Welcome to this issue of i.research produced by the Institutional Research Consultancy Unit at RMIT. This month has seen some interesting developments; a State election campaign devoid of any surprises (or major education policy initiatives for that matter), the completion of the consultation phase of the Review of Higher Education, the unearthing of the Senate Inquiry due to the very late response of the Federal government reminding us that there is no funding crisis in higher education (just in case we were starting to have doubts!), legislative reform in a National approach to training, and a positive (yet small) step forwards in Indigenous education.

As well as providing information about a host of issues relevant to post-compulsory education, this issue focuses on a number of topics that are emphasised in recently released OECD reports on education. These include international education, adequate funding levels and participation, equity and access issues, youth strategies and the overlooked sector in Australia – early childhood education for the under threes.

The next issue of i.research will be a special issue comprising suggested summer readings. We will resume with our normal issue in early February 2003. In our commitment to analysing ‘currents’ and sharing them with the RMIT community, the IRCU will continue to issue environmental alerts as topics arise.
- Ensure early development of schools in new areas of population growth.

The Victorian Liberals’ policies includes:

- Provision of 600 additional effective full-time primary school counsellors.
- Increased provision of nursing services to schools.
- Introduce Special Needs Mediators in communities to help parents create Individual Education Plans for students with special needs.
- Increased funding for students with special needs.
- Extra capital works grants for targeted non-government schools.
- Ensure continuing support for non-government schools through State Recurrent Grant.
- Increased support for Information Technology.

Victorian ALP higher education policy states that they will:

- Lobby for increased funding from Commonwealth;
- Extend the standards of accountability and transparency that apply to non-commercial ventures of universities, to commercial operations and practices;
- Conduct an audit of external members of governing bodies of universities, and allow for modest payment of members of such bodies; and
- Ensure that employment arrangements for senior officers of universities are approved by relevant governing body, not delegated to individuals or subcommittees.

Victorian Liberals promise a $31 million package for regional universities, including the provision of 300 scholarships to attract students to regional campuses, and $22 million capital works boost. The Victorian ALP’s election campaign has been silent on education policy related to VET, however this is not surprising after the detailed pre-election policy released by the Minister for Education and Training Lyn Kosky, Knowledge and Skills for the Innovation Economy: A Statement on the future directions for Victorian higher education.

The Liberal Party released The Liberal Plan for Tertiary, Vocational and Lifelong Education. It claims to provide a practical and effective pathway for students in a vocational education training system that provides more flexibility and choice.

The plan proposes the re-establishment of Technology Colleges with emphasis on TAFE accredited Vocational Education and Training (VET) subjects and building close links with local TAFE institutes. In addition they claim to establish specialised Strategic Industry Training Centres (specific industry-oriented research centres in TAFE institutes) for industries that provide employment growth potential - $16 million over four years.

TAFE will be the official training provider for the 2006 Commonwealth Games - a model that was successfully implemented in Sydney during the 2000 Olympic Games.

The Liberal’s policy statements can be accessed at http://www.vic.liberal.org.au/

The ALP’s policy statements can be accessed at http://www.vic.alp.org.au/

First National Report to Parliament on Indigenous Education and Training

This report, released by the Department of Education, Science, and Training, (DEST) is not an evaluation nor a review with recommendations. Rather, it provides a picture of the state of play in Indigenous education and training, and is the first in an annual series of reports.

The report covers the preschool, school and post-compulsory education sectors for 2001. The results highlight a number of achievements in Indigenous education:

- the apparent retention rate to Year 12 of Indigenous students was 35.7% in 2001 compared with 30.9% in 1997;
- around one in four Indigenous people aged 15-64 are undertaking some form of vocational education and training;
- 72.9% of Indigenous university students are enrolled in Bachelor and higher level courses compared with 61.5% in 1997.

The report claims that those providing education are increasing the relevance of education to Indigenous people through the development and adoption of culturally inclusive curricula. There is increasing involvement of Indigenous people in education decision making and the employment of Indigenous people in education institutions.

While there are many Indigenous students who are experiencing success in their education, the report indicates that the situation for many more Indigenous students is one of serious educational disadvantage.

The report can be found at: http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/publications/subject.htm#Indigenous_Education
More Must Be Done to Help Indigenous Students
AVCC Media release, 15 November 2002

The Australian Vice-Chancellors’ Committee (AVCC) have endorsed the DEST report on Indigenous education and training, stating that it highlights some serious gaps in Indigenous education and training. However they call for a review into the adequacy of current income support arrangements for Indigenous students.

AVCC President, Professor Deryck Schreuder, said “These measures must include HECS-free ‘enabling courses’, and the provision of Aboriginal Tutorial Assistance Scheme funding for students enrolled in these courses. The AVCC also support contestable funding to support and reward those universities that enrol students from designated under-represented groups”.

Research: Engine Room of a Nation

The ALP has released a Discussion Paper on Research and Development in October, entitled Research: Engine Room of a Nation. Responding to the ALP’s invitation to assist in its process of policy formation, the AVCC has established a working group headed by John Hay, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Queensland, to consider the paper. It will report to members in February 2003.

Key proposals include:

- A national framework for R & D policy, and a full-time Chief Scientist
- A thematic approach to research priority setting, focusing on issues rather than disciplinary fields
- A review of current mechanisms and performance indicators for research and research training, and possible adaptation of the British Research Assessment exercise in the Australian context
- Consideration of mechanisms for encouraging philanthropic investment in R & D, including a national endowment scheme
- A national approach to intellectual property management
- Developing Humanities and Cultural Research Centres
- Strategies to develop competitive salaries for Australian researchers
- Mechanisms to foster collaboration in R & D between public and private sectors, State and commonwealth Governments, state and community-based research agencies.

The Discussion Paper can be downloaded at: http://www.alp.org.au/media/1002/20002698.html

DEST to review Australia’s innovation landscape

21 November 2002

The Federal Minister for Education, Science and Training, Brendan Nelson, announced a major initiative involving documenting Australia’s science and innovation activities across the public and private sectors. This work follows from the Commonwealth Government’s program outlined in Backing Australia’s Ability.

The objective of the study will be to develop a comprehensive overview of the Australian science, technology and innovation system as a whole. It will cover public and private sector players, roles, linkages, resources and priorities to set future strategic directions.

This exercise will be conducted in cooperation with State and Territory governments, industry and the research community and other interested parties.

Draft terms of reference for the study are currently being refined in consultation with key stakeholders and will be finalised over the next few weeks. A taskforce has been established within DEST to coordinate the work and will report by the end of 2003.

Time runs out for Greenwich

20th November 2002 The Australian

As forecast in last month’s issues of i.research, the bill that will cease the Greenwich University’s operation as an Australian university was passed in Federal Parliament.

Opposition science spokesman Kim Carr said Greenwich, which boasted internet courses in advanced alchemy, new mysticism and intuition, had already been thrown out of the US, New Zealand and Victoria.

The Higher Education Legislation Amendment Bill means Greenwich will have to cease trading until it meets national education protocols.

The Vexing Issue of Standards

AVCC Media release, 19 November 2002

Australia’s Vice-Chancellors say legislation passed in Federal Parliament will ensure the integrity of the university sector. The legislation will bring external territories (such as Norfolk Island, Christmas Island and the Cocos group) under the National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes.
The AVCC have long been concerned that Australian Government’s effectively implement the standards set under the national protocols concerning which institutions can be called universities and which other institutions may offer higher education awards.

The vexing issue of intellectual standards of Australian degrees are of central importance to universities, as foreshadowed in a yet to be released report by Professor Don Anderson for DEST, Changes in Academic Work. Professor Anderson refers to the report in his submission to the Government’s Review of Higher Education. He says that “recent additional evidence has become available confirming that academic standards of staff casualisation, plagiarism and changes in academics’ work environment are at risk”

More than half of Australia's academics believe the academic standard of graduates has declined and almost half say the quality of incoming students has fallen. About 40 per cent agree there has been grade inflation, but only 25 per cent think this is a change for the worse. Most also believe plagiarism has increased. The Department of Education, Science and Training has so far has refused to release the report, but a summary of the findings appears in a submission by Professor Don Anderson to the Government’s higher education review.

See the following link for Professor Anderson’s submission to the Review of Higher Education:


**A Review of Industry Advice on Training**

The Australian, 23 October 2002

The Victorian Minister for Education and Training, Lynne Kosky has recently accepted the Victorian Learning, Employment and Skills Commission's (VLESC) recommendations arising from the review of industry advice on training.

In line with the Ministerial Statement on Knowledge and Skills for the Innovation Economy, the review overwhelmingly supports a bipartite and independent advisory system that effectively contributes to Victoria’s industry led vocational and education training (VET) system and Government's innovation economy objectives.

Accordingly, the Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs) will continue to play a critical role in this advisory system. Through their networking capacity, the Bodies will influence Government skill formation policy development and funding priorities, as well as assist industry to participate in the VET system.

A copy of the report, A Review of Industry Advice on Training is now available on the VLESC website, www.vlesc.vic.gov.au

**National Consistency in Training Legislation**

15th November 2002

State and Territory Training Ministers have agreed to the Commonwealth’s proposal to use model clauses for training legislation to guarantee consistency in training requirements and standards across Australia.

At present employers and employees who move across state borders face difficulties due to differences in compliance rules and red tape. By ensuring consistent legislation is in place across all States/Territories, the model clauses also ensure that employers, apprentices and trainees will get consistently high standards of vocational education and training regardless of where they live in Australia.

In addition to legislative reform, the Ministers have also asked the National Training Quality Council to:

- recommend action to further enhance quality assurance in relation to New Apprenticeships;
- undertake a high level review of Training Packages which have been progressively introduced since the late 1990s to meet the changing skill needs of Australian industries.

**The Power of Joint Research Networks**

20th November 2002 The Australian

THE University of NSW is intending to form a network with intellectual property lawyers, venture-capital providers and entrepreneurs to exploit research, and will invite other universities to join.

This contrasts with the widespread practice of universities or academics setting up commercialisation companies, which some critics see as compromising the primacy of universities’ teaching and research roles.

UNSW revealed that this initiative is a response to the belief that universities are not particularly good environments for the development of new technology, and that it is more efficient to collaborate with commercial sector professionals who have dedicated skills in the commercialisation of new intellectual property.

Some overseas examples of research networks, such as UCSD Connect in San Diego, have been a significant stimulus to new business development. Cambridge University’s alliance with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has ‘speeded up the pace of research’.
The Australian reported that the president of the UK Royal Society, Lord May, called for more attention to the ethical questions and public concerns of research commercialisation, as opposed to technical issues.

National strategy for VET 2004-2010

In a collaborative national effort Ministers responsible for VET have agreed to the development of a national VET strategy for 2004-2010 by November 2003.

The Ministers, meeting as the ANTA Ministerial Council (ANTA MINCO), have supported a consultation program with a wide range of organisations and individuals in a project focussing on the future skill needs of Australia.

Consultations include people in regional communities and industry, a cross-section of learners, State and Territory education and training sectors and government agencies at all levels.

Key elements are:

- a consultation discussion paper, *Shaping our Future*, available mid January 2003;
- a formative evaluation of *A Bridge to the Future*, Australia's current national strategy which runs until the end of 2003;
- community forums in rural, regional and metropolitan centres during February 2003; and
- consultation with groups of learners, training providers and industry, community and government representatives.

A new national strategy for 2004-2010 expected to be considered by Ministers in June 2003. See the timeline for the project, with key milestones and dates.

Visit ANTA’s website for more information:

The i.research newsletter, November 2002 Page 5 of 21

Review of Higher Education Wrap Up

This Review of Higher Education process is now concluded. DEST received 355 responses to *Higher Education at the Crossroads* and a further 373 responses to the Issues Papers.

A submission is expected to be put before Cabinet in early December. While there may be some earlier announcements, the extent of the Government’s response to the Review is unlikely to be clear before the May Federal Budget.

A consensus of opinion is emerging regarding the package likely to be put before Cabinet. It is expected to include some deregulation of student fees – possibly allowing universities to vary the charges to HECS-liable students (within a limited price band); and removing the 25% cap on full fee paying domestic load – and giving all students access to income contingent loans.

Fee deregulation is likely to be accompanied by increased contestability between public and private providers. Hopefully the package will contain proposals for increased public funding. Any such increases are likely to be tied closely to Commonwealth goals (eg education in regional Australia) and/or performance outcomes. Any increases likely to flow to the sector will be realised in the long term, rather than within the Government’s current term.

Fee deregulation will require legislative reform, which means that any package with fee deregulation at its heart will not be implemented until 2004 at the earliest and will be contingent on agreement by the Senate.

Government Response to Universities in Crisis – Report on Higher Education


Each recommendation made by the Main Committee and the Democrats Supplementary Report is addressed in the document. However given the long delay in the Government’s response to the report much of the information and views contained in each item are already known. The establishment of the Government’s own Review of Higher Education and the implementation of *Backing Australia’s Ability* are frequently cited in the report as indicators that recommendations have either already been implemented, or are currently open for consideration within the Review.

Nevertheless, the Government takes the opportunity to restate that there is no funding crisis in higher education. It also restates its opposition to phasing out fee-paying courses for domestic undergraduates and disputes that Australian academics are being lost to overseas markets due to relatively low wage levels.
It further rejects

- The need to centrally determine appropriate fee levels for international students
- The need to lower the HECS threshold and alter current three-tiered HECS charges
- The need to alter Commonwealth and State responsibilities for higher education and transfer statutory power to the Commonwealth.
- Changes to the Science, Engineering and Innovation Council or the Office of the Chief Scientist.
- The need to make substantive changes to the Funding and Management of Research beyond those already implemented through Backing Australia’s Abilities

The report declares a number of recommendations to be of interest, and suggests they are already (or could be) addressed further through the Higher Education Review Process. These include:

- Developing a vision and long term financial and policy strategy for public universities
- Adjusting indexation of operating grants to take into account movements in wage costs
- Auditing requirements between state and federal governments
- Proposals to increase participation of disadvantaged Australians

The original Senate Committee Report *Universities in Crisis – Report on Higher Education* is available at: 

**Senate Inquiry on the Financial Situation of Australian Universities**

On 18 September 2002, the Senate referred an inquiry into the financial state of universities to the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education References Committee. The Committee is to report by the 5th sitting day of February 2003.

The inquiry results from the refusal of the government to produce documents demanded in the Senate relating to the financial state of universities. The Inquiry has not published terms of reference, but will focus on the application of ‘commercial-in-confidence’ restrictions regarding the publication of financial information relating to the higher education sector, as well as the actual state of university finances. It is likely that universities will be asked to provide a number of financial documents to the Senate Committee.

For further information see: *Financing University Education: an Overview*, speech given by Peter Shergold, Secretary, DEST at the Higher Education forum Symposium, Parliament House, Canberra, 3rd October 2002.

**International Numbers Estimated to Grow**

International students contribute over US$11 billion to the US economy and over AUD$4.2 billion Australian economy annually.

International education now represents Australia’s 8th largest export sector. Approximately 200,000 international students study in Australian institutions. A report released by the IDP recently, *Global Student Mobility 2025, Forecasts of the Global Demand for International Higher Education* in association with the Centre for International Economics, predicts that by 2025 this figure will increase to about 500,000 students.

This growth will be part of a global growth in international education in general. According to the forecasts, transnational or offshore (through offshore campuses and distance education) programs will account for 44% of this total demand. Asia will continue to dominate the global demand for Australian higher education. The demand from Asia is set to increase from 83% in 2000 to 92% in 2025. If this demand can be met by Australian education providers international education could be worth more than $10 billion to Australia in 10 years time, and some $38 billion in 20 to 25 years.

While the potential for such growth exists whether or not that potential is realised will depend on a number of factors. We are reminded now more than ever before about the potential for international conflict. In the event of further global conflict and unrest, the capacity for Australia to accommodate international students may be dramatically reduced. At more local levels, the decisions of government in both education and foreign affairs may also impact the potential for future growth, and at the very least may dictate the levels at which growth becomes unsustainable.

In any case the study’s forecasts raise a series of interesting issues. Capitalising on this opportunity for increased export dollars will require a significant shift in government policy. Importantly, government policy will need to recognise the holistic benefits of international education to the future economic, cultural and political development and prosperity within Australia.

The report can be downloaded at: 
GATS and the European Atmosphere

A major determinant of realising the potential in growing demand for international education will be the developments in foreign policy globally. The European University Association (EUA) has pointed to the lack of transparency in the negotiation process for General Agreements on Trade in Services (GATS) and requested that the Secretariat monitor developments in the area. The GATS is a government-to-government agreement. It lays down the framework of international rules within which firms operate around the globe. By giving more freedom to companies to supply their services and by creating greater international competition, the GATS should encourage innovation, price competitiveness and high quality services.

On 1 July 2002, a French press agency informed EUA that the European Commission, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States, has filed requests in the framework of the GATS negotiations, one of which concerns higher education. This request is directed to the United States and asks that the US market be opened to privately funded institutions to match the commitments signed by the EC in 1994 that allow such institutions access to Europe.

It is also worth noting the position of other non-European countries:

- Australia: This proposal views liberalisation of trade in education services primarily as a means of providing individuals in all countries access to a wide range of educational options.

- Japan: This proposal promotes a degree of liberalisation in the education service sector through better market access, further assurance of national treatment and deregulation of related domestic regulations.

- New Zealand: This proposal asks for a clarification of the “Other education” category.

- United States: This proposal focuses on private higher education. It recommends that the classification of education services, used by the WTO, clearly distinguishes two types of services: training and testing services. It identifies a series of obstacles to trade when an institution attempts to get established outside its national borders.

For information about GATS: objectives, coverage and disciplines, scheduling commitments etc. see:


OECD Education at a Glance 2002 Edition

Released October 29:

The focus of this year’s edition of Education at a Glance is on the quality of learning outcomes and the policy levers that shape these outcomes. This includes a comparative picture of student performance in reading, mathematical and scientific literacy.

Highlights

Participation in tertiary education overall in Australia exceeds OECD averages

Australia ranks second (behind the United Kingdom) in the proportion of typical age graduation completions at the tertiary-type A level of education\(^1\). That is 36 per cent of the population at the ‘typical’ age of graduation have completed a tertiary qualification.

The nature of ‘typical’ may be changing in Australia. It is unique in its high levels of participation of older students (enrolment rate for 20 to 29-year-olds still exceeds 25 per cent) and has the highest proportion of part-time students in the OECD, particularly in vocational courses.

Tertiary attainment as a whole in Australia is higher than the OECD average\(^2\) with 19 per cent of all 25-64 year olds having completed a tertiary qualification. However, Australia ranks below the OECD average on retention rates in tertiary education (proportion graduate / commencing students), trailing below countries such as Japan, Ireland, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

In addition Australia trails behind other countries in the OECD in terms of return on investment in educational attainment. These countries include Germany, Hungary, Norway, United Kingdom, United States, Portugal and France.

While total expenditure on tertiary education as a proportion of GDP, at 1.5 per cent, is higher than the OECD average, public expenditure on tertiary education in Australia is 0.8 percent of GDP, lower than the OECD average of 0.9 per cent. This proportion trails behind other OECD countries, including Austria, Canada, Belgium, Unite States, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Ireland, Finland and Denmark.

---

\(^1\) These rates of participation, however, include students studying part time, and it should be noted that Australia has a higher incidence of part-time students than most countries, particularly amongst older persons.

\(^2\) Table A3.1c
It is not surprising then that Australia has seen a clear shift in the relative proportions of public and private investment in tertiary education institutions between 1995 and 1999. The private-sector proportion has increased from 36 to 48 per cent.

A more detailed summary that compares progress with 2001 is available from the Institutional Research Consultancy Unit. Please contact josie.Palermo@rmit.edu.au for further information.


OECD Focuses on Countries’ Early Childhood Education Policies

The report, Education Policy Analysis 2002, is a detailed review of education policy in OECD countries against eight key strategies for improving access to quality early childhood education and care are identified.

Australia in the main compares highly with OECD countries on a number of criteria. In net enrolment rates by single year of age in pre primary and primary education, Australia ranks above the OECD average or children aged 4 and over. However Australia falls well behind countries in pre-primary education to children three and under. Due to this, overall Australia trails behind most OECD countries in this area, with expenditure on pre-primary education being 0.09 per cent of GDP in 1999.

While an emphasis on early childhood education may appear to be in opposition to needs of an ageing population, this result is still a concern. Research points to the value of high quality early childhood education in promoting cognitive social an emotional well being of children, and later, their long term success in school and life. The report emphasises the urgent need for public provision in early childhood education due to the changed nature of labour force participation of women.

Even though Australia achieves literacy results about the OECD average, student socio-economic background characteristics have a more profound effect on literacy results than in other OECD countries. In Australia, (like Ireland, New Zealand and the United Kingdom), there are large numbers of students at the highest level of reading, mathematical and scientific literacy, but over 10 per cent of students perform at or below Level 1.


Realising Australia’s Commitment to Young People

Honouring Our Commitment, from the Dusseldorp Skills Forum, briefly reviews the recent history of commitments by Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments. It outlines the case for taking a decisive step forward by implementing these commitments to young people. The report, Realising Australia’s Commitment to Young People: Scope, Benefits, Cost, Evaluation & Implementation, Applied Economics, is an essential companion to the paper.

The commitment Australian governments have made to young people is to effectively guarantee them access to 12 years of worthwhile learning, experienced through either school, TAFE, ACE (Adult and Community Education), an apprenticeship or other forms of vocational learning (or vocational education and training. VET). They have also agreed that all young people leaving their initial education wanting to participate in the workforce should be able to do so.

The paper reports that in spite of the general agreement about the national policy framework required there has been decidedly patchy performance on the development of action strategies and their implementation:

- the retention levels of young people in schools has plateaued in the 1990s.
- the expansion of VET programs in schools and beyond has not prevented 15 per cent of teenagers being disengaged from full-time education, training or employment.
- only a fraction of students participate in the school based apprenticeship program.
- networks to provide mentoring, personal support and assistance for young people leaving school early are growing but are chronically under-funded and under-staffed.

The paper calls for a better coherence in design and delivery combined with strategic, phased investment. Several strategies are crucial for the learning and work commitment to be effective. They reflect the lessons derived from the comparative work of the OECD, including the experience in countries such as the Netherlands, Ireland and the Scandinavian countries where they have successfully reduced the unemployment rate and improved the work related

3Limited to organised centre based programs designed to foster learning and emotional social development (may not include day care, playgroups and home-based structures).
earnings of early school leavers. (see OECD Education at a Glance in this issue)

According to Applied Economics a realistic assessment is that the number of young people not completing 12 years of learning can be halved over a five-year period. Thus by 2008 an additional 25,000 young people a year who would otherwise be leaving school early will be in education and training and taking up a place in school, TAFE, ACE or an apprenticeship / traineeship.

They purport that increasing demand will itself fund the extra provision required to meet this demand. The Applied Economics report predicts a return of at least $2-$3 for each $1 spent on the effective implementation of the Governments’ own policy commitments to young people. They claim that the investment on increased participation will deliver significant social benefit and increased economic participation and productivity and reduce unemployment and associated government expenditures on income support.

Download all these reports free from the Dusseldorp website: http://www.dsf.org.au/real. The website also includes five fact sheets on key issues including the importance of 12 years of learning and how Australia compares to other countries.

Citizenship and Democracy: Students’ Knowledge and Beliefs

The Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) and the University of Canberra have released a report entitled Citizenship and Democracy: Students’ Knowledge and Beliefs, Australian Fourteen Year Olds and the IEA Civic Education Study. The study found that there is much more Australian students can learn about civic and citizenship education which will assist them in their adult life to participate actively in the nation’s democratic process. The report also found that schools have an important role in ensuring that civic education is a rich and engaging experience for students.

The report found that:

- only half of the Australian students have a grasp of the essential pre-conditions for a properly working democracy.
- Australian students do not have a strong grasp of the impact of economic issues in the functioning of a democratic system, i.e., the role of trade unions in a modern economy, the key characteristics of a market economy.
- Television news is the preferred source of information for 80% of Australian students.
- Australian student scores revealed a low level of support for civic engagement, compared to their international peers.
- Australian students regard knowing the country’s history and following political issues in the press as relatively unimportant.
- 80 per cent of Australian students believe in the importance of participating in "activities to benefit people in the community".
- The overwhelming majority of Australian students do not intend to participate in conventional political activities other than voting.
- 89 per cent of Australian students agree that immigrants should have the right to equal educational opportunity and 77 per cent agree that immigrants should have the right to maintain their customs.
- Four in five Australian students are “very sure” they do not want to live anywhere else. The Australian flag is “not important” to a quarter of them.
- The majority of Australian students trusted the police, the courts, and local government. The least trust was afforded to political parties.
- 90 per cent of Australian students agreed “women should get equal pay” and “should have the same rights as men in every way”. This was among the strongest support of all countries.
- 55 per cent of Australian students said they learnt in school about the “importance of voting in national elections”.

The Youth Engagement Initiative (United States)

Responding to similar concerns about civic engagement and its role in building good societies, the Pew Charitable Trusts (US) have begun a six-year effort to increase the civic engagement of Americans between the ages of 15 and 22. The strategy is designed to reach young people directly and connect them to specific opportunities to act while simultaneously motivating and improving the ability of the “civic engagement community” (political parties, non-profit organisations, the media, high schools, colleges and universities) to engage young people in civic life. The Trusts’ goal is to engage ten per cent of this generation in at least one civic act (registering to vote, voting, participating in a deliberative forum or debate, joining a civic organization or program, and/or contacting a policymaker). The assumption is that participating, even in small ways, early in life will increase the likelihood that they will continue to do so as they grow older.
In the Trusts’ view “civic engagement” can include a wide variety of acts, from donating blood to running for public office. The Trusts’ investments are intended to increase young Americans’ participation in activities that focus more explicitly on government and policy. Central to these are democratic deliberation (structured debates, forums and discussions about public policy), electoral participation (largely through voting), and collective public problem solving (largely through active membership in organizations and programs that address policy issues). The Trusts’ believe that today’s youth are much less likely than older Americans or past generations of younger Americans to participate in electoral politics or the policy process.

The Trusts’ assumptions are underlined by Young people’s current disengagement results from a sense of powerlessness and irrelevance rather than apathy or disinterest.

Overcoming this sense of powerlessness and irrelevance requires efforts to increase their motivation, opportunity and ability to participate, both as individuals and as a generation.

Increasing young people’s motivation, opportunity and ability to participate requires both connecting their participation to public issues that matter to them and encouraging key civic actors and institutions to see young adults as valuable resources.

The most direct pathway to future participation is providing young people with meaningful opportunities to participate today.

For further information see the Pew Charitable Trust’s website:
http://www.pewtrusts.com

OECD Policy Brief: Improving Policy Coherence and Integration for Sustainable Development

The report highlights that governments must ensure that their policies are consistent with the sustainable development goal and not undermined by other policies.

It provides a checklist for policy-makers on improving policy coherence and integration for the pursuit of the goal of sustainable development. The checklist builds on the experience of OECD countries and their concerns that achieving the sustainable development goal requires specific attention to governance practices.

It draws attention to the main obstacles to be overcome at the domestic level in order to address the institutional challenges raised by the pursuit of sustainable development. These institutional challenges involve not only government but all stakeholders, including the business community, civil society organisations and other citizens’ associations.

The main criteria for improving policy coherence and integration for sustainable development include:

- A common understanding of sustainable development;
- Clear commitment and leadership;
- Specific institutional mechanisms to steer integration;
- Effective stakeholder involvement;
- Efficient knowledge management.

The brief can be downloaded at:

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Round up of current events and developments in relevant to information technology and education

Universities Online – A Survey of Online education and services in Australia

DEST Occasional Papers Series March 2002

This report is based on a survey of online programs, courses and services at 40 Australian Universities in 2001.

The key finding were:

Online Programs

- There were 207 fully online programs at 23 universities, of which 65 (including 2 from RMIT) were delivered only by on-line mode.
- Most online programs, 90%, were at the postgraduate level, and tended to be specialist programs.
- Management and Commerce 26%, Education 17% and Health 15% dominated the provision of online programs.
- Duplication of programs was limited to graduate diplomas in e-commerce or e-business (5 universities) and graduate certificates in online learning or flexible learning (4 universities).

Online Courses
Internet usage in courses ranged from 99 or 100 percent (7 universities) to a low of 9 percent at one university.

Web supplementation of course delivery was the dominant form of course delivery at 46%, (RMIT 83%) whereas fully online courses comprised 1.4 % (RMIT 1%) of all course delivery.

Nationally Management and Commerce, Education, Information Technology and Health have the highest percentages of fully online courses.

Information and Technology courses make the highest use of the web where 40% (RMIT 7%) of IT courses are fully online or web dependant. Areas where RMIT has a higher percentage of fully online or web dependant courses are Natural and Physical Sciences 35%, Architecture and Building 28%, Health 27%, Management and Commerce 21% and Society and Culture 17%.

Online services

Most universities provide an intranet for students with 70% providing access from off campus.

Almost all universities (92.5%) provide handbooks and/or calendars online.

University library catalogue access is high at 95%, online journals are accessible via the Internet at 90% and 82.5% of universities allow online reservation of books.

The most frequently used courseware management systems are WebCT (29 universities), in-house systems (20 universities) and Blackboard (17 universities) and RMIT uses all three of these.

The use of online registration and enrolment is not widespread, 27.5% offer these services to new students and 40% to existing students.

Only 30% of universities offer online payment of fees to all students.

Learning support online is available at 57% of universities and 45% provide online training in information, communication and technology.

Unことで, universities with small proportions of web delivery tend to make these courses web dependant but universities with large proportions of web delivery allow a mixed mode of study. RMIT’s current business approach is to use mixed mode delivery with pure on line delivery focused in narrow areas of postgraduate study.

At semester one 2001, there were just under fifty thousand enrolments in the distributed learning system (DLS). There were 8,613 students using the DLS representing 17% of total RMIT enrolments at that time. There was a significant difference between sectors, with higher education students more likely to use the DLS than VET students.

RMIT is continuing to develop new postgraduate programs for online delivery in the areas of health and business. Compared to national data, RMIT is currently strong in its fully online or web dependant courses for Natural and Physical Sciences at 35%, Architecture and Building 28%, Health 27%, Management and Commerce 21% and Society and Culture 17%.

The full report can be obtained at:

Plagiarism and the Internet

Up to 14 per cent of Australian university students may be pirating material off the Internet for their essays, according to a study commissioned by six Australian universities. The material is plagiarised from hundreds of Internet sites, including five well-known cheat sites, the report says. Plagiarism from other students’ electronic papers also was detected.

In the Australian study, Turnitin.com detected that 166 of the essays, or 8.62 percent of the total, had more than a quarter of their material plagiarised from electronic sources. Fourteen percent of the essays had 5 percent or more of the material plagiarized.

The six institutions involved in the study were Deakin, La Trobe, Monash, RMIT, and Victoria Universities, and the University of Ballarat. About 150,000 students are enrolled in the universities.


The Internet and the University: Forum 2001

This site provides access to papers presented and discussed at the Forum on the Internet and the University, held during the Forum’s 2001 Aspen Symposium. The Internet Forum explores how new learning media and technologies can improve the quality and condition of higher learning. Scholars include John Seely Brown, Clayton Christensen, Woodie Flowers, J.C. Herz, Diana Laurillard, Michael Macedonia and Mitchel Resnick. The Internet and the University: Forum 2001 is a joint publication of the Forum for the Future of Higher Education and EDUCAUSE.

http://www.educause.edu/forum/ffpiu01w.asp
Quality Auditing of Online Learning

October 24, 2002

The Flexible Learning Initiative has released the latest draft of guidelines for auditing online learning, including a checklist for performing evaluations of online learning resources. For each standard, commentary is provided along with a list of indicators of compliance. The document is available in HTML and PDF (links are to the right side of the page, under 'Project Updates'). Other material available on the site includes reports from previous auditors, project background and history, and reports from project administrators.

More information about the Australian Flexible Learning Framework can be found at:
http://flexiblelearning.net.au/qualityaudit/

Interactive e-Learning Initiative

Education News 18 November 2002

The Minister for Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, Senator Richard Alston, has announced the finalisation of the Commonwealth's $8 million agreement with Optus Networks to deliver learning services to small rural towns and isolated homesteads in the Clarence, Murray-Darling and Dubbo regions of New South Wales (NSW) and across the Northern Territory (NT).

The Interactive eLearning Initiative claims to improve the delivery of education services for School-of-the-Air, remote primary and TAFE Outreach students, and provide new learning opportunities for adults living in remote communities seeking access to further education.

http://www.educationnews.infoxchange.net.au/group/noticeboard/

Measuring the Information Economy 2002

This report provides a comprehensive international comparison of countries' performance in the information economy. New indicators address emerging policy issues: international differences in the quality and price of the ICT infrastructure, diffusion of Internet technologies in larger and smaller firms, relative size of cross-border electronic transactions, barriers to Internet commerce.

The report can be downloaded at:

Using Digital Video to Enhance Learning

BBC News, 16 November 2002

A pilot project by the British Film Institute for the U.K. government's computer agency, Becta, indicates that the use of digital video can raise students' enthusiasm for what they are studying. It claims that video can also motivate a wider range of pupils than traditional teaching methods, according to a study. Schools increasingly are using digital video to enhance teaching and learning.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/education/2482341.stm

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UK Leaders Debate Top Up Fees

As leading policy analysts and sector leaders speculate on the outcomes of the Review of Higher Education, consensus is growing around the inevitability of fee deregulation. In this context, the debates around top up fees in the UK therefore provide interesting insights into issues likely to surface in the wake of the Review's final report.

There have been a series of pronouncements from both politicians and university leaders in response to the government's proposed introduction of top-up fees or a 'graduate tax' to boost university funding.

As reported in the Times Higher Education Supplement (THES), 18th November, 2002, Clare Short became the first cabinet minister to break ranks on the controversial issue of top-up fees. She likened the outcomes of fee deregulation to the situation in the U.S where the "rich would pay extra fees and go to the elitist universities." Other cabinet ministers are known to be resisting the introduction of the fees although all agree on the need to find extra funds for universities.

Earlier reports in THES (11th November) also confirmed that Cambridge University would consider opposing top-up fees, breaking with other elite institutions and intensifying the debate over charging students.

World Economic Recovery Hesitant

November 21, 2002

The OECD Chief Economist's latest forecast suggests that the world economy should pick up in 2003-2004, however recovery appears more hesitant and less widespread than expected. In a context of weakening consumer and business confidence, economic activity bounced back early in 2002 but then lost momentum. This pattern of fits and starts is not unusual in the initial stages of a recovery but it has been associated with a further deterioration of equity and financial markets,
which marks a clear departure from past business cycle experience.

According to the OECD recent developments featuring large growth differences between North America, continental Europe and Japan, have prompted concern that stabilisation policies were not appropriately fine-tuning global demand in certain OECD areas. The recent cycle appears to have been highly synchronised. This suggests a phenomenon of “structural divergences”, with potential growth in North America far exceeding what can be observed and expected in other OECD regions.

For more information see the online version of the OECD Economic Outlook, No 72, November 2002: http://www.oecd.org/EN/document/0,,EN-document-0-nodirectorate-no-2-21578-0-00.html

**The European Research Area**

The Sixth Framework Programme (FP6) is the European Union’s main instrument for the funding of research in Europe. Proposed by the Commission and adopted by the Council and Parliament in co-decision, it is open to all public and private entities. The main focus of FP6 is the creation, for the first time, of a European Research Area (ERA) as a vision for the future of research in Europe. It aims at scientific excellence, improved competitiveness and innovation through the promotion of increased co-operation, greater complementarity and improved co-ordination between relevant actors, at all levels. Research priorities for the ERA include:

1. Life sciences, genomics and biotechnology for health
   - Advanced genomics and its applications for health
   - Combating major diseases
2. Information Society technologies
3. Nanotechnologies and nano-sciences, knowledge-based multifunctional materials
4. Aeronautics and space
5. Food quality and safety
6. Sustainable development, global change and ecosystems
   - Sustainable energy systems
   - Sustainable surface transport
   - Global change and ecosystems
7. Citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society

For further information on the framework for research and technological development, please follow the link below:


**Industry R&D spending pulling out of the EU**

26th November, 2002

Europe's biggest industrial companies have proposed that they will shift an increasing amount of their research and development spending outside the European Union due to perceived unattractive investment conditions, including inadequate human resources and infrastructure, insufficient financial incentives and unwieldy regulation.

The Higher Education Times Supplement reported that a confidential note to EU government leaders from the European Round Table of Industrialists describes the 160% increase in targets agreed by governments at the Barcelona European Council to raise R&D investment as "unrealistic".

**Doctoral Awards Decreasing in American Universities**

The Chronicle of Higher Education, 11th November 2002 reported that the number of doctorates awarded by American research universities in 2001 fell to a level not seen since 1993, according to a new study. The institutions awarded 40,744 doctorates in 2001, down from 41,340 the previous year and a high of 42,654 in 1998, with most of the decline occurring because of drops in science fields.


**National U.S. Student Engagement Survey**

TRANSFER STUDENTS are less engaged in academic work and college life than other students, according to the latest results of the National Survey of Student Engagement, which measures how colleges encourage learning. The survey data also show that students who are exposed to diversity report higher levels of engagement than other students.


**Linkages Between Secondary and Post-Secondary VET in China and Australia**

During the past decade both Australia and China have implemented reforms to their educational systems to develop labour force skills for the new globalised markets. This report describes the major features of the vocational education and training sectors in China and Australia, and their strategies and reforms, with
emphasis on links between secondary and post-secondary vocational education and training.

The report can be downloaded at:
http://www.ncver.edu.au/cgi-bin/srchCat.pl?list=886&amp;action=show

Irish and Aussie Universities Working Together

4 November 2002

The AVCC has announced a landmark agreement between the university heads of Australia and Ireland. The President of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, (AVCC) Professor Deryck Schreuder and the President of the Conference of Heads of Irish Universities, Dr Art Cosgrove, have signed the Agreement on Co-operation in Higher Education, in Melbourne. Professor Schreuder said the three-year agreement would promote co-operation that will advance university teaching, research, scholarship and management in their member institutions.


New Zealand's Tertiary Education Sector Report - Profile & Trends

This recently released report is the fourth edition of the Ministry of Education's annual surveys of the state of the tertiary education sector. The report includes extensive analysis of trends and of the performance of the sector. It is intended to be a primary source of information on tertiary education in New Zealand. The emphasis is on students, their participation and achievement in tertiary education, the pathways that they take to enter tertiary education, initiatives supporting specific groups such as Maori and Pacific students and financial issues for providers and students. The report also looks at the diversity and capability of tertiary education provision in this country, innovative developments and new educational strategies in the sector.


Productivity Commission Report: RMIT's Submission

The Productivity Commission released a draft report titled "University Resourcing: Australia in an international context" on 30th September 2002. RMIT provided a written response to this draft report on 17th October 2002. RMIT were subsequently invited to participate in a Productivity Commission forum on the draft report which was held on 14th November 2002 in Melbourne and was represented at that forum by Angel Calderon, Head of the Institutional Research Consultancy Unit (IRCU), and David Rutherford, Strategic Economist in the IRCU.

During the forum, the RMIT participants re-stated the institution's concerns with the draft report to Commissioner Michael Woods and additionally provided advice to the Commission on suggested strategies to overcome, or at least reduce, the impacts of the issues discussed. A number of other participants substantially shared RMIT's concerns, which included the small sample of universities considered, poor data quality and the presentation of non-comparable data as if it were comparable.

For more information on the details on RMIT's submission, please contact David.Rutherford@rmit.edu.au

Australian Technology Network Update

The Australian Technology Network (ATN) is preparing for its annual senior executives conference, which will be held in Brisbane from 29 to 31 January.

This year, the conference will be addressing a number of the key issues including:

- An update on the Nelson review of higher education from DEST
- The AUQA experience
- Research and commercialisation

These together with the issues of equitable access to higher education for all Australians and university governance, appear to be the key issues that are emerging from the Nelson review. The Conference will allow the ATN members to think about positioning themselves collectively and individually to take advantage of any new initiatives.
The conference also provides an opportunity for the various working groups to meet and interact with each other in order to progress cooperation at all levels across the member universities.

More information on the conference program can be found on www.atn.edu.au.

The ATN sponsors the Business Higher Education Round Table Award for the Best Entrepreneurial Educator of the Year. The 2002 winner of this award, Dr John Bailey from the Melbourne Business School, lists an Adjunct Professorship at RMIT amongst his current appointments. Congratulations John on the well deserved recognition.

**Advancing Australia - The Information Economy Progress Report 2002**

November 2002

The report finds that significant progress has been made in many areas - citing a number of independent international analyses which show that Australia is a leader in the development, deployment and use of information technologies and services.

The Report summarises the Commonwealth's policies, programs and achievements in promoting and developing the information economy between 1997 and now. It is the third progress report against the Commonwealth Government's Strategic Framework for the Information Economy-Identifying Priorities for Action released in early 1999.


**Research Training in Doctoral Programs What can be learned from professional doctorates?**

This EIP report discusses the relatively recent experience of offering doctoral education through professional doctorate programs as a contribution to the improvement of doctoral education in Australian universities. The evaluation focused on the extent to which such programs had developed practices for sustaining closer collaboration between universities and industry, through:

- a review of the general literatures relating to the role of doctoral research in contributing to the growth of knowledge and innovation;
- a multi-method exploration of the range of practices and relationships
- associated with professional doctorate programs; and
- the development of strategies and policy recommendations for optimising doctoral education in Australian universities in terms of industry-focused outcomes.

When set against the 800-year history of the PhD, the professional doctorate is a young doctorate, the first being set up in Australia within the last two decades. The nature and status of professional doctorates remains unclear to many, including a number of university administrators of research training, as well as government and industry personnel.

While there is strong evidence of an increase in the number of professional doctorates being offered in Australian universities, and there is some evidence of innovation in a number of professional doctorate programs, it appears that industry-focused doctoral education is still in its infancy. With a few exceptions, the report found that neither industry nor universities were engaging in any significant way to develop sustainable partnerships to serve and support the work of doctoral education. Most operational professional doctorates programs were characterised as having only ‘surface’ level links.

The report discusses the untapped potential for professional doctorates to offer a context for more innovative and industry-focused doctoral training. In particular, there are significant possibilities for the design and development of doctoral programs that deliver new types of quality research training.

The report recommends a number of strategies by which universities may address the dearth of deep linkages with professional and industry bodies. Recommendations also include that DEST categories used for reporting and monitoring research training be adjusted to acknowledge the professional doctorates as ‘differently rigorous’ doctorates in their own right.

The report may be downloaded at:


**CSIRO Report: Options to 2050 for Australia’s Population, (Technology, Resources and Environment)**

This technical report by Barney Foran and Franz Poldy, Resource Futures Program, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, was commissioned by the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) into the environmental impacts of different levels of population growth. The impacts considered are primarily in the areas of consumption and waste production.

The report looks at three population growth scenarios as follows:

- low growth - Zero net immigration, population of 20 million by 2050
- medium growth - Net immigration of 70,000 per annum (current level), population of 25 million by 2050
- high growth - Net immigration of 0.67% of total population per annum, population of 32 million by 2050

The low growth scenario is advocated by a number of environmental groups; the high growth scenario is advocated by a number of business interests.

The low and medium growth scenarios imply a ratio of 7 to 8 dependents per 10 people of working age, the high growth scenario implies a ratio of 6 dependents per 10 people of working age. The likely economic consequences of higher numbers of dependents relative to people of working age are: lower levels of economic growth; and, higher health and welfare costs. The likely geographic consequences of higher numbers of dependents relative to people of working age are: fewer people living in regional Australia; and, the average age of people living in regional Australia increasing.

The report suggests that all three population growth scenarios are sustainable in terms of Australia's land, water, food and energy resources for the foreseeable future. However, the report also comments that while "the size of the labour force [in the low growth scenario] may not be sufficient to ensure the maintenance and expansion of key economic sectors".

The report can be accessed either in full or in chapters. A summary version is also available. Follow the link below:


**Good Reputation Index: Australia's Business Top 100**

The Age 26th October 2002

The Good Reputation Index examines through the perceptions of community leaders and stakeholders on performance based across six main categories: management of employees, environmental performance, social impact, ethics and corporate governance, financial performance, and management and market forces.

Australia's overall big 5 for 2002 were Westpac, Australia Post, Energex, Queensland Rail, Holden and IBM Australia (tied in position 5).

Australia Post was the leader in Employee Management. The Age reported that work / family balance could become an influencing factor in future rankings. Westpac received a high score from Diversity@Work, the Federal Government funded group established to help companies diversity their workforce.

Australia Post was also the leader in Environmental Performance. However the leading environmental NGO's reported that Australia's corporations are not facing up to their environmental responsibilities.

Shell Australia topped the others as a leader in Social Impact. The judges assessed business commitment to human rights, the arts, global poverty and youth employment. Three of the top four were petroleum or mining companies, each of which has experienced social disasters in the past. Their success is in part also due to continued and strong pressure from civil society groups.

Sydney Water was the leader in Ethics and Corporate Governance. Government organisations and automotive companies also out-performed the rest.

The Flight Centre maintained its top position from 2001 in Financial Performance. The Australian Shareholders Association stated that results indicated a greater number of average results this year, rather than extremes.

While Australia Post was the overall winner in Management and Market Focus, utilities upheld their good reputations while insurers performed poorly.

From a risk management perspective, utilities upheld their good reputations while insurers performed poorly.

The authors, Robert Chapman Wood and Gary Hamel have chronicled how the World Bank built a "pipeline of smart, practical ideas". The World Bank realised that traditional programs aimed at combating global poverty were not achieving success because they were mainly tailored to large organisations incapable of dramatic grassroots innovation.

In response to this need for new and radical ideas the World Bank created a 'marketplace' where employees could set up stalls and pitch their ideas. Some were sceptical at first that such an event would ever get off the ground. The notion of speculating on ideas that
were not fully formed struck some people as absolutely unacceptable. In an unprecedented move, the World Bank committed 3 million dollars to projects that were not reviewed using traditional bureaucratic processes which demanded iron clad guarantees of success. Instead they created “market like structures and incentives that would cause people with ideas to behave like sellers and people with development money to behave less like bureaucrats and more like venture capitalist who minimise risk by spreading small investments over a broad portfolio of start-ups” (p.106).

The Innovation Marketplace took place in the World Bank’s atrium in May 1998. A panel of judges, that included popular leaders from stakeholder groups such as Oxfam International and World Vision. The judges were able to consider dozens of proposals in a matter of hours and divided the 3 million into 11 grants, two of which, in particular, have been major successes for the World Bank.

The authors’ reported that as well as the obvious benefits of this initiative; there were some additional unexpected wins. The marketplace became a catalyst for further innovation, gave staff and collaborators an opportunity to network and share ideas that have lead to further project development. The marketplace was held again in 2000, and is now being promoted in client counties, such as Thailand, Peru and Brazil.

As the article concludes, solutions to major programs require a larger surface area of experimentation. This requires rethinking the perpetuation of past processes and championing for the future. It may be interesting to think about the ways in which an education marketplace could be used as a vehicle for building a culture of collaboration in VET and HE.

CONFERENCE REPORT:
Victorian TAFE Association Inc – Forum for Senior TAFE Executives, Performance Measures: The Balanced Scorecard

Attended by Suzy Ballantyne and David Rutherford (21 November 2002)

This session on performance measurement in TAFE institutes was conducted by the Victorian TAFE Association and facilitated by Judy Curson. A panel of presenters from Swinburne, Chisholm and Kangan Batman TAFE shared their experiences and explored new possibilities of recording and reporting performance against their strategic directions, focussing on a Balanced Scorecard (BSC) approach.

The BSC is a strategic measurement-based system, which provides a method for aligning business activity to an organisation’s monitoring performance of strategic goals over time. It serves as a record of results achieved, indicates expected future results and creates the opportunity for an environment of clear communication so that everyone understands how they contribute to the overall corporate strategies. The BSC is built upon the concepts of quality management and suggests that customer focus, employee involvement and continuous improvement activities are equally as important as the financial performance of the organisation.

At Swinburne, the scorecard development is a continually evolving process, but is basically determined through the following four questions:

1. External stakeholders: Who are they? What do they expect from us?
2. Internal processes: What must we excel at to meet their requirements?
3. Capabilities: What capabilities are needed to achieve the processes?
4. Finances: What support, generation and / or redirection of resources is required to resource these strategies and priority areas?

Chisholm has refined the language used in their strategic planning processes to better suit their organisational needs. From the highest level down, they use the following:

- Vision and goals
- Strategic initiatives
- Success measures
- Priority actions and KPIs

Chisholm is currently working towards the following five strategic directions:

- Learning
- Sustainability (economic and government)
- Enterprise (customer and industry)
- Networking (community and region)
- Collegiate (staff and internal processes)

Another example of the relationships flowing from the high-level strategic direction can be viewed as follows:
Strategic Direction: Learning

Outcome: Enhanced learning experience

KPIs (Lag Indicators)
- Student destinations
- Employment rates
- Further study outcomes

Drivers -
- Learner support
- Learner opportunities
- Learner environment

Measures (Lead indicators)
- Student satisfaction (induction rates)
- Module evaluations
- Classroom renewal
- Institute initiatives
- Induction program
- Class renewal program
- Related plans
- T&L strategy
- Class renewal strategy

Kangan Batman has developed a set of indicators as part of their strategic planning and reporting framework. The initial set of indicators were developed over two, one-day workshops with the Senior Management Team and relevant stakeholders to reflect the critical measures that Kangan Batman TAFE will report on in 2002.

- Reviewed existing performance measures in light of the information obtained from the workshops.
- Embarked on the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) approach to measurement, incorporating environmental, community and economic aspects, with the aid of consultants.
- Created a performance indicator management committee, which reviewed the measures (identified core business processes and other areas for periodic review).
- Decided upon eight priority areas:

Up to four indicators were attached to each priority area, and the ‘traffic light’ system was also utilised for ease of understanding:
- Green – No concerns.
- Amber – Caution, some issues need to be further analysed or monitored with management actions considered.
- Red – Issues of serious concern to be further analysed or monitored with management actions to be considered.

ARTICLE: Corporate Reforms to Australian Universities: Views from the Academic Heartland


This paper presents a study of 1,041 Australian academics’ responses to corporate reforms in eight Australian universities. Participants responded to the Academic Work Environment Survey developed by the authors in a previous study. While the paper acknowledges the use of qualitative and quantitative methods, the lack of information about the framework used to analyse qualitative data is a concern. Findings should therefore be interpreted cautiously.

Findings suggested that corporate reforms, (i.e. decreased public funding, external management principles such as quality assurance, managerialism, entrepreneurialism) had exerted a very large impact on academics’ jobs and workplaces. A large number of academics expressed value conflict to funding cuts and corporate reforms, with academic particularly at the lecturer level regarding market behaviour and business related principles as inappropriate to the primary goals of teaching, learning and scholarship. Academics also highlighted pressure to pass students and reduce standards due to the pressures felt from an increasingly competitive market.

In contrast a number of senior academics highlighted the positive benefits of increased efficiency in operations, improved financial management, quality assurance and academic accountability. The authors suggested that this indicated that academic managers were challenging the deeply held academic values and collegial models of governance. The paper concludes that heads of departments may be critical change agents by virtue of their positions that span the ‘tightrope’ between entrepreneurial activity and more traditional academic values.

The Organisation of the Academic Year

Earlier this year the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (Gabrielle Baldwin and Craig McInnis), from the University of Melbourne released a report from a detailed analysis of how changes to the structure of the academic year affects sequential learning, student intellectual development and maturation, the student experience and the nature of academic work.

Dated last May, it has only just been released on DEST’s website. It warns against "unnecessarily rushed implementation of radical change in the structure of the university year".

The report is a response to the changing structure of the academic year in Australian universities. Enrolments in 'non-standard' teaching periods, outside the two main semesters, are growing rapidly, particularly in summer.
sessions. Some institutions are considering a radical re- structuring of the calendar towards a trimester system, with three equal teaching periods providing year-round teaching.

The two principal factors driving this process of change are the desire to achieve greater efficiency in the use of expensive infrastructure and a perceived demand from students for flexibility in their study schedules, which would demand equal distribution of enrolments across the three teaching periods.

The report suggests that evidence from universities in other parts of the world suggests that this model may be difficult to achieve in practice. It provides evidence from the United States, Europe and Asia to support this claim. The report suggests that it seems likely however, that in the immediate future, organisation of the academic year will mostly take the form of increased offerings in summer sessions without disruption to the two standard semesters. There is considerable potential for expansion of summer offerings, particularly at the postgraduate level.

The report can be downloaded at:

Bridging the Gap between the Haves and Have Nots

A recent report released by the National Education and Employment Forum NEEF is focussed on the actions that need to be taken to assist those most disadvantaged in the community.

The NEEF is a project of the World Education Fellowship (WEF) Australia. NEEF consisted of consultations in five States, between October 2000, to August, 2001.

The report includes strategies and recommendations to assist those most disadvantaged in the community”

It recommends that Federal, State, Territory and Local Governments collaboratively work towards targets for higher educational outcomes for young people who are disadvantaged and for geographical areas of concentrated disadvantage.

A substantial increase in investment in education, is sought by participants who believe that the population would support a specific tax quarantined for education. The tax would be progressive on income and a component of company tax and GST.

The report suggests that demonstrated success of full-service schools warrants their expansion. In addition, Community and Youth Centres (CYCs) should be offered to communities, so that all agencies work collectively to support young people with integrated services and comprehensive information.

The report also recommends investment in early preventative programs to reduce costly remediation later. These recommendations align with those made by the OECD in their country analysis of education policy (see review earlier in this issue). They include recommending the provision of early childhood education to all children from 0 to 5 in vulnerable areas and in areas where there are high populations of young children.

Other recommendations include address access and ability needs in the use information and communication technologies;

- Improve the quality of teaching by establishing formal State and National structures for ensuring standards and accreditation to develop ‘quality teachers’.
- Prioritise indigenous education and develop through their education, tolerance, attitudes of inclusiveness, and a broad understanding of Indigenous history and culture for all Australians.

The report includes proposals for action to the parliaments of Australia and is available at:

Evaluating the Impact of the Literacy and Numeracy Training Programme for Job Seekers

This report deals with the evaluation of the Commonwealth Government’s Literacy and Numeracy Training (LANT) Program that was introduced to improve literacy and numeracy amongst the unemployed. The report begins by briefly discussing the background factors that led to the introduction of the program, followed by an overview of the purpose of the evaluation and the major outcomes that were examined.

Chapter Two examines participation and completion based on administrative and survey data. The findings relating to the key outcome variables literacy and numeracy, employment, income support status and subsequent education/training participation - are discussed in Chapters Three to Six. Appendices are also included to record details supporting various chapters.


New Study Shows How to Improve Literacy

DEST has produced a report that recommends strategies for improving literacy in early and middle primary years. Three Years On – Literacy Advance in the Early and Middle Primary Years report - looks at the success of various literacy teaching strategies and
explores a range of classroom and background influences on literacy development.

Schools that participated in the study experienced improvements in students’ literacy achievement when:

- daily uninterrupted literacy teaching time was introduced;
- early intervention assistance was provided for students requiring help;
- the Principal led a comprehensive school focus on literacy; and
- parents regularly participated in school literacy programmes.

This study has provided valuable insight into what influences the teaching and learning of literacy in the crucial stages of a child’s life. From this study we will learn how to further improve children’s literacy in Australia so they can make the most of opportunities throughout their life.

The study was funded by the Commonwealth and conducted by the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria. The study began in 1998 and follows the literacy development of more than 34,000 Year 1 students in more than 300 classes in 161 Catholic primary schools across Victoria.

http://www.dest.gov.au/schools/Literacy&Numeracy/projects.htm

**COMING UP AND EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

It’s our intention to profile forthcoming conferences, events and tenders in this section of the newsletter. If you want to alert us to any such happening, contact us at ircu@rmit.edu.au

---

**Australian Universities Teaching Committee’s Sixth National Teaching Forum**

2 December 2002

The Australian Universities Teaching Committee invites people working in the higher education sector to register for this forum and share information about innovations in teaching and learning. The theme for this year’s forum is “Internationalisation and cultural diversity”. A number of notable speakers will add insights to the conference theme especially in relation to student learning and graduate employability.

The world renowned Dr Hans de Wit, will present a session on "Internationalisation of higher education: meaning, approaches and models". Participants at the forum will also hear from the finalists in this year’s Australian Awards for University Teaching. Please register on the AUTC website: [www.autc.au/forum/2002.htm](http://www.autc.au/forum/2002.htm)

**Cultural Citizenship: Challenges of Globalisation**

Deakin University: Burwood Campus 5-8 Dec 2002

In an era of rapid cultural globalisation, and increasing local resistance, this conference examines the ‘cultural dimension’ of citizenship – both national, and global. The conference addresses a range of key questions for researchers, policy-makers and community workers around issues of cultural citizenship, identity, political participation and heritage. The conference includes a half-day public symposium on Refugee Rights to be held on Thursday 5 December 2002 from 1:00 - 6:00 pm supported by the Victorian Multicultural Commission.


**CALL FOR PAPERS: Experiential-community-work based: Researching learning outside the academy**

27-29 June 2003

The Centre for Research in Lifelong Learning (CRLL) invites contributions to an international conference, which will place in Glasgow on 27-29 June 2003. This is the second international conference to be hosted by CRLL and has developed out of research undertaken within the Centre on workplace learning, and the accreditation of prior experiential learning (APEL).


**CALL FOR PAPERS: Researching policy and practice in vocational education and training**

Royal Naval College, University of Greenwich, London 16-18 July 2003

The Journal of Vocational Education and Training, which is organising the fifth international conference, invites contributions on issues related to the conference theme but also on any topic related to post-compulsory education and raining.

Deadline:- 31 December 2002

[http://www.triangle.co.uk/vae/index.htm](http://www.triangle.co.uk/vae/index.htm)

**CALL FOR PAPERS: Lifelong learning for a knowledge-based society**

Toulouse, France, 23-24 May 2003

The Toulouse Business School (Groupe ESC Toulouse) invites contributions to the fourth conference on human resource development research and
practice in Europe. Themes include Lifelong learning in the European agenda; Knowledge-based society and Knowledge Management, Competence development: contemporary debates; Vocational education and training and Pedagogic and technological innovation.

Deadlines for proposals is 31 January 2003.


Information Online 2003
21-23 January 2003

Information Online 2003 will provide a forum for over 1000 Australian and international information professionals and others, to exchange information and to explore new developments and major topics relating to online and multimedia information and communications.


IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Mr Tim Besley has been appointed the new Chair of Australian Research Council. He is currently President of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering.

Mr David Hind, the Managing Director of BOC Process Gas Solutions, South Pacific, has been appointed to the Board of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA). He is currently responsible for BOC business activities throughout Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Pacific Islands.

Ms Stella Axarlis, a long serving board member, has been appointed as Deputy Chair of ANTA. Ms Axarlis is the Chair of the National Training Quality Council, Chair of Peninsula Health Service and a member of the Prime Minister’s Science, Engineering and Innovation Council.

The Institutional Research Consultancy Unit

The IRCU’s mission is to:

- Assist and contribute to informed decision-making
- Contribute to strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of RMIT’s activities and programs
- Be proactive in the study and advancement of tertiary education
- Manage, share and create knowledge for the benefit of RMIT

The main function of IRCU is to coordinate the collection, organization and analysis of institutional data and other quantitative and qualitative information to support institutional management, operations, decision-making and planning functions of RMIT University. The IRCU is also engaged in applied educational research, performance measurement, evaluation and assessment; and is proactive in the study and advancement of higher education.

The IRCU Staff are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angel Calderon</td>
<td>Head</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Brion</td>
<td>Business Analyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Garner</td>
<td>Strategic Advisor - Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann Hornsby</td>
<td>Executive Assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josie Palermo</td>
<td>Institutional Research Advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Rutherford</td>
<td>Strategic Economist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neil Wentworth</td>
<td>Institutional Research Systems Coordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The IRCU, along with the Quality Consultancy Unit and Statistics and Reporting, is part of the Planning Group.

If you would like to comment on the newsletter, or provided us with items of interest, please email us at

Email ircu@rmit.edu.au

This issue was compiled by Josie Palermo with additional contributions from Suzy Ballantyne, Angel Calderon, Michael Murphy, David Rutherford and Julie Wells.

Parting thought

It’s Just Art: 1.4m Watch Broadcast of Public Autopsy

Fiachra Gibbons, arts correspondent, The Guardian Friday November 22, 2002

The maverick anatomist, Professor von Hagens, has carried out Britain's first public autopsy in 170 years on a 72-year-old German man. 1.4 million people watched a Channel 4 broadcast of the postmortem examination, forming one of the network’s best late-night ratings of the year.