and key committees. This is especially the case with the critical quality-control function of accreditation, for it is through accreditation that the community confers recognition that school offerings are of good quality and will achieve the results needed to equip young people for the future. The Taskforce believes that community, industry and education representation on VCAB should be substantial.

Recommendation 10: That VCAB advise the Minister for School Education on ways to strengthen community, Industry and post-secondary education and training sector Input by considering:

- appropriate changes to the structure of the Board and committees, including the option of incorporating significant representation from industry and the community

- ways in which VCE programs address industry recognised competency standards as they are developed from the work of the Mayer committee and the NTB
3. STRENGTHENING SCHOOL INDUSTRY LINKS AND IMPROVING WORK EDUCATION

SCHOOL INDUSTRY LINKS

3.1 The major way in which schools have traditionally linked with industry has been through the provision of work experience and careers information. This suited the needs of both students and employers in past years, given that many students were quite likely to leave school by Year 11 to go to work. The links were dependent on the cooperation of employer and union organisations at a statewide level, and at the local level, a range of businesses taking an active role.

Overseas practice

3.2 In Victoria, school industry links have been generally initiated by the education sector and not by industry as in some other countries. It was estimated that in 1988 in the United States, around 40 per cent of the country's primary and secondary schools were involved in partnerships with industry. In Britain in 1989, approximately 80 agencies were involved in the area of school industry links and virtually every primary or secondary school was involved. Because there were varying ways in which these agencies operated, in 1990 the Foundation for Education Business Partnership was set up to raise and target funds and plan school industry programs. In the United States, industry support for schools has come in response to significant social problems experienced by young people.

Current links in Victoria

3.3 In the 1990s, relationships between industry and schools are changing significantly. Apart from statements issued nationally about the role of education and industry, for example the "Declaration of Goals for Australian Schools" by the National Industry Education Forum (NIEF), there are many examples of tri-partite cooperation where education, employers and unions are working to further school industry links. The School Work Program, set up to pilot arrangements for VCE students to complete part of their studies in the workplace discussed in Chapter 2, was initiated by key groups in industry, primarily BP Australia and Business in the Community. It has developed from the concept of the London Compact, in which BP has taken a lead. Joint efforts have been made to advise industry on curriculum and assessment. The VCE and the Workforce is a recently released employers' guide to the VCE endorsed by the Employers Education Consortium of Victoria. Industry has also engaged in the production of curriculum materials for schools, and activity in this area has expanded in response to the VCE. Teachers have worked with employers to develop resources in such curriculum areas as chemistry, physics, mathematics, health education and information technology as well as in Australian Studies.
3.4 Opportunities for students to learn in the workplace are offered in the VCE. Fifteen of the 44 Study Designs either recommend or require that school industry contact takes place. Examples of good practice in each curriculum area should be published and promoted. Further methods to broaden the design and nature of school industry contact in VCE Studies should be addressed by VCAB during the re-accreditation process. There may be opportunities to expand the number of studies where the workplace is an appropriate setting for learning.

3.5 The encouragement of students to use industry contacts has some implications for workplaces. Many workplaces are not yet adequately prepared to service student demand and it is unrealistic to expect that all employers can offer appropriate experiences. The success of students using the workplace will depend on careful negotiation between schools and employers and the recognition of the mutual benefits which can follow.

3.6 There is a series of special programs and services which assist students or teachers to make industry links. For example, Knowbiz is a joint initiative supported by the Department of School Education and private industry which coordinates visits to industry by students. With 430 businesses involved, Knowbiz ensures effective use of school and industry time. In 1991, over 18,000 students and 1,200 teachers took part in visits to industry. Another program which has operated for several years is Project School Industry. It aims at increasing teachers' knowledge and understanding of changes in the workplace and of industry understanding of schooling. Through schemes such as these, productive links have been made and considerable effort at the local, regional and central level has produced helpful guidelines and materials to support teachers, students and employers in cooperative endeavours.

The role of teachers

3.7 Increasingly it is being recognised that teachers' understanding and involvement in industry is the key to successful education industry links. The Teacher Release to Industry Program (TRIP) was set up in 1991 to provide direct experience in industry for teachers and principals. It is funded for three years from the Victorian Education Foundation (VEF) and host employers. The Program involves teachers enrolling in a Graduate Certificate of Education offered by the teacher education faculty at Deakin University and a 39 week placement in industry. Thirty four teachers were involved in 1991, with 62 participating in 1992, and approximately 90 anticipated in 1992. A range of employers is involved, from large companies such as BHP and ALCOA, to Municipal Councils, to the Association for the Blind. In 1992, 23 per cent of the placements are in training and development, with 5 to 7 per cent in each of information management, promotion and marketing, science, and social welfare.

3.8 The Taskforce found strong support for the Program from industry, which anticipated that TRIP would lead to changed attitudes and approaches to employment within schools, revision of curriculum and materials, and ultimately a better understanding by students of work. One major issue for TRIP is how to expand it to involve more teachers; another is how to give teachers who have completed the Program the opportunities to inform and advise colleagues, parents and students of the knowledge gained from the Program.
3.9 There are few other forms of teacher industry exchange in operation in Victoria. The Business Council of Australia and the Department of School Education sponsor a program for principals to work in industry for six months and in 1992 GMH, BP and Coles Myer are involved. Another program provides for three day interchanges for six principals and six senior staff from key industries. As with the Teacher Release to Industry Program, there needs to be consideration given to the role teachers will play after they have completed the industry exchange program. While the benefits of their experience can be significant at their own schools, it may be possible for them to provide an industry liaison role to other schools. The Taskforce recognises that these schemes provide for a very limited number of teachers. If schools and school systems are to rapidly increase teacher knowledge of industry, a much greater effort must be undertaken.

3.10 The involvement of tertiary institutions with schools and industry, particularly through the Coordinated Area Programs (CAPs), has led to the development of other significant initiatives. The CAPs were initially set up in four tertiary institutions to increase the education base for mathematics, science and technology. They now operate from six locations: Ballarat, Bendigo, Geelong, Footscray, Bundoora and Clayton. They have formed links with industries and schools and their networks have been important in the development of new arrangements. They conduct a range of professional development activities for teachers and involve teachers and students in industry visits, summer schools at the tertiary institution, and computer camps for girls as well as arranging the use of tertiary facilities. They have published case-studies of industry applications of work requirements in the VCE and have promoted the importance of school-university-industry links. The experiences gained from these programs need to be taken into consideration in the development of a statewide strategy.

3.11 Project School Industry has undertaken a number of schemes to broaden teachers' knowledge of the workplace, particularly by encouraging individual schools to link with a local industry. The publication and dissemination of a kit, *Managing Workplace Links*, in 1991, builds on examples of these links and aims to give schools and students advice on making their own connections. Deer Park Secondary College provided the Taskforce with documentation of their close relationships with ICI and Keilor Council in incorporating school industry links into every year of the school's curriculum. This provides a useful model. No doubt similar initiatives have been developed elsewhere and should be published and promoted.

Teacher education

3.12 At the pre-service stage of teacher education, an understanding of industry and experience in the workplace can lead to a greater awareness of the needs of employers and employees and how these can be incorporated into schools' programs. Recognition of this has resulted in the VEF supporting a teacher education course at Deakin University and at Phillip Institute of Technology where industry placements for 3 weeks are part of the undergraduate experience. Other innovative approaches need to be developed to give prospective teachers an awareness of industry as well as recognition of the changes taking place in post-compulsory education and training.
3.13 Consideration must be given in pre-service teacher education courses to the complex range of skills now needed for teaching in the post-compulsory years. As well as specialist knowledge in VCE fields of study, teachers require strategies for developing a vocational orientation in VCE programs in Years 11 and 12. Also they need to understand the skills students should acquire for effective entry into a broad range of occupations and the education and training pathways available. While traditional attributes are still vital, understanding of work and the workplace, where possible through actual experience, is desirable, as is the ability to incorporate mixes of work and study and teach students with a greater diversity of expectations than in the past.

3.14 At the post-graduate level there is some recognition that teachers in school, TAFE and in universities, together with trainers in industry, require some common understanding of the distinctive features of each sector, and of work places. The Master of Education in Education and Training at Victoria University of Technology was designed with this in mind. It offers a three-tier qualification: a graduate certificate, a graduate diploma and a masters degree, allowing work conducted on-the-job to receive some credit in the qualification. Recognition of the in-service programs in which teachers participate for professional purposes as credit in award courses could encourage closer links with industry.

Recommendation 11: That teacher education faculties enable students in their courses to develop a sound understanding of:

- industry, where possible by taking part in industry placements
- education and training pathways for young people
- strategies for increasing the capacity of schools to address workplace perspectives

Recommendation 12: That lecturers in teacher education courses be involved in industry through a range of activities such as long-term industry placements, assisting with the development of curriculum materials with a workplace orientation and on-going contacts with industry.

Recommendation 13: That full-time, limited tenure positions be funded in each Victorian university with a teacher education faculty to promote and coordinate links between the teacher education faculties, education and training providers and industry.

Industry education exchange

3.15 There are several ways in which industry personnel can be directly involved in schools. Many of these are not yet widely in use. Teachers have professional concerns and employers do not see how school involvement can add value to their industries. These concerns may be met by some new approaches such as:
one-day visits to schools by top executives followed by publication of a report on their experiences (for example, the project successfully undertaken by Business in the Community in London inner-city schools)

- "shadowing" of industry personnel by teachers, and vice versa

- mentoring, where industry commits time from employees to assist students in particular schools (20,000 IBM employees in the United States "help out" in schools)

- involvement of retirees of companies in linking schools and industry

Exchange programs on a full-time basis are difficult to support; the development of schemes where employers and employees are released on a part-time basis would ensure continuity in the workplace for employees as well as for schools and teachers. Some of these arrangements are already in train, but now the challenge for schools and school systems is to make use of a broader range of imaginative schemes.

A statewide strategy

3.16 With increased retention, schools must recognise that all students require greater understanding of work and the workplace through curriculum programs. Industry too, realises that it has a key role in being more closely involved with schools. Across Australia, there is a gradual move from links based upon a public relations/corporate citizen approach towards a culture of education - industry collaboration focusing on the development of workplace skills and partnerships with schools.

3.17 A structure to enhance school industry links needs to be established. This could be along the lines of the British Foundation for Education Business Partnership or through some other kind of forum. Currently there is a plethora of advisory committees, steering committees and management committees. Within the Department of School Education alone there exists the School Industry Advisory Committee, the Project School Industry Steering Group and Executive, the School Work Program Steering Committee and Management Committee, the Teacher Release to Industry Program Steering Committee and Management Group to name but some. Examination of these groups suggests that there is little relationship between them. In addition, an audit of the membership of these committees shows a pattern whereby education, employer and union representatives meet regularly, but in separate committees to discuss different initiatives. As the Finn Report recommended:

"Governments should examine arrangements for contact between education and industry with a view to rationalising procedures and lines of communication. The NIEF should provide advice to governments to aid this process of review"^4.

3.18 The move towards closer and more consistent links between schools and industry now requires a strategy that can make the current arrangements, approaches and programs more coherent. In its written response to the Taskforce, the Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry stated the following as components of a framework of
school industry cooperation:

- arrangements to be determined and developed at the local level with a regional/district focus within the statewide framework;

- all curriculum and program initiatives should incorporate strategies on how to develop and implement appropriate school/industry activities;

- clear guidelines should be developed to provide assistance to students, individual teachers and schools with appropriate requirements and the protocol to be used when communicating with business, industry and the community;

- minimum policy parameters consistent with government policy on resourcing issues should be developed within which schools are able to negotiate, at a local level, sponsorship arrangements;

- personnel exchange between schools and industry should be encouraged and promoted.

Added to this is:

- the need to ensure access and equity issues are addressed within the range of programs available

- the need to ensure that school industry link programs are integrated into the mainstream curriculum

The Taskforce believes that unless a statewide strategy is developed and implemented by schools and school systems together with industry, the current ad hoc arrangements and uncoordinated initiatives will continue.

Recommendation 14: That the Department of School Education and the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training, in conjunction with Industry, develop a statewide Education Industry Strategy that incorporates:

- a range of in-service activities to ensure that teachers acquire information about education, training and employment pathways for students and the means to implement these at the school level

- education industry exchange schemes, including the Teacher Release to Industry Program, for all schools

- independent research that documents examples of best practice in school, industry and training sector links and analyses factors that make these successful

- the publication and promotion of initiatives where industry education
cooperation is significant
. mechanisms for both statewide and local consultation and implementation

WORK EDUCATION

Policy directions

3.19 The Finn Committee expressed concern about the adequacy of careers education in Australia and proposed the establishment of a working group of the AEC and Ministers of Vocational Educational Employment and Training (MOVEET) with the NIEF to develop strategies to:

. raise the profile of careers education
. achieve better coordination in the operation of the careers education system; and
. respond positively to the call from business for a simplified and improved mechanism for involvement in careers education

3.20 Within Victorian schools the term "careers education" is avoided as being too narrow and the term "work education" is used instead. However there is a good deal of confusion about the area and its relationship to the curriculum, and a clear direction needs to be established.

3.21 A Ministerial Review of Work Experience in 1988 led to the development of a policy on work education in 1989. The policy states that the three major aims of work education are to develop skills and competencies for working life; to provide knowledge about the world of work; and to adopt a methodology that encourages students to be actively engaged in learning about work. Within the policy, the content of work education is given different emphases at different year levels, with years P-8 providing a broad introduction to the work that people do and Years 9-10 giving a more sophisticated understanding.

3.22 The development of a curriculum that focuses on work education is currently the subject of investigation in a number of national and state forums. The AEC Working Party on Careers Education has recently completed a draft "National Statement of Career Education Outcomes for Australian Schools" with a focus on agreed goals over the years P-12. Work in the National Curriculum on "Studies in Society and the Environment" is just beginning and is expected to include an element focusing on the world of work.

The curriculum approach

3.23 The recent decision to make Australian Studies optional has not only placed added pressure on other elements of the VCE to ensure students' learning focuses on issues of work and the workplace, but also emphasises the need for students in Years 7-10 and
below to learn more about the world of work and the various education and training courses available.

3.24 In Victoria, work education has largely been through work experience at Year 10 and careers education. During consultation, the Taskforce heard many views on work experience, and while some were positive, the majority were not. In the student workshop, it was explained that where real tasks were allocated by employers, or where it was possible to learn what was actually involved in performing the duties of a position, work experience was valuable. However teachers, parent groups and administrators commented on the difficulties of organising work experience for large numbers of students, and the problems employers have in offering it, particularly at Year 10 level. There may be better ways of learning about the workplace in these years; other methods of work exposure should be explored.

3.25 The Taskforce found that there were major gaps in students' and teachers' knowledge of post-school choices in both the training and employment sectors and often prejudices about some industries which ought to be addressed. Where schools have closely linked career information, advice and curriculum and where universities, TAFE colleges and industry are closely involved with local schools in organising awareness programs and sharing information, students are well informed. Material provided to the Taskforce by Kealba Secondary College detailed an excellent approach where careers information and counselling are incorporated with work education in the curriculum throughout the College.

Prep to Year 6

3.26 The primary curriculum in Victoria is not structured to focus on work education. There are however, many aspects of a primary school's curriculum in which children can learn about work. These include studying the roles and responsibilities of family members in the home and in the community, including the work place. The National Policy for the Education of Girls recognised the need for the issue of gender stereotyping, particularly as it relates to work, to be addressed as early as possible in schools. Currently in relation to the National Policy, Victoria in liaison with Western Australia, is conducting a project of national significance to develop curriculum units incorporating women's experience, including in the area of work and careers.

3.27 At present, only a small number of primary schools is offering a structured program to address these issues and the degree to which this is likely to occur is limited unless some concerted effort is made. However some good models are available. The Country Education Project has developed material on careers for primary school children and is publishing a booklet *Careers, Courses, Choices*, a directory about people and their work for use in primary schools. Springvale North Primary School worked with Schutt Aviation to learn about work in the aviation industry and has developed a high quality video, available through Project School Industry.
Years 7-10

3.28 A major aim of work education programs in Years 7-10 is to introduce students to an understanding of the workplace, to broaden their knowledge of the opportunities open to them and to ensure that they choose post-Year 10 courses which keep their options open. Units of work education usually focus on:

- a general introduction to the workforce and how it is structured
- the organisation of the post-school education and training system
- options within the VCE
- the options available to young people after Year 10 in training, education and employment
- the opportunities available for direct entry to the paid work force at the end of Years 10, 11 and 12 with an emphasis on the value of remaining at school
- issues of major concern in the workplace

3.29 Subject associations, often in conjunction with industry, are a significant source of support for teachers in providing approaches to work education. For example, the Science Teachers' Association of Victoria has published material to assist teachers to teach science and technology through work themes and the Victorian Commercial Teachers' Association of Victoria has published units of work, for example on obtaining and retaining jobs. The Careers Education Association of Victoria is also a major source of support for the work of careers teachers, both in their curriculum work and in the areas of course and careers counselling.

3.30 The challenge now is to ensure that the content of Year 7-10 programs is also set within an historical and social context, as Australian Studies was designed to do. Since this will take place at levels below the VCE, the chance to develop a sophisticated study of the area will not be possible to the same degree. The year level most actively involved in the study of work is Year 10 and schools either integrate work education into major subject areas or develop a discrete elective in work education. The concentration of work education in Year 10 and the lack of it in Years 7-9 creates difficulties. By Year 10, although many students have made some decisions about the general direction of their careers, these can be based on misunderstandings of work and the workplace. A planned curriculum in Years 7-10 would give all students a sound basis for understanding trends in employment and training and knowledge of the contemporary work place. Schools should examine the place of work education in Years 7 and 8, but clearly structured and directed activities should be provided in Year 9, with Year 10 taking up issues in a more rigorous manner.
Advising students

3.31 Given the increased retention rates, there has been a significant role change for careers teachers. In the 1970's and early to mid-1980's, the major focus for careers teachers was on the entry of school leavers to the workforce below year 12 and the organisation of work experience, with course advice more of a minor task; now the focus is mainly on course advice and work experience and, to a lesser extent, on advice relating to direct entry to the workforce.

3.32 There is a close connection between the choices students make for courses, particularly at the end of Year 10, and the post-school options they will have available to them. Schools are increasingly adopting a team approach in this complex area where the careers teacher and the year level coordinators work closely to ensure that all students and their parents are aware of the implications of choices. The Job and Course Explorer data base (JAC) is a key tool in assisting in the course and career counselling process as well as being a good resource for all teachers in developing courses on work. Current JAC developments of the National Occupational Descriptions and the Industry Information and Subject Search are making this an even more useful resource which should be available to students in all secondary colleges over time. In addition, Jobs Illustrated (JILL) provides further information through a compact disc system though access is limited at this stage. However there needs to be an evaluation of ways in which JAC can be used most effectively in schools, both for information provision and for curriculum application.

3.33 Given the priority that will be attached to the following areas, drawing these together into a cohesive strategy at the school level will require more sophisticated staffing arrangements. The areas are:

- partnerships between schools and industry
- links with the training sector
- work education in the compulsory years
- career and course counselling and information provision
- forms of work exposure including work experience and structured programs which mix school and work
- training and higher educations selection
- local networks as envisaged in the Carmichael Report

Recommendation 15: That, following the decision that Australian Studies be optional in the VCE:

- a structured study of work be introduced within the curriculum in the compulsory years, with particular attention to Years 9 and 10
teaching and learning about the world of work be integrated into the curriculum in a rigorous manner

trade unions and employers be closely involved in providing advice on work education curriculum

materials providing examples of best practice be published and promoted

professional development programs on work education be conducted to assist teachers
4. GROWTH AND NEW REFORM CHALLENGES FOR THE TRAINING SECTOR

4.1 During the life of the Taskforce, the public recognition of the training sector, especially TAFE, has increased. This has been driven by the record level of demand by Year 12 leavers for places in post-secondary education. For many students, TAFE has been seen as a second choice after university, and for governments as a safety valve for over-crowding in universities. It has become apparent that the training sector must redefine its vocational education and training mission.

4.2 This has culminated in the Prime Minister's offer that the Commonwealth take on the funding responsibility for the TAFE and training sector.

4.3 All the indications are that the training sector now has to face the challenge of rapid growth. The Taskforce strongly endorses the Commonwealth commitment. It is consistent with the findings of the Finn and Carmichael reports and the Report of the Training Costs Review Committee, and offers the chance to redress a period of funding neglect, largely a reflection of the financial weakness of state governments. The Taskforce is pleased that there is a bi-partisan political commitment to growth in the provision of vocational education and training and strong endorsement from unions and employers. This challenge can be compared to that faced by universities in the wake of the Dawkins reforms, and the school sector in coping with unprecedented growth in retention. If the training sector cannot meet the challenge with a high quality product, efficiently delivered to an increasingly diverse group of demanding clients, then it will hold back attempts to transform the skills base of the workforce and the wider community.

4.4 Despite much good work in recent years - the most recent example being the establishment of a seven-day college at Holmesglen - the Taskforce is not convinced that the training system, with TAFE as its leading edge, is fully geared to meet the challenges of growth. Just like much of the Australian industry it serves, the training system has an urgent and substantial adjustment task.

4.5 To achieve necessary reform, the training sector must:

. consolidate and promote a clear understanding of its mission, especially in the light of diverse demands from school leavers and adults seeking further education, training and re-training

. deliver a new, broader and more accessible form of certificate-level training, paying special attention to the delivery of key elements of general education through the delivery of the "key employment related competencies"

. negotiate the training sector relationships with post-compulsory schooling

. develop programs that are attractive, accessible and worthwhile for young school
leavers and adults, both at the certificate level and the advanced vocational level, taking into account a range of future training needs, including retraining

- clarify its expectations of schools and the school systems as to what outcomes from the VCE will meet the entry and credit requirements of the training sector

- expand training provision to adults both in and out of the workforce, in keeping with industry skill requirements, including those demanded by a restructuring Australian economy

- improve the quality of its offerings and encourage diversity by adopting flexible delivery modes, staffing practices, and management styles

- build a strong public and private training sector

- further develop the skills of teachers to deliver the broader training required by its clients

The main role of the training sector

4.6 The need for training providers to operate at the highest levels of quality, diversity, efficiency and flexibility within a more open market raises important management issues for the public sector TAFE system. TAFE colleges must be given the capacity to respond flexibly to demand, be it from local industry, individual students or governments seeking training initiatives for priority industries and the unemployed. Key management functions should reside at the college level, including planning, detailed coordination with schools and universities, commercial training provision to industry, human resource planning and development and staff management. One reform could be a shift to college-based employment of all college staff, including teaching staff. However, equally important in the establishment of TAFE colleges as flexible, responsive institutes is the development of enterprise bargaining in the TAFE system. Victorian Industrial Relations Commission deliberations open the way for this to occur.

Recommendation 16: That the State Training Board advise on ways to increase the flexibility of TAFE colleges, including the development of enterprise bargaining in the TAFE system and college employment of teaching staff.

4.7 The Finn, Carmichael and Deveson reports put forward the main elements of the new mission for the training sector. Four areas are stressed:

- entry-level or vocational certificate-level training

- advanced vocational training programs

- specialised training for industry, to be provided on a commercial basis

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The Taskforce strongly endorses this approach and agrees with the Finn Report that governments and training systems should "identify unequivocally that TAFE's primary role is the provision of high quality education and training relevant to industry needs and standards".

4.8 Furthermore, the Taskforce echoes the view of the Training Costs Review Committee that while the TAFE system is undoubtedly the major player in training, it is competing in a demanding and competitive environment, with community, commercial, industry and universities playing an increasingly important role. There is a recognition of this diversity in Victoria, and a commitment to it in the State Training Board's proposal that by 1993, 25 per cent of the state training system provision will take place through private, commercial and industry providers.

Vocational training credentials and terminology

4.9 A clarification of the terminology used to describe vocational training outcomes is urgently required. The Taskforce employed the term "advanced technical training" in its Discussion Paper, following the Minister's Pathways statement. During the course of Taskforce deliberations, it has become clear that this term is unsuitable as it cannot encompass the high-level vocational training it seeks to describe. Many people found the image of training it conveyed to be too narrow, unlikely to be appealing to young women and too much oriented to the world of manufacturing and production rather than the growing service areas.

4.10 A range of terms has emerged to describe aspects of the training sector. They relate variously to levels of qualification, location in the education and training hierarchy and to probable labour market outcomes. The Commonwealth Government has proposed that TAFE colleges be renamed "Institutes of Vocational Education", with "specialised technical training" centres within them. Some TAFE colleges in NSW are now called Institutes of Technology.

4.11 The Carmichael report found the term "entry-level training" to be confusing and shifted to the term "vocational certificate training". This is in line with proposals being considered by the VEETAC Working Party on Recognition of Training to establish a new, clearer system of credentials for vocational education and training, aligned with the ASF competency levels. The Taskforce finds these proposals useful. They suggest the establishment of four certificate-level credentials corresponding to ASF levels 1 to 4 and a system of two diploma-level qualifications corresponding to ASF levels 5 and 6. The Carmichael report deals with certificate-level training defined in this way. The Taskforce follows the Carmichael report in this approach. Consistent with this, the Taskforce considers the next "tier" of vocational training to refer to ASF levels 5 and 6. Under the VEETAC proposal, this type of training would lead to diplomas at various levels: The term "advanced vocational training" is used in this report to denote this type of training instead of "advanced technical training". 
4.12 Taskforce consultations found a great deal of confusion about the type of qualifications the training sector offers. The plethora of certificates, advanced certificates, associate diplomas and diplomas and their unclear relationship to the emerging ASF competency standards did little to help. The VEETAC proposals would provide a much needed clarification. However they still may not be the best terms for public promotion of training. Neither, as Taskforce consultations showed, may be the terms "technical", "vocalational", "apprentice", "trainee", or even "TAFE". Some more favoured terms appeared to be "college" and "diploma". A name change for the TAFE system should be considered as part of the promotion of training, along with other changes and clarifications such as the replacement of the "apprenticeship" label as proposed by the Carmichael Report.

Reform to vocational certificate level training

4.13 Certificate-level training (previously termed entry-level training) has been the subject of detailed consideration by the Employment and Skills Formation Council, resulting in the Carmichael Report. The main thrust of the reforms is to establish an Australian Vocational Certificate Training System to replace the past mix of certificates, traineeships and apprenticeships with a more coherent framework cemented by the recognition framework of the ASF competency standards.

4.14 The Taskforce recognises that a number of important developments are taking place, driven now by the Carmichael proposals. These include:

- an acceleration of the introduction of competency-based training
- a merging of the range of current certificates and awards into one framework
- an increasing diversity of provision through schools and school systems, workplaces, TAFE, private training providers, and cooperative arrangements between all of these
- an expansion of programs to cover a wider range of industries and occupations
- a greater general education component through the key generic teaching of competencies
- a mix of work and study as an essential basis for completing vocational certificate-level training

4.15 Certificate-level training, especially through apprenticeship, has shown strong resilience over the years. It has provided a desirable vocational training option for some young people (especially young men), and offers an alternative to the final years of school for some. Most apprentices still enter from Year 11, rather than waiting to complete Year 12. Figure 4.1 (p.64) shows recent changes in certificate-level programs, by industry field of study.

4.16 Given these trends and given that reform is likely to make the various forms of certificate-level training more desirable particularly if it is linked to the teaching of "key
competencies”, the following points need to be recognised:

- the strength of certificate-level training in industry and TAFE is not necessarily consistent with a policy of very high or virtually universal retention to Year 12 at school
- the belief that all certificate-level training should or will be accessed post-Year 12 is both unrealistic and inappropriate
- the decision made by some young people to take up certificate-level training options before completing Year 12 should be supported, respected and promoted

4.17 While the Government’s Promoting Pathways policy appears to recognise choice and diversity, its implementation and some other policy statements have not been consistent with this view. The Taskforce believes this lack of clarity needs to be rectified through:

- the clear support for certificate-level training, including its recognition as a high quality choice for some young people before completion of Year 12
- the recognition of certificate-level training for credit towards VCE completion
- the development of strong delivery links between certificate-level training programs in TAFE, industry and school
4.18 The Taskforce does not believe this type of more open approach will lead to a leakage in retention. It will, however, provide a challenge to schools seeking to maintain retention levels. Students will only stay at school if they believe it is worth their while to do so - and so it should be. During a recession, school may seem a better alternative than unemployment. In a healthier economic climate, this may not be the case, unless schools can offer many of the attractions of other forms of education, training and work available. Certificate-level training, with its close links to the workplace, apparent career prospects, wages, and more mature environment, is one of these. This is a powerful argument for enhancing the VCE by offering some of the attractions of certificate-level training, access to certificate programs in TAFE or industry training with advanced standing upon completion of Year 12, and elements of certificate-level training itself. The Carmichael proposals encompass this and the Taskforce proposals for vocational programs in the VCE address this in a practical way.

4.19 With the introduction of the VCE, TAFE moved out of providing Year 11 and 12 level programs. The Providing Pathways policy clarified school and TAFE delivery responsibilities following this. That policy and the Blackburn report before it did not come to terms with apprenticeship, often taken up as an alternative to the final years of school. Many school principals pointed out to the Taskforce that the interest in Years 11 and 12 displayed by some young people would be much reduced if apprenticeships were more readily available.

4.20 Reform to certificate-level training offers the chance to end destructive sectoral competition. As the Taskforce Discussion Paper argued, with the blurring between school-based and training sector based offerings at the certificate-level "the question of the sector in which choice is exercised then becomes less important". Both schools and the training sector will offer certificate-level programs. The key is to ensure dual recognition, through the recognition processes of both sectors. A person could then achieve a vocational certificate and credit towards the VCE, or vice versa. A greater range of well-regarded choices would then be available.

4.21 In time, this approach will lessen the value of school retention as a measure of education and training achievement in itself. More meaningful measures will be those related to participation in post-compulsory programs and attainment of qualifications against recognised standards.

Recommendation 17: That the government endorse the reforms to certificate-level training outlined in the Employment and Skills Formation Council report on a Vocational Certificate Training System.

Recommendation 18: That vocational certificate-level training be promoted to young people and adults as a program of education and training which:

- takes place in schools, TAFE colleges, private training providers, industry and in cooperative arrangements between providers
- enables a person to gain dual recognition as outlined in Recommendation 9
Advanced vocational training

4.22 An important feature of overseas models of education and training examined by the Taskforce is the existence of a high-quality advanced vocational sector in the post-school arena. Exemplary overseas experience places a special emphasis on an advanced vocational training sector (not always called that). Michael Porter's study of competitive advantage in ten nations found that a key characteristic of sound education and training policy is the provision of "respected and high quality forms of higher education besides the university". He makes the point that "a high percentage of students who attend university is not necessarily a sign of the most effective human resource development. A system for vocational technical and specialised industry training is a central priority in any advanced economy."

4.23 We have not succeeded in developing and clearly identifying this sector in Victoria or elsewhere in Australia. This is the second half of the training sector equation, the completion of the work begun by Carmichael. The Taskforce Discussion Paper stressed this as a major area requiring growth and development. Strong and wide support was received for this during consultations.

4.24 The basis of this advanced vocational sector may exist in the training system's Associate Diplomas and Advanced Certificates, but more needs to be done to:

- make it more attractive to Year 12 school leavers
- offer it in a wider range of industries and occupations
- deliver the improved skills required by industry and increase its standing with and recognition by industry

4.25 Recent growth in advanced vocational programs is shown, by main industry field, in Figure 4.2 (p.67). The Taskforce Information Paper showed that these programs are largely taken up by people over 25 years of age, usually from an employment base.

4.26 Despite its growing importance, advanced vocational training is not clearly recognised as a category of education and training in the way that degrees or apprenticeships are. The Taskforce believes that the recognition of this sector of training is an essential task for promoting and increasing the status of vocational education and training. The most significant reform task in the quest to raise the status of the training sector is the development of the advanced technical training sector. If successful, it will be the leading edge, the flagship for the training sector. The Taskforce believes that a developed advanced vocational training sector would contribute to meeting important skills requirements of Australian industry. Analyses of employment growth and change for Victoria and Australia suggest that while employment growth will be moderate in the "middle level" skill category of para-professionals, the jobs created will require more skill. Microeconomic change, technological change and greater exposure to international practice is likely to demand higher levels of quality and the application of skill in a range of areas.
STUDENTS AT TAFE COLLEGES BY FIELD OF STUDY, VICTORIA, 1988 TO 1990

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4.27 Advanced vocational training is likely to offer significant benefits to individuals who undertake it, including good employment prospects, industry recognition of training and links to further education and training. The Taskforce would expect the reformed system of advanced vocational training to attract:

- young people entering from Year 12
- adults seeking re-training and skills upgrading
- people entering from vocational certificate-level programs and from degree programs, seeking to widen their skills

Moves to strengthen the training sector delivery of advanced vocational programs will need to endorse quality improvements, the development of "leading edge" or "flagship" centres within the training sector which specialise in advanced training and the consideration of ways to best promote this training. The Taskforce considers this work to be an important priority.

Recommendation 19: That the State Training Board commission quality reviews in three key areas of advanced vocational training to be completed by mid 1993 and conducted in cooperation with industry.

Recommendation 20: That the State Training Board advise on the development of "key centres" or "Institutes" of advanced vocational training within the training system which would:

- be established in industry areas of strategic significance to the Victorian and Australian economies
- be leading edge vocational training centres for the development of high level technical skills for Industry
- be involved in both the teaching of these high level skills and their practical application through the provision of consultancy services to Industry
- develop a clear relationship with and cooperation with relevant areas of university teaching and research

Recommendation 21: That the State Training Board in consultation with Industry Training Boards, review both the entry requirements for and the certification of advanced vocational training to establish:

- entry to advanced vocational programs to be either post-Year 12 or the vocational certificate-level equivalent
- a system of diplomas
Balance within the training sector

4.28 The Carmichael report and recent Commonwealth proposals on vocational education and training foreshadow significant certificate-level training growth, to be provided in schools, TAFE colleges, private providers and industry. This raises two critical issues of balance within the training sector:

- what should be the balance between programs in the training sector; in particular, what should be the balance between the provision of certificate-level programs and advanced technical programs

- what should be the age balance in the training sector; in particular, can adult participation in training grow at the same time as young people's participation

4.29 The balance between certificate and advanced vocational training has shifted in recent years. Advanced vocational training has been growing at a faster rate. The question arises as to whether this shift will be continued and consolidated or whether there will be a shift back to greater certificate-level training. There is the additional and related question of whether the shift is a response to real industry need or a case of "credential creep". Some evidence points to a greater need for certificate-level training given that:

- The vast majority of today's workers will still be working ten years from now and that they have generally low levels of initial qualification which suggests that a large initial training exercise must be mounted

- the moves to reform certificate-level training, fuelled now by the Carmichael report, which will increase training opportunities at this level in TAFE, schools, industry and private training providers

4.30 Other arguments, while not denying the importance of the certificate level, point to the need for more advanced training given that:

- production and service delivery tasks are becoming more complex, especially with the advent of new technology and changes to work organisation. Most new jobs will demand a higher level of skill

- demand will be for training places at the advanced level, especially from qualified young school leavers, but also from adults seeking new or additional training. Those who have received a good education and training grounding, either in school or through some other form of initial training, tend to be the ones that seek further study. The incentives embodied in award restructuring, workplace change and certificate-level training reform to encourage relatively unqualified workers to seek training will have to be very strong indeed to reverse this trend

4.31 Decisions on the balance of activity within the training sector must take into account:

- quality labour market analysis, including views about the level of skill required in jobs of the future and employment growth
industry's analysis of its skills needs

- student demand for places
- the understanding of training providers of their market

4.32 The pattern of industry and individual demand for courses is a significant issue and one which central planners too often neglect. The Taskforce warns against the view that the balance of provision within the training sector can simply be planned on the basis of even the best labour market analysis and advice from industry. In many cases, industry requirements and individual needs will only make themselves felt when students apply for course admission. The most finely-tuned planning system must have a considerable degree of tolerance to respond to market shifts. Fee-charging practices are important in this regard. While not strictly within its purview, the Taskforce agreed that fees should be structured and charged in consistent ways which allow students and industry to make informed decisions. Recent moves to rationalise fee arrangements in TAFE are appropriate in this regard, although further review will clearly be needed. Equally, clear information about study options and pathways and employment prospects are also important in helping to inform student and industry demand for courses.

Promoting and marketing training

4.33 Promotion of training rests on the quality and relevance of programs and the links these have with school and university offerings. Any interest that an advertising campaign may stimulate will be short-term if students and trainees do not find substance in their learning and better future employment and training options opened.

4.34 Recent studies of young people's attitudes to post-school options for the Finn committee indicate low interest in formal training after Year 12, a generally negative attitude to TAFE, a positive attitude to university, and an unfavourable perception of the jobs and industries traditionally associated with the training sector. While these studies give a measure of the attitude shift required to promote training successfully, they also show young people's keen interest in the vocational outcomes of their education and training.

4.35 Young people are strongly vocational in their concerns. Attitudinal research concluded that "young people clearly see the role of the education system as providing them with skills which will aid their 'employability'. There is little interest in knowledge for knowledge's sake. These young people were interested in school subjects which had direct vocational relevance, provided pre-requisites for post-secondary study and the basis for future "life skills". Similar research conducted in Victoria showed that by and large young people want jobs in areas that are well paid, offer security, and are interesting and healthy. They rate the opportunity for workplace training and associated career advancement highly, but do not often associate this with formal training providers, especially not with TAFE. The desired areas of employment are associated with university study. Seventy percent of the high school students intended to complete Year 12 and to seek entry to university. Only 15 per cent planned to enter TAFE.
4.36 These attitudes are rational from the perspective of individual choice and goals. In general the employment prospects and income rewards of university studies are higher than those for TAFE studies. The status of training as a post-school option cannot be changed in isolation from changes to the way work and skills are managed and rewarded in our community. Workplace change and award restructuring are largely concerned with this. In the final analysis, changes in attitudes towards training will depend upon these larger reforms: these changes can be assisted but not driven by training reform. It is therefore most important that the training sector remains closely associated and responsive to Industry change.

4.37 Five areas of activity are important for the promotion of training. First, the school experiences of students are critical. Vocational programs must be accessible, challenging and interesting, lead to a variety of further education and training options in university, TAFE and the workplace, and be highly valued by the community. Table 4.1 shows data made available to the Taskforce. This indicates that Year 11 and 12 students who take part in TAFE courses while at school are more likely to move into the TAFE sector after completing their schooling than those who have no such exposure. The final years at school lay important ground for future education and training participation. This factor underlines the need for the emphasis and development of vocational programs in the VCE outlined in Chapter 2 of this report.

Table 4.1 Secondary Students in TAFE and School/TAFE Transfer

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Students Enrolled</th>
<th>% of Those Leaving School in the Previous 12 Months Enrolled in TAFE or Equivalent in May 1991</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Students Enrolled in TAFE as a % of Total Year 11 and 12 Enrolments 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSW</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qld.</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.A.</td>
<td>8.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>S.A.</td>
<td>12.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tas.</td>
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<tr>
<td>N.T.</td>
<td>9.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>A.C.T.</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>7.4</td>
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4.38 Secondly, potential training sector clients need access to clear information, advice and counselling on possible education, training and employment options. For students in Years 11 and 12, the basis of this should be found in their school experiences, as noted
above, and in the counselling and careers information made available to them at school. For others, this advice and information must be available through a central agency, through industry bodies or through training providers. It should be about both education and training pathways and future employment prospects.

4.39 Thirdly, Taskforce consultation with young people considering their post-school options and with school and TAFE college administrators pointed to the practical importance of the central enrolment arrangements for university through the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) system and the failure of the training system to provide an equivalent service. The process gives young people early access to information about higher education and enables them to signal their favoured options in a straightforward way. By comparison, the training sector gives little coordinated information, leaves most advice up to individual institutions and has widely varying enrolment arrangements and admission procedures, both in terms of timing and conditions applying to entry. These arrangements are confusing and deter young people from seeking training. They give a strong impression that the training sector is far less organised and less highly valued than the university sector. Urgent change is needed.

4.40 The training sector should introduce an admissions and enrolment arrangement similar to that used for the university sector. It should provide information and a clear, centralised framework for young people about to leave school and for adults seeking entry to training courses. However, the Taskforce recognises the importance of maintaining training flexibility and a regional focus to admissions and enrolments. These strengths should be maintained within a more centralised and coherent framework. The development of an overall framework with a regional dimension may be appropriate. A staged process of implementation could occur, with the clearly post Year 12 advanced vocational courses introduced first into such a system. There should be clear coordination with university admission processes to enable a range of post-secondary choices to be made. Later reforms may explicitly link a training sector framework with the VTAC process.

4.41 Fourthly, government policy should send clear and positive signals that participation in the training sector is an appropriate and highly-regarded choice. While the tone of government announcements has changed in recent months, the former Minister's Pathways statement being one example, it has been disappointing that past key government education and training goals for school retention and transfer to university have encouraged a narrow view of desirable education and training pathways. This imbalance should be redressed in a new statement of government education and training goals and targets.

4.42 Finally, promotional campaigns must be targeted to those who influence young people most when it comes to study and career choices - parents, careers and course advisers, teachers and peers.

4.43 The Taskforce received input from several schools, TAFE colleges, the Vocational Orientation Centre (VOC) and the Jobs and Course Explorer (JAC) unit on these issues. It is clear that with some notable exceptions, schools do not have the capacity to advise students on future training options. This is a result of a range of factors, including lack of information, and the prominence given to the university pathway by teachers, parents and students. TAFE colleges and private training providers do not promote themselves well.
among school students, especially by comparison to the highly professional and organised effort of the universities. Although not the only factor, a lack of resources and planning devoted to this activity at the central and college level would appear to be a major reason. The recent December-March promotional campaign has been a welcome innovation, although it appears that it was not followed up consistently at the college level. However, a clear indication of a growing public interest in TAFE is the number of requests for advice handled by the central VOC careers advisers.

4.44 JAC, a computer-based information service on education and training courses, together with Jobs Illustrated (JILL) provide useful advisory and counselling tools. JAC currently relates courses to possible occupational outcomes. Three areas of development appear to be important for enhancing its use:

- the capacity to relate education and training outcomes and occupations to the competency frameworks being developed through the Mayer committee and the NTB
- the integration of community-based, industry and labour market program training into the network
- the extension of the JAC data base to provide information on the potential outcomes of VCE programs

Recommendation 22: That the State Training Board develop a central application and admissions framework to be established in time for the 1993 intake with the following characteristics:

- a genuine capacity to provide Year 11 and 12 students with information about post-school training options
- a capacity to manage admissions at the regional and local level
- liaison with the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre to ensure that applications for both university and training sector courses can be processed in a similar timeframe
- a clear indication of training sector admissions policy and pre-requisites
- a capacity to process and record provisional enrolments as recommended in 8 above

Recommendation 23: That the Job and Course Explorer (JAC) and Jobs Illustrated (JILL) systems be enhanced to:

- develop a capacity to relate education and training course outcomes and occupational destinations to the emerging “key employment related competency” and Australian Standards Framework competency frameworks
Integrate community, industry and private training programs into its data base

extend coverage to provide information on potential education, training and employment outcomes from VCE programs proposed in Recommendation 2 above
5. RESTRUCTURING INTERRUPTED PATHWAYS

5.1 Developing a learning culture in Australia is important, not only for the Australian economy, but also for the benefit of individual citizens. It is increasingly likely that people who have not completed a full secondary education or gained a vocational qualification will work less than others and when they do work, earn less. Lifelong education, the "education permanente" of the French, will be realised most readily when it builds on high levels of initial education and training.

5.2 For some young people, and for many adults, the foundation for successful continued learning needs strengthening. The Taskforce believes that a range of measures is required both to support young people to finish their schooling successfully, and to encourage adults to re-enter education and training to improve their knowledge and skills.

Who misses out on education and training?

5.3 Around 80 per cent of students in Victoria in 1991 stayed on to Year 12. Of these students, about 80 per cent successfully completed their VCE, leaving 20 per cent with an incomplete credential. Added to these are the 20 per cent who have left school in Year 11 or earlier. In addition, there are the early school leavers of past years, those who are unemployed and require re-training, and those for whom re-entry to education is likely to be the only passport to a productive future.

5.4 It is possible to identify various groups, such as women, people of non-English speaking background, people with disabilities, people of low socio-economic status, rurally isolated people and Koories. The difficulty with this kind of categorisation is that it tends to hide the problems of individuals within groups. This often hinders the development of diverse and realistic pathways which meet individual needs. As well, many are members of several groups, and can also be in sub-groups, for example, clients of Community Services Victoria (CSV) include the homeless, young offenders, those under care and protection orders, and people with intellectual disabilities.

5.5 In any analysis, however, Koories are particularly in need of restructured pathways which will only succeed with attitudinal change and integrated support. For most Victorian Koorie children in 1992, the end of the education pathway will be Year 10. They will then face the experience of their parents, that is, only 20 per cent are likely to find a job.

Supporting school retention

5.6 Programs and approaches to prevent early school leaving (classified now as below Year 12), are based on research and experience. It is known that early school achievement influences the desire to stay on, that parental attitudes are a key factor in school success and that student-teacher relationships are also important. Programs such
as the Students at Risk Program, funded by the State and Commonwealth governments, seek to identify and support young people at risk of dropping out of education. Homeless students wishing to re-enter or continue their schooling\(^1\) and young people in Youth Training Centres have benefited from the Program. However schools' roles in providing access for all students and taking responsibility for success is variable, as seen in widely differing data from different regions and individual schools. Documented examples of best practice are needed to inform the work of schools and the development of action plans.

Recommendation 24: That effective strategies used by schools in the Students At Risk Program form the basis of statewide action plans.

5.7 The importance of early success at school has led to concentration on Prep to Year 3 in the first stages of the implementation of the Koorie Education Policy in Victoria. The Policy is part of the implementation of the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Policy and from 1990, provides the framework for cross-sectoral coordination of Koorie education services\(^3\). As the development of a supportive and culturally relevant learning environment at all levels has been identified as an important factor in achieving increased participation by Koorie students, cross-sectoral teams have been established in 16 significant Koorie population areas. Local Aboriginal Education Consultative Groups participate in the development and operation of programs as equal partners with the education and training systems. However, effective Koorie education policy will only be able to be implemented at the school level if there is a commitment from the State Government to continuity of resources. It is of concern that at this stage, positions for officers implementing the Koorie Education Policy are temporary.

5.8 Other government agencies, particularly CSV, the Office of Employment, and the Office of Youth Affairs (OYA), support programs and strategies for young people to remain in education and training. The involvement of CSV with schools supports their clients' continuing education. Cooperation at the system level has been problematic in the past and joint strategies need to be developed. The translation of these strategies into action at the local level requires sophisticated communication and professional development programs for staff.

Post-compulsory strategies

5.9 Young people using CSV or CSV-funded services are on protective or correctional court orders, are homeless or are identified as "in crisis". They are predominantly aged 15-18 and number around 6,000 in a twelve month period\(^3\). They are a particularly disadvantaged group with very low levels of educational attainment (75 per cent have Year 9 or less, 36 per cent have Year 8 or less), and experience high rates of unemployment (60-70 per cent). Approximately 70 per cent of these young people would not be in education, training or employment. They, and other disadvantaged 15-18 year-olds not participating satisfactorily in education, require targeted education, training and employment strategies. Programs may be in school, TAFE or the workplace, and there are some already that are successful. However there is no guarantee that some young people are
not falling out of the system. Little data exists, there is virtually no monitoring of this group and no single government agency has clear responsibility for them. This compares unfavourably with the approach taken in Sweden, for example, where local school boards, working with municipal authorities, are fully accountable for monitoring and providing appropriate programs for young people up to the age of 18 who are not continuing in education.

5.10 In 1991, pilot projects were conducted to transfer students over the age of 18 with intellectual disabilities from special settings to appropriate TAFE, further education or community programs. The provision of pathways for students with intellectual disabilities could become a reality under this initiative. Careful monitoring and close cooperation between CSV and the education and training systems, together with parental and community support, are needed to open up a range of education and training options previously unavailable to this group. However, this requires the design of appropriate programs, delivered in integrated settings. In many cases individual support will be needed.

Recommendation 25: That a statewide Service Agreement be developed between Community Services Victoria, the Department of School Education and the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training to ensure access to education and training for disadvantaged young people. This Agreement would identify:

- the target group
- Individual support, packages of support and Support Services
- curriculum approaches, programs and access
- accountability mechanisms

5.11 The OYA, particularly through its lead role in addressing youth homelessness, has funded projects to encourage young people who are homeless, or at risk of homelessness, to remain in or return to education. One effective strategy, developed through the Youth Homelessness Taskforce, has engaged Melton VCE students in a Year 11 Australian Studies project to investigate the support available for young people in the area. This has resulted in the publication of a report, Educating Others; Educating Ourselves.

Labour market programs

5.12 The Finn Report commented on the concern among some groups that labour market programs appear to be moving away from their strong bias towards young people and argued that a balance must be struck so that the unemployed of all ages could be provided for. The other major question raised was whether there should be more attention to bringing training courses into the mainstream or whether the flexibility that is needed to
provide for the labour market needs of a diverse range of people is better catered for by local, less rigorous and non-institutional programs. Re-establishing education and training pathways for disadvantaged people requires clear mechanisms for linking programs into those which offer recognised credentials or in giving credit for the learning that has occurred. Programs which cannot demonstrate results for their participants are increasingly unlikely to attract funding or be useful to those who undertake them.

5.13 However, more is often needed to support disadvantaged people than the programs themselves. The integration of support with the program offers the best outcome for many participants. Together with this, the promotion of programs, targeting the client group where required, and co-operation of agencies involved are all vital.

5.14 Through a network of Employment Counsellors across the State, Workstart Victoria provides young people aged 15 to 24 and unemployed for six months or more, individualised assistance to enter employment, education or training. Since its introduction in 1987, this service has assisted approximately 7,800 young people, of whom 75 per cent had completed only Year 10 or lower. The service placed 34 per cent into employment and 15 per cent into education or training including apprenticeships.

5.15 Most employment placements have been into jobs with low skill requirements and few career paths, a category of jobs that is rapidly disappearing. The 15 per cent return-to-study rate is perhaps lower than would have been expected, but reflects the difficulty experienced by Workstart clients in accessing appropriate courses and obtaining the necessary income support.

5.16 Even for young people with higher than Year 10 education, the placement rate into education or training was only about 23 per cent. While the proportion going into jobs was similar to that for early school leavers, anecdotal evidence suggests that these jobs had relatively greater skill requirements and offered better career paths.

5.17 In addition to young people, significant numbers of other groups are seeking to re-enter the education and training system. In certain trades, for example, the attrition rate is almost 20 per cent per year. The incidence of workers changing jobs and people dropping in and out of the labour force is high. Women often leave employment to care for their young children and then re-enter the labour force. Retrenched workers form an increasing part of the labour force. In October 1991, for example, there were 82,000 persons in Victoria who were unemployed as a result of retrenchment. Most people from these groups require appropriate re-entry points into education and/or training.

5.18 While Commonwealth programs such as Skillshare operate in the State, Victoria has labour market programs designed to meet the needs of particular groups. The Ministry of Employment, Post-secondary Education and Training, through Workstart Victoria, provides young people aged 15 to 24 with opportunities for entry-level training, employment and further education. The majority of courses offer a TAFE-accredited Certificate in Occupational Studies and provide entry to work or access to higher level studies.

5.19 Entry by disadvantaged young people into mainstream courses has also been achieved through the Targeted Apprenticeship Access Program and the Employment
Access Program, which were designed on the basis that the successful (re)integration to the labour market for many young people on corrective and protective court orders is through direct placement into employment with training. The Programs were transferred from CSV to the Department of Labour in 1991, within the Workstart Victoria program. In 1992, the program is the responsibility of the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training.

5.20 There is some concern that the range of labour market programs, both state and federal, may not be clearly understood by client groups, particularly when they are provided by different agencies. There needs to be a comprehensive inventory of labour market programs, which details the targeted client group, the entry requirements, the certification awarded and the credit given. The relationship to further training and employment needs to be explained. Comprehensive listing of labour market programs could then be available to all those who work with disadvantaged groups.

Re-entry programs

5.21 In Victoria, over 200,000 adults, around 80 per cent of them women, participate each year in adult, community and further education which constitutes a fourth sector of education. Programs and courses are provided by TAFE colleges, community-based providers such as neighbourhood houses and local learning centres, the Council of Adult Education, and Adult Migrant Education Services. There are six categories of programs: general user-pays such as history, languages, science, politics, personal development and the arts; literacy and basic education; the VCE for adults; English as a second language; vocationally specific programs offered by community-based providers; and general returning-to-study and access programs.

5.22 If stronger links are not made with programs in both higher and vocational education then many users of the sector will be disadvantaged. Therefore in recent years the adult, community and further education sector has actively sought stronger and clearer links with other educational sectors.

5.23 It is now recognised that adults who voluntarily participate in general adult education courses are more likely to proceed to further formal education and training than the rest of the population. While more needs to be understood about these pathways, it is clear that adult, community and further education makes a major contribution to generating a society oriented towards learning. The provision of locally-accessible, community-based opportunities is one key reason. Another factor is that individuals select pathways which are tailored to meet their specific learning needs. Even recreational programs can give the confidence, skills and networks needed to support re-entry to more formal programs.

5.24 Pathways through adult and further education courses are flexible. In 1991 more than 20,000 adults were enrolled in the adult VCE. Many return-to-study courses offered by adult, community and further education have been adapted to fit the VCE framework and are now offered as accredited units of the VCE. Approximately 85 per cent of adult VCE students attend TAFE colleges. Familiarity with the colleges through regular attendance, and the benefits of college facilities, are important aspects of this pathway for
adults. This is particularly of benefit to women, especially mothers, who can make use of creches at the colleges.

5.25 During its twenty year history, adult literacy and basic education provision in Victoria developed in an informal and locally determined way, and assessment was used as a basis for planning lessons and to give the student information about progress. Now employers, unions, the Government and educational institutions require more standardised information about the outcomes of programs, and students need evidence of competency to assist their transition from basic education into a variety of education and employment.

5.26 The process to develop a framework has been underway since 1989 and involves considerable consultation with practitioners and all other interested parties. The adult basic education framework will have clearly identified competencies, commonly recognised and accepted levels for assessment and reporting; a conceptual framework which recognises that adults use basic education competencies in a variety of inter-related contexts; a structure for the continuation of current good practice, flexible curriculum development and the capacity to maximise common curriculum development and accreditation.

5.27 Adult Migrant Education Services in Victoria are Commonwealth-funded and provide English as a second language classes for over 20,000 Victorians each year. Through the program, adults from non-English speaking backgrounds are able to enrol in mainstream education, training and employment. This enables the large number among them who are already highly skilled in professions or trades to gain access to bridging courses as a step towards recognition of their qualifications for employment.

5.28 Recognition of prior informal learning on the part of many post-compulsory educational institutions has created the means whereby mature-age students have commenced further education and training. Given that high retention rates in school are a recent phenomenon, there are many more adults who stand to benefit from an improved system to recognise their existing skills. Improvement to the system will involve identification, standardisation, definition, and documentation of competencies developed in areas of significant course activity.

5.29 People who have re-established their pathways and wish to go on to tertiary study can do so through mature-age entry procedures, although variation in the way in which mature age is defined by institutions means that this pathway is not consistent. Added to this is the restriction on the number of tertiary places available and the transfer rate of school leavers which is seen to limit opportunities for mature age students, many of whom are women.

5.30 In consultation with further education practitioners, the Taskforce found that there was concern that the adult education sector was not widely recognised. Thus, the understanding of adult, community and further education pathways needs to be informed by detailed research. Because the community base of the sector is so significant, there is support for a project of national significance to study the contribution of adult education. This would more clearly identify pathways that adults have taken to re-enter education and training and provide the basis for strategic policy.
Recommendation 26: That the Adult, Community and Further Education Board (ACFEB) in conjunction with the VCAB and the STB undertake work on the further development of accreditation for adult, community and further education programs as an urgent priority

Recommendation 27: That the Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission (VPSEC), in conjunction with the ACFE Board, develop and promote a consistent framework for adult entry provision across all universities

Recommendation 28: That the ACFE Board undertake a nationally significant study of adult, community and further education outcomes and pathways

Community Initiatives

5.31 Non-government agencies and community groups are involved in programs to support re-entry to combinations of employment, education and training. The Salvation Army runs Crossroads which is an integrated accommodation, employment and support program for chronically homeless people up to the age of 30. The Industries Project at Crossroads aims to provide employment and related training, thus offering some income support as well as successful experience. Links are being developed with the state training system so that Crossroads participants can gain the benefits of accredited TAFE programs. Other organisations, such as the Brotherhood of St Laurence also offer programs which can attract TAFE accreditation.

5.32 Community groups wishing to initiate local projects are increasingly seeing the need for links with education and training. Richmond District Rotary Club is involving local small businesses in a scheme to help young unemployed homeless people to re-enter education or training in combination with work experience and support. In South Melbourne, Hobson’s Bay Secondary College is linking TAFE and further education providers to encourage re-entry. A child-care facility is planned for the school, thus offering opportunities for those with young children to return to education. These and other initiatives raise issues about support for re-entry. It is important that cooperative arrangements are developed both at local and central levels to encourage innovative programs. Funding to support projects at the developmental stage should be encouraged from government, community and industry sources.

Recommendation 29: That as part of the Statewide Education Industry Strategy:

- an Industry Education Partnership Program be established to support disadvantaged groups to participate in education and training
- pilot projects which provide re-entry to education, employment and training for particularly disadvantaged groups, be set up under the Industry Education Partnership Program
Information and counselling services

5.33 Career, education and training information, and counselling need to be available to young people outside the school system, unemployed workers, workers planning a career change and those returning to work or study after being out of the workforce. Currently information and counselling provision is uneven across Victoria, and particularly in rural areas. It is also not targeted strategically, so that groups with special needs, generally those who are most disadvantaged, are unlikely to gain appropriate information on the range of education and training options available.

5.34 All people need clear information about their options and the implications of their choices, with locally relevant up-to-date information on training and employment trends and opportunities. Basic vocational information, such as JAC, is available through neighbourhood houses and other community settings, as well as through schools, but the use of this resource depends on knowing where it is available and how to use it.

5.35 The Finn Report notes the importance of Youth Access Centres (YACs) in providing services, including information and counselling to young people, but the location and limited number of YACs may make it impossible for those young people most in need to use the services, even if they are aware of their existence. Adults may find similar difficulties in accessing and using information available from Commonwealth Employment Service offices, where detailed local knowledge is needed to identify appropriate re-entry programs. Often this information is only gained through informal networks.

5.36 Innovative information strategies need to be designed with particular groups in mind. How would homeless young people find out about the schools, TAFE colleges or neighbourhood houses in a locality where they seek supported accommodation? Documentation of best practice should inform the development of a coordinated approach to information strategies linking education and training with the support mechanisms required for successful participation.

Recommendation 30: That the Ministry of Employment, Post-Secondary Education and Training In conjunction with the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training design and promote Innovative Information and counselling strategies to encourage disadvantaged groups to re-enter education and training

Other Issues

5.37 Detailed and up-to-date data and research are needed to indicate the reasons for people leaving education and training. This would show more clearly the pathways that need to be available and the changes required in the system. Forecasts of future scenarios should predict the kinds of programs required to best meet the employment demands of the next decade. Cooperation between the State and the Commonwealth in analysing data would inform the development of policy.

5.38 The issue of income support for those re-entering education and training is another
requiring cooperation between the State and Commonwealth. Despite having been the subject of various reviews, for example the Austudy review, lack of income can provide a major disincentive to re-entry. In particular, youth support needs a consistent approach.

5.39 For accessibility, programs need to be delivered by flexible means. The use of telematics, developed primarily for rural schools, together with other new technologies, should be incorporated widely in programs designed to give access to those in isolated or special settings. The Telematics Network, together with Distance Education providers, needs to identify strategies for flexible learning appropriate for wider use in labour market programs.

5.40 Education and training programs should be able to capitalise on the resources which exist within education sectors or in the community. While there are many examples of schools, TAFE colleges, institutes and community facilities used for the delivery of labour market and related programs, there are also complex and bureaucratic restrictions which impede their use. Co-operative arrangements should be encouraged as part of a statewide framework for the delivery of innovative programs.

5.41 Teachers in all sectors and other professionals who work with disadvantaged people need to come to some common understanding of the importance of factors influencing participation in education and training. Pre-service courses should include curriculum to address this. Cooperative professional development programs across different education and training sectors and with workers in other agencies could raise awareness and promote understanding, as is occurring in the Specialist Child and Family Services Program in relation to students with intellectual disabilities.

Principles for restructuring pathways

5.42 To provide for the needs of all who need restructured pathways there should be:

- a range of programs which can be delivered by flexible means
- multiple entry points to programs
- accreditation, where possible through the education and training system
- credit given for programs with clear articulation to the next stage
- clear, consistent and structured relationships between programs
- access for particular groups, especially those who have special needs
- innovative and comprehensive targeted information strategies
- cooperative development through service providers
- support from business and community groups
6. LINKS BETWEEN UNIVERSITIES AND THE TRAINING SECTOR

The diversity of Victoria's universities

6.1 Universities comprise a heterogeneous grouping within post-secondary education where historical, cultural and geographic factors determine their relationship with other institutions and society more generally. A common assumption that there is a single entity called the university sector is a simplification. There is in fact a diversity of institutions within this grouping. Recognition of the autonomy and individuality of each university is a fundamental prerequisite for the formulation of policies that relate to enrolments, credit transfer, and mix of programs.

6.2 Diversity among Victoria's universities has increased as a result of recent reforms. Following the round of amalgamations which flowed from the Commonwealth Government's introduction post-1988 of the Unified National System of higher education, universities have grown in size, in the diversity of their offerings and in the geographical spread of campuses. A number of new universities has also emerged from the former Advanced Education sector whose relationship to the older universities has yet to evolve.

6.3 In Victoria, while the post-1988 process has seen a spectacular drop in the number of higher education institutions and a consequent development of large multi-campus universities, it has been particularly complex and lengthy given the previous strength of the former Advanced Education sector and the collapse of a number of proposed structural changes. The Taskforce found a legacy of weariness and suspicion among administrators and academics that suggested governments need to treat universities with particular care if further policy reform is to be implemented.

Issues before the Taskforce

6.4 The Taskforce raised two key themes affecting universities directly. First, there was the question of how best to develop articulation and credit transfer arrangements between universities and the training sector. Secondly, the issue of developing an appropriate balance in post-school education and training was raised. Work is being done on both matters. Credit transfer arrangements have been considered by a joint State/Commonwealth Steering Committee which recently reported to State and Commonwealth Ministers responsible for higher education. The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) is examining credit transfer in Business, Computing and Engineering, following earlier work in South Australia. Nationally, the National Board of Employment, Education and Training is considering the balance question in conjunction with the AEC and MOVEET, and in Victoria, both VPSEC and the STB have been looking at the issue.

6.5 This multiplicity of work indicates the concentration of effort on issues associated with training planning and links between post-compulsory education and institutions. It also
underlines the need for coordination of effort across sectors, and between government agencies.

6.6 The consultations drew some important (if not definitive) contributions on the issues of balance between, and balanced development of, the universities and the training sectors. It adduced very little new on the articulation and credit transfer issue but did confirm a level of concern about blanket government policies which fail to recognise differences in missions, levels and standards between and within universities and TAFE Colleges, and industry training.

Credit transfer between universities and the training sector

6.7 When the Taskforce received its terms of reference in October 1991, much was made of articulation between the sectors and more particularly, the pathway for TAFE students to enter university courses with credit. The Taskforce remains convinced of the importance of strengthening such links. It agrees with the thrust of the report of the Commonwealth/State Steering Committee on TAFE/Higher Education Access\(^1\), especially its proposals that universities recognise students from TAFE and other training institutions as a clear entry category when establishing annual activity profiles.

6.8 While the broad approaches proposed by this Steering Committee are very important, the Taskforce emphasises the significance of bilateral agreements between institutions and, indeed, between individual faculties and programs. Joint curriculum design involving university and TAFE teachers is critical to the success of credit transfer arrangements. Recent proposals from the Swinburne higher education and TAFE components reflect this approach. The Taskforce also notes the AVCC Report on the South Australian Credit Transfer project which stresses the importance of involving professional associations in the development of credit transfer arrangements. The Taskforce believes that the universities with significant TAFE components are well placed to lead in the development of linkages between universities and the training sector.

Recommendation 31: That support be given to articulation arrangements and credit transfer to and within universities with a significant TAFE component.

6.9 Nevertheless, while credit transfer and articulation arrangements are important, they should not be seen as a panacea for improving the standard and breadth of post-school education and training. For example, a preoccupation with the expansion of two year courses at TAFE colleges designed solely as a prelude to university-level programs is unlikely to address the future skill needs of the community or help to establish a broad and balanced set of qualifications and skills among young people. The Taskforce believes that such a development would undermine the value of advanced vocational training and endeavours by governments and TAFE colleges to promote TAFE as an alternative provider of post-Year 12 education and training. This concern was also shared by leading university educators during the consultation.
The Issue of balance

6.10 The current debate about balance between the sectors suffers from lack of definition about what is meant by balance. In the context of post-school education and training, this debate is seen in terms of who should go to universities, who should go to TAFE and about what funds should flow to each sector and in what form. It is a debate which has attracted considerable recent interest, particularly in light of the numbers of Year 12 students who have been frustrated in their attempts to obtain either a university or a TAFE place in 1992.

6.11 The issue of balance was discussed in Chapter 2 and VPSEC's recent work on this matter was acknowledged. Such work, if carried out in collaboration with the STB and the ACFE Board, would assist governments and education providers across the post-school education spectrum in making more informed judgements about their own planning.

Diversity across the post-school education and training spectrum

6.12 The Taskforce is persuaded that, despite the clear funding imbalance that has emerged between the TAFE sector and universities (largely a result of the decision to fund university growth through student contributions via the Higher Education Contribution Scheme and the inability of the States to fund growth in training), a debate which revolves around balance between two sectors which have traditionally been seen as distinct is not particularly useful for planning for the future. On this point, many criticised the Taskforce during consultations for taking what was perceived to be a rigid sectoral approach in its Discussion Paper, though some of this criticism appeared to be based on a misunderstanding of the purpose of the three scenarios for growth, discussed in Chapter 1.

6.13 The Taskforce is also persuaded by those who argued that post-secondary education providers were varied in their missions and their strengths. This is true for universities and for training providers. For example, the fact that the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, the Victoria University of Technology and Swinburne Institute of Technology all have substantial TAFE components inevitably affects their program balance, student mix and links with industry and the community. They are distinctive institutions with distinctive missions, standing on both sides of the current university/GGTAFE divide. These institutions are well placed to lead in developing links between advanced vocational and degree-level studies as a result. Within the training sector, the mono-purpose colleges stand in stark contrast to those large multi-campus institutions that have developed close working relationships with universities, such as Holmesglen and Box Hill Colleges of TAFE. There is also a number of excellent cooperative arrangements between post-school providers in Victoria's provincial centres.

6.14 The distinction between some training sector and university offerings has diminished. The growth in associate diplomas in TAFE in recent years has contributed to this, and further blurring is likely with the development of programs designed to attract 'Year 12 graduates, particularly those programs which are more generalist than specifically related to an industry or occupation. It is also often forgotten that the bulk of university programs are clearly vocational. The Taskforce does not necessarily consider this blurring to be a problem, provided that the spectrum of post-school institutions can be geared to deliver the
full range of education and training programs needed in the community and industry. However, the Taskforce cautions against a wholesale move by post-school institutions to the upper end of the qualifications scale. While this might be attractive for some institutions for perceived status reasons, it would neglect critical certificate and advanced vocational training needs and reduce post-school education and training diversity.

The balance of funding and skill needs

6.15 While there may be a range of institutional types across the post-school spectrum and while the offerings of many institutions may cross boundaries, concern about actual funding allocations reflects current sectoral distinctions. Both training sector and university representatives argued during consultations that growth for their institutions should not be compromised by growth for others. The practical reality is that, in the short term at least, finite resources will be allocated separately to the areas of post-secondary education and training. Public sector resource allocation should be directed at achieving the balance of skills and qualifications needed by the community and industry and provided by the range of post-school institutions.

6.16 At the broadest level, the allocation of resources should pay strong regard to Australia's, (and Victoria's), international standing on participation in and attainment of a range of post-secondary education and training qualifications. This is discussed in Chapter 1.

6.17 The relative cost of provision between the universities and the training sector is an important factor which should be taken into account given the inevitable limit to public resources and high levels of demand for post-school places. However, cost should be only one factor taken into account. In the final analysis, cost is likely to vary more between fields and types of study than between types of institution. Many university courses may turn out to have a lower unit cost than some technology-based courses in training institutions.

6.18 Increasingly the issue is more than one of funding allocation to public sector education and training institutions. Balance between sectors must take into account industry's own training contribution (with a number of public and private enterprises developing their own vocational programs, often in cooperation with universities and TAFE colleges) and the commercial training sector. In Europe this "third sector", as it is called, is gaining greater recognition.

6.19 Most importantly, some programs should grow and others should not. Both within and between the universities and the training sector, program development must be driven by demand from individuals and employers and by an assessment of the future needs of the economy and community. Such an assessment must address:

- the skill needs and employment prospects of the general community
- the age balance, especially the need to ensure access to training and university study for adults
. the gender balance, especially in the training sector and in some high-status areas of university study

. the regional balance, especially providing access to a wide variety of training and university study options

. the need to ensure a range of entry modes to post-school education, including school leaver entry, mature age entry, entry through recognition of prior learning, entry to university degree courses from TAFE and the workforce with credit, including recognition of education and training in the private sector

6.20 The Taskforce reaffirms that the critical area for growth is in "middle level" programs, probably of two years in length, which hitherto have been under-developed in Australia. The educational and economic rationale for such programs needs to be considered and this will influence whether they are best placed in universities or TAFE colleges. There appears to be a need for high level technical training; in the Taskforce's terms, advanced vocational training. These programs are probably best conducted in the training sector, with its traditionally strong industry and workforce orientation and emphasis on practical forms of learning. Other more generalist middle-level programs are required, especially for school leavers, as a different form of future access to degree-level studies. Such programs are probably best conducted in universities, especially those with a TAFE component, which would allow students to move easily into university programs in their second year if appropriate. However, in regional areas, TAFE colleges might be best placed to conduct both kinds of programs. This would assist regional access to university study and plug regional and local gaps in provision. For example, Sunraysia College of TAFE provides first year components of some La Trobe University College of Northern Victoria degree courses.

6.21 The convergence of institutional structures, sectoral divisions, and provision of programs is inevitable and should not be feared. Moreover, it probably cannot be resisted even if this were desirable. The task is to manage the change in a way that ensures high quality programs and results regardless of where education and training takes place. The Taskforce believes that making the sorts of decisions required can be assisted by examining other countries' delivery of post-school programs.

Some implications of international practice in post-school education and training

6.22 Europe's and North America's advanced economies have been attempting to balance and mediate the relationship between universities and the training sector and between academic and vocational forms of post-school education. While this has parallels in our current debate, arrangements have varied significantly across countries.

6.23 Many of these countries, proceeding from a base of high levels of secondary school achievement, have developed distinctive post-school provision. In particular, a non-university post-school sector has emerged, in part to expand offerings to the growing number of completing secondary students, but also to offer a more immediately vocational and industry-oriented alternative to traditional university programs.
The fast-developing Asian economies have also been concerned to develop a balance between universities and training to assist economic and social development. Educational policy is increasingly focused not only on qualitative improvement in university education, but also on how to develop a close linkage between labour market demand and supply from post-school institutions. There are some common education and training concerns between these countries and Australia. However, it remains the case that post-school education and training in most developing Asian nations is an option only for a minority of those fortunate enough to have completed school. This is the most important immediate education challenge for much of Asia. Many countries are experiencing rapid improvement in school participation and attainment, but current international practice most immediately helpful to Australia will probably be found in Europe or North America.

An OECD study of post-school education and training, conducted in 1973 and updated in 1991\(^2\), found four approaches to the establishment of what it termed the "non-university sector of higher education":

- The multi-purpose model (for example, North American community colleges) offering vocational courses and the first two years of university four-year undergraduate programs
- The specialised model (for example, mostly found in western Europe) offering specialised, mostly vocational courses in a limited number of areas and leading to below-degree level qualifications
- The binary model (for example, British polytechnics) offering courses and qualifications that were intended to be different from but equal in status to university degrees
- The development of the third sector, as yet ill-defined but consisting mainly of private organisations, both industry and for-profit education institutions, offering highly focused vocational programs. The OECD asserts that while these programs were often established for retraining or further education purposes, they are now beginning to cater for an increasing number of secondary school leavers.

While the non-university sector is an important component of the total post-school scene, in general it has not outstripped universities in growth; that is there has been little change in the overall post-school balance. Distinctions between the universities and the non-university sector have shifted at the same time as greater differentiation between institutions has developed within and across the traditional boundaries.

In assessing these developments within the OECD, the Taskforce noted that:

- Some universities, especially in disciplines associated with workplace and technological change, have developed programs with a more specific vocational orientation along with a greater emphasis on applied research and a close relationship with industry. This has led them into territory previously occupied by the more specialist vocational institutions.
some universities have also taken on a greater sense of regional or community orientation and have strengthened their adult and continuing education provision, increasingly overlapping community college and polytechnic-type institutions

many students in the multi-purpose community college institutions were seeking to use them as a route to two year vocational qualifications in their own right rather than as a route to degree-level study, although the status of such programs from these institutions has remained low with prospective employers

specialised vocational institutions have tended to strengthen their vocational specialisation and have derived significant status as a result

differentiation is strong within both the university and non-university sectors. In some cases there are strong elements of hierarchy in this; for example, some universities concentrate more strongly on research and higher degree student activity, while others concentrate on undergraduate programs or programs training for specific jobs and industries

6.28 The development and rise in status of the non-university sector is characteristic of most OECD countries. Generally this sector has offered two year programs for school leavers and adults with full secondary school qualifications or their equivalent.

6.29 The development of the non-university sector overseas has been directly associated with an increased emphasis on education and training programs being related to the labour market and industry. The issue of status between and within the traditional sectors is ultimately decided by the labour market. Higher status institutions will be those that enable people to obtain high status and/or well-paid jobs. No amount of promotional activity will change that reality.

6.30 It follows that a continuum of university and TAFE institutions will emerge during the 1990s rather than a retention of the old higher education/TAFE divide. In the future, institutions which are currently in the TAFE sector may well look like some of the newer universities, or at least parts of them. As pointed out previously, there are already institutions which straddle the university and TAFE divide; current Commonwealth and State policies may well encourage similar arrangements for other institutions.

6.31 Boundaries between institutions and sectors are likely to change as a result of the offering of two-year programs which deliver both a vocational outcome in themselves and an alternative form of entry to degree studies. In the immediate future, the bulk of the growth in these programs should be in clearly vocational programs funded in TAFE colleges and industry providers. The balance of growth in the longer term will need to take into account the labour market and student demand factors referred to above.

Recommendation 32: That expansion of two-year programs in universities and the training sector be a key priority for post-school planning
Recommendation 33: That the bulk of two-year programs in the advanced vocational training area be provided by TAFE colleges and industry, and the bulk of two-year below-degree generalist programs be provided in universities, particularly those with a TAFE component

An education and training market

6.32 Differentiation between public and private sectors is also likely to occur. This is already on the agenda in the training sector, with the capacity for recognition of training delivered by private providers and industry. Allocation of public sector dollars to efficient high quality private providers is a logical and sensible next step.

6.33 The OECD conclusions to its international analysis are right in stating first that "traditional sector-based planning of [post-school] education is no longer adequate and has to give way to approaches based on programs and courses often cutting across sectors of institutions" and secondly that "market-force principles, increasingly applied by governments themselves in their dealings with publicly-supported institutions, will remain a dominant feature of the supply of post-secondary education in the future".

6.34 There are major challenges for governments in balancing public and private education and training requirements and provision. Regulation to ensure quality and assist equitable access and good results in all areas of post-compulsory education and training is an important and essential role of government. Equally governments should reduce bureaucratic requirements to a minimum and help to increase the flexibility of education and training institutions to enable programs to be delivered for the benefit of individuals and the community. The success of expanded post-school programs will ultimately be determined by their quality and capacity to meet the demands of their market.
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Chapter 6

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ACRONYMS

Each of the following, as it first appears in the text, has been expressed in full and thereafter as an acronym.

ACFEB  Adult, Community and Further Education Board
AEC  Australian Education Council
AMES  Adult Migrant Education Services
ASF  Australian Standards Framework
AVCC  Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee
CAPs  Coordinated Area Programs
CSV  Community Services Victoria
DEET  Department of Employment, Education and Training
HSC  Higher School Certificate
JAC  Job and Course Explorer
LOTE  Languages other than English
MOVEET  Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training
NIEF  National Industry Education Forum
NTB  National Training Board
OECD  Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OYA  Office of Youth Affairs
STB  State Training Board
STC  Schools Year 12 and Tertiary Entrance Certificate
TAFE  Technical and Further Education
TOP  Tertiary Orientation Program
TRAC  Training for Retail and Commerce
TRIP  Teacher Release to Industry Program
VCAB  Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board
VEETAC  Vocational Education and Employment Training Advisory Committee
VCE  Victorian Certificate of Education
VEF  Victorian Education Foundation
VOC  Vocational Orientation Centre
VPSEC  Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission
VTAC  Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre
YACs  Youth Access Centres
CONSULTATION

The Taskforce prepared a Discussion Paper and an accompanying Information Paper to promote debate on the issues raised in its terms of reference. These publications, released in early February, were circulated widely to school systems, the training sector, and education, training and industry interest groups. The Taskforce engaged in consultation through:

- meetings of Taskforce members with interest groups
- forums organised by key education bodies
- receiving short written comments
- a public forum
- a series of four invitational workshops around key themes

Invitational Workshops

School/Training Systems and Industry Links was led by Richard Sweet, Dusseldorp Skills Foundation. It was chaired by Jean Blackburn. Participants were from TAFE Colleges, Industry Training Boards, teacher and trade unions, and government, education and employer agencies and organisations.

Access to Training and Further Education was led by Don Edgar, Director of the Australian Institute of Family Studies. It was chaired by Connie Benn. Participants were from adult, community and further education providers and interest groups.

The Size and Balance of the Post-School Sectors was led by Bill Hall, Director, TAFE National Centre for Research and Development, and Simon Marginson, Senior Research Fellow, University of Melbourne. It was chaired by Jarlath Ronayne. Participants were from TAFE Colleges, Universities, teacher, student and employer organisations and government agencies.

Students Views was led by Margaret Batten and Suzanne Mellor of the Australian Council for Educational Research. It was chaired by Pat Robinson. Participants were VCE students from metropolitan government and non-government schools.

Groups Consulted

The Taskforce consulted with and received written comments from the following agencies and organisations:

Department of School Education - Regions, School Support Centres, Principals, Schools; Catholic Education Office - Principals, Coordinators; Association of Independent Schools of Victoria; State Board of Education; Country Education Project; Koorie Education Unit;
Ministerial Advisory Committee on Women and Girls; Ministerial Teacher Education Reference Group; Coordinated Area Program Forum; Federation of Victorian School Administrators; Federated Teachers Union of Victoria; Staff Association of Catholic Secondary Schools; Victorian Secondary Teachers Association; Victorian Independent Education Staff Association; Incorporated Association of Registered Teachers of Victoria; Joint Council of Subject Associations of Victoria; Combined Councils of Special Settings; Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Board.

Association of Councils of Post Primary Institutions in Victoria; Victorian Federation of State Schools Parents' Clubs; Victorian Council of School Organisations.

Office of the State Training Board; TAFE Colleges; TAFE College Councils Association of Victoria Inc; Victorian Association of Directors of TAFE Colleges; Industry Training Boards; Private Training Providers; Office of Employment - Workstart; Vocational Orientation Centre.

Division of Further Education; Council of Adult Education; Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council Inc; Association of Neighbourhood Houses and Learning Centres; Association of Further Education Centre Committees; Council of Adult Education; Adult Migrant Education Services; Australian Association of Adult and Community Education; Common Interest Group of TAFE Further Education Teachers.

Office of Higher Education; Victorian Post-Secondary Education Commission; Victorian Vice-Chancellors Committee; Universities; Council of Academic Staff Association; Federation of Australian University Staff Associations; National Union of Students.

Business Council of Australia; Electrical Contractors Federation of Victoria; Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Australian Council of Trade Unions; Victorian Trades Hall Council.

Victorian Government Departments and Agencies including: Community Services Victoria; Department of Labour; Department of Premier and Cabinet; Office of Youth Affairs; Department of the Treasury; Department of Manufacturing and Industry Development. Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training; National Board of Employment Education and Training.
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