

PARLIAMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Unique Individuals, Broad Skills

Inquiry into school to work transition

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training

May 2018
CANBERRA

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Abbreviations

AATE	Australian Academy of Technology and Engineering
AATIS	Australian Apprenticeships and Traineeships Information Service
ACARA	Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
ACOLA	Australian Council of Learned Academies
AITSL	Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership
AMSI	Australian Mathematical Sciences Institute
AND	Australian Network on Disability
ASQA	Australian Skills Quality Authority
ATAR	Australian Tertiary Admission Rank
AQF	Australian Qualifications Framework

CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
CsfW	Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework
DATSIP	Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (Queensland)
HASS	Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences
HEPPP	Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IIS	Integrated Information Service
KYC	Koorie Youth Council
LLEN	Local Learning & Employment Networks
LLN	Language, Literacy and Numeracy
NAEN	National Apprenticeship Employment Network
NAPLAN	National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NIES	New Enterprise Incentive Scheme

NSWALNC	New South Wales Adult Literacy and Numeracy Council
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PIAAC	Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PVC	Pro Vice-Chancellor
SDA	Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees' Association
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
STEAM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency
VET	Vocational Education and Training
VETIS	Vocational Education and Training In Schools
YACVic	Youth Affairs Council Victoria
YDAS	Youth Disability Advocacy Service

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Terms of Reference

The Committee will inquire into and report on how students are supported from school to work including the following matters:

1. Measurements of gain in school and how this contributes to supporting students to prepare for post-school education and training;
2. Opportunities to better inform and support students in relation to post-school education and training, including use of employment outcomes of students who undertake school-based vocational education or post-school tertiary pathways;
3. Other related matters that the Committee considers relevant.

List of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

- 2.29 The Committee recommends that standards for the quality of initial teacher education be set high, programs rigorously assessed and requirements made transparent.

Recommendation 2

- 2.30 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government immediately commence implementing the recommendations made herein that are directed to lifting the quality of initial teacher education.

Recommendation 3

- 2.31 The Committee recommends that the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership be reconstituted to undertake a stronger role to ensure high standards of initial teacher education in Australia.

Recommendation 4

- 2.32 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government establish a national initial teacher education regulator through a reconstituted Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership to overhaul and manage the accreditation of initial teacher education programs, and work with the states and territories to ensure rigorous accreditation processes operate effectively with teacher registration.

Recommendation 5

- 2.33 The Committee recommends that in accrediting programs, higher education providers be required to be able to demonstrate that their programs have

evidence-based pedagogical approaches, effective integration of professional experience, rigorous and iterative assessment of pre-service teachers throughout their education, and final assessments that ensure pre-service teachers are classroom ready.

Recommendation 6

2.34 The Committee recommends that Higher Education providers:

- use the national literacy and numeracy test to demonstrate that all pre-service teachers are within the top 30 per cent of the population in personal literacy and numeracy by the conclusion of their pre-service study; and
- equip pre-service teachers with the training necessary to work within teams that assess the learning needs of all students.

Recommendation 7

2.35 The Committee acknowledges the non-teaching demands on teachers' time, and, with a view to enabling teachers to devote their time to honing and practising their profession and craft, and planning to do same, recommends that the Australian Government, through COAG:

- support and implement a policy to provide more youth workers, social workers and other professionals with specialist experience in supporting young people to transition and/or social support in schools; and
- work to ensure that teachers have reasonable opportunities within working hours for ongoing professional development, and planning.

Recommendation 8

2.36 The Committee recommends that initial teacher education be updated on an ongoing basis through continuing professional development, to ensure that teachers are trained in best-practice approaches and up-to-date thinking. To facilitate this, the Committee recommends that:

- stakeholders including parents' groups, education unions, industry, government, VET providers and universities be engaged in setting requirements for continuing professional development; and

- teachers be given such workload relief as is necessary to make more thorough ongoing development possible.

Recommendation 9

2.37 Acknowledging the importance of raising the status of the teaching profession, the Committee recommends that:

- teachers' working conditions and pay be sufficient to both attract and retain good teachers; and
- consideration be given to ensuring both opportunities for professional development and career paths.

Recommendation 10

3.68 The Committee recommends that further research be undertaken into the better use of NAPLAN and ATAR for the purpose of measuring gain, with appropriate metrics to be included as part of NAPLAN reports.

Recommendation 11

3.69 The Committee recommends that further research be undertaken into measurements of gain, referring to a student educational journey over time. Without limiting the foregoing, the Committee recommends that research be undertaken as to how to measure gain in relation to the teaching and learning of soft skills.

Recommendation 12

3.70 The Committee recommends that schools incorporate into their curriculum literacy, digital literacy, numeracy and soft skills to prepare students for post-school education, training and work.

Recommendation 13

3.71 The Committee recommends that stakeholders work together to enable secondary schools to increase delivery of:

- work experience and volunteer work;
- adult learning environments; and

- career assessment and career guidance activities in order to assist students in recognising their career goals and their areas of strength.

Recommendation 14

3.72 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government review the differing ways in which industry connections are organised in schools compared with in VET and compared with in higher education, with a view to:

- considering what constitutes best-practice;
- looking at ‘what works’ to maximise access to quality work-integrated learning opportunities;
- identifying ways that both education providers and industry can be proactive in establishing work integrated learning opportunities; and
- considering how best to measure the success or otherwise of work-integrated learning arrangements.

Recommendation 15

4.107 To make government-led work experience programs more likely to lead to good jobs, the Committee recommends that such programs:

- incorporate defined training components which are directly connected with specific planned and agreed work-experience component(s);
- require employment service providers to ensure that employers within the current “Jobactive” system are engaged with government-led work-experience programs; and
- ensure program design takes into account the importance of promoting secure employment, compliance with industrial relations laws, the avoidance of exploitation, value-for-money in respect of any publicly-funded incentives, and ongoing accountability for employment outcomes.

Recommendation 16

- 4.108 The Committee recommends that the Government consider the financial pressures on university students, especially those university students who have relocated to participate in higher education, and consider what might be able to be done to ameliorate those pressures with a view to increasing retention and attainment.

Recommendation 17

- 4.109 The Committee recommends that the availability of career advisory programs and information within the school sector be increased, and that such counselling emphasise VET, apprenticeships and alternative post-school pathways to the same extent as higher education.

Recommendation 18

- 4.110 The Committee recommends that all high schools should have access to trained career advisors on staff. This advisor must be able to give accurate advice to students and parents on:
- the likelihood of them gaining employment post-school based upon their VET/VETIS or university qualification;
 - what post-school level of employment they could expect to obtain because of their VET/VETIS qualification, what post-school training they could or could not access with fee help and what post-school training they would need to complete in order to obtain employment at their desired level; and
 - information on apprenticeships and traineeships.

Recommendation 19

- 4.111 The Committee recommends that schools, working with stakeholders (such as governments, industry, industry associations, training providers and unions), be supported to have the following industry engagement mechanisms in place:
- industry presentations to classes exploring different career options, particularly raising the status and perception of vocational education and training;

- school councils be supported to have industry representation that can assist in providing a VET perspective across all school decision making at a strategy level;
- schools engage with their local vocational education providers to provide integrated strategies for transition during and post-school to sustainable employment opportunities;
- labour market information is integrated into professional development for career advisors, and schools are adequately funded to ensure career advisors have access to this training (and it be a mandatory professional development program for career advisors); and,
- school models be reconsidered, and guidelines put in place, to allow students from year 9 to engage in meaningful VET programs which both provide vocational education and training and cover the curriculum's learning areas.

Recommendation 20

4.112 The Committee acknowledges that raising the status of VET, apprenticeships and traineeships will require significant investment and reform. The Committee recommends that consideration be given to establishing more trades training in schools. In addition, the Committee recommends that the status of VET, apprenticeships and traineeships be raised through increased marketing activity by government and industry in schools, with additional focus on promoting the financial benefits and employment outcomes achieved on completing VET qualifications.

Recommendation 21

4.113 The Committee recommends that First Nations communities lead engagement with schools with a view to developing culturally-competent measures of attainment and gain.

Recommendation 22

4.114 The Committee recommends that retention of First Nations children beyond year 9 and to the conclusion of year 12 be a priority for schools, and education authorities, and that to facilitate this retention, schools are supported to:

- recognise that indigenous communities are not homogenous;
- work with local communities and stakeholders to ensure that the learning environments they provide are culturally-competent and culturally-safe;
- incorporate indigenous student identity within the school; and
- ensure that indigenous culture is visible within the school.

Recommendation 23

4.115 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government ensure that indigenous perspectives are included within the National Curriculum.

Recommendation 24

4.116 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, in developing VET and higher education policies, take into account the specific needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Recommendation 25

4.117 The Committee recommends that schools and teachers be adequately resourced, supported and trained to assist students from CALD backgrounds to understand the education system, understand their post-secondary options, and make appropriate choices.

Recommendation 26

4.118 The Committee recommends that students from CALD backgrounds have access to information about their rights at work, as well as information about the services available to assist them in the event that they are subjected to unlawful conduct at work.

Recommendation 27

4.119 The Committee recommends that schools, VET providers and higher education providers be supported to provide English language training that goes beyond conversation English to training specifically directed towards ensuring that the student has the English skills needed for success in the vocation, occupation or profession that the student seeks to enter.

Recommendation 28

- 5.65 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, through the Department of Social Services continue to support Ticket to Work.

Recommendation 29

- 5.66 The Committee recommends that Australian governments, through COAG, draft model legislation to ensure students with disability can access a person-centered post-school transition process, beginning as early as Year 9 and including:

- work experience opportunities and the facilitation of part time work – connections with local businesses and employers will be essential for this;
- foundational skills to be addressed;
- career development planning to take place; and,
- follow up with young people post school.

Recommendation 30

- 5.67 The Committee recommends that measurements of gain within schools, such as NAPLAN, are made accessible to students who are blind or have low vision.

Recommendation 31

- 5.68 The Committee recommends, in relation to students who are blind or have low vision, that all information offered to students about further education, training and employment outcomes is provided in accessible formats.

Recommendation 32

- 5.69 The Committee recommends that career advisors be appropriately trained in assisting and advising students with disabilities and students who are carers.

Recommendation 33

- 5.70 The Committee recommends that the wage subsidies *Youth Bonus* and *Youth* be open to employees who are registered with Disability Employment Services.

Recommendation 34

- 5.71 The Committee recommends that:

- all Australian Governments invest in the development and implementation of a national young carer education framework or strategy to better identify and respond to young carers' education support needs, including mandatory young carer identification at enrolment;
- the Australian Government monitors and identifies unmet needs in the Young Carers Respite and Information Services initiative and implements measures to provide early intervention access for at risk young carers to ensure they continue and complete their secondary education; and
- the Australian Government invests in and commits funding to meet the service demands of the Young Carers Respite and Information Services initiative to young carers in need.

Recommendation 35

- 5.72 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government rethinks the way it determines its young carer policies so that young carers are identified and supported at the beginning of and along their caring path with timely, responsive and appropriate interventions to ensure that they complete their education and transition to further study or employment, while maintaining their caring role.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On Wednesday 31 May 2017, the Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, referred to the Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training (the Committee) an inquiry into how students are supported from school to work.
- 1.2 The Terms of Reference are set out in the front pages of this report.

Inquiry process

- 1.3 The Committee called for submissions from interested individuals and organisations.
- 1.4 The Committee accepted and considered 80 submissions and seven supplementary submissions. Full details of submitters can be found at Appendix A.
- 1.5 The Committee held the following public hearings:
 - 4 September 2017, Canberra;
 - 18 September 2017, Melbourne;
 - 19 September 2017, Sydney;
 - 16 October 2017, Canberra; and
 - 9 November 2017, Brisbane.
- 1.6 Full details of the public hearings can be found at Appendix B.
- 1.7 The Committee would like to extend its thanks to all submitters and witnesses who provided evidence to this inquiry.

Structure of the report

- 1.8 This report's structure reflects the inquiry's Terms of Reference:

- Chapter 2 looks at teachers and teaching, including the importance of ongoing teacher education;
- Chapter 3 explains and discusses ‘measurements of gain’ in schools, the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), alternatives to NAPLAN and ATAR, and addresses ‘soft skills’;
- Chapter 4 considers government programs designed to support young people to gain the skills and work experience they need to get and keep a job, the transition to Vocational Education and Training (VET) and University and apprenticeships and traineeships; and
- Chapter 5 outlines the particular issues facing students with a disability.

Background

Innovation and creativity: workforce for the new economy

1.9 On 19 June 2017, the Committee tabled its report *Innovation and creativity: Inquiry into innovation and creativity: workforce for the new economy*.¹ This report made recommendations on many of the issues that the Committee received as evidence during this inquiry such as:

- Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM);
- Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STEAM);
- Creative digital skills;
- Mathematics as a pre-requisite for university;
- Vocational Education and Training (VET); and
- Work Integrated Learning.

1.10 Where appropriate this report will refer to the recommendations made in the above report.

1.11 The following section looks at the main Australian Government agreements, programs, studies and research that form the background to this inquiry. A fuller list and outline of Australian Government programs was provided to the Committee by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training and the Australian Government Department of Employment in their submission to the Committee.²

¹ Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Training, *Innovation and creativity: Inquiry into innovation and creativity: workforce for the new economy*, Parliamentary Paper: 61/2017, p. 74.

² See *Submission 76*, Department of Education and Training and the Department of Employment.

Australian Government agreements and programs

National partnership agreement on youth attainment and transitions

- 1.12 The *National partnership agreement on youth attainment and transitions* ('the Agreement') is an agreement between the Commonwealth of Australia and the States and Territories of Australia signed on 2 July 2009.
- 1.13 The objectives of the agreement are to:
- work towards achieving improvements in high level outcomes for schooling agreed by COAG in the National Education Agreement and in the 2008 National Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians;
 - work towards increasing the qualifications and skill level of the Australian population as agreed by COAG in the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development;
 - achieve improvements in the numbers of young Australians making successful transitions from schooling into further education, training or employment;
 - work collaboratively with the non-government school, training, business and community sectors to improve the support provided to young Australians to increase educational outcomes, attainment and improve transitions to further education, training or employment, with particular focus on 15 to 24 year olds and young people at risk; and
 - develop a skilled and work ready indigenous workforce by increasing the educational attainment and engagement of young indigenous Australians.³
- 1.14 The Agreement sets out a series of outcomes and performance indicators which are reproduced in the table below.

Table 1.1 Outcomes and Performance Indicators

Outcomes	Performance Indicators
Increased participation of young people in education and training	Enrolment of full-time equivalent students in Years 11 and 12

³ See <http://www.federalfinancialrelations.gov.au/content/npa/skills/national-partnership/past/youth_attainment_transitions_NP.pdf Clause 15>, accessed 16 August 2017.

	15 – 19 year old without a Year 12 certificate and not enrolled in school who are enrolled in a vocational education and training (VET) course at Certificate II level or higher
Young people make a successful transition from school to further education, training or full-time employment	The proportion of young people engaged 15-24 participating in post-school education, training or employment six months after leaving school
	The proportion of young people aged 20-24 who have attained year 12 or equivalent
Increased attainment of young people aged 15-24 including Indigenous youth	The proportion of young Indigenous people aged 20-24 who have attained Year 12 or equivalent

Source: National Partnership Agreement on Youth Attainment and Transitions, Clause 16.

- 1.15 The Agreement outlines how the above outcomes would be measured, and how financial arrangements between the Commonwealth, States and Territories to facilitate implementation of the Agreement would be arranged and implemented.
- 1.16 The *National partnership on youth attainment and transitions second evaluation report* makes the following three broad points:
- Participation in education has grown – particularly for school education;
 - Retention and attainment rates have increased; and,
 - Transition to work remains a challenge for young people.⁴

⁴ Dandolo Partners, *Evaluation of the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions: A report for the Department of Education*, 16 January 2014, <https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/np_yat_final_evaluation_report.pdf> accessed 16 August 2017, pp. 20-21.

- 1.17 In relation to the last point, which is the focus of this inquiry, the report states:

In terms of transitions into the labour market, since 2008 there has been a considerable drop in full-time employment for young people not in full-time education, more so than for the 15–64 year age group. In addition, the proportion of 15–24 year-olds fully engaged in employment, education or training is still not at the same level as pre the Global Financial Crisis, particularly for the 20–24 year age group where it has continued to drop. It is worth noting, though, that transitions for young people are, in general, getting longer. Other research shows that not only have levels of full-time employment decreased for the 20–24-year age group, but also that other life transitions such as independence (leaving home), home ownership, marriage and parenthood are occurring later.⁵

Quality schools, quality outcomes

- 1.18 *Quality Schools, Quality Outcomes* is a report produced by Dandolo Partners for the then Department of Education. It outlines the Australian Government's evidence-based approach to schools' reform to improve learning outcomes for all Australian students.⁶
- 1.19 *Quality Schools, Quality Outcomes* sets out evidence-based priority reforms to help support improved outcomes for students and schools by focusing efforts towards the following five areas:
- boosting literacy, numeracy and STEM performance;
 - improving the quality of teaching and school leadership;
 - preparing our students for a globalised world;
 - focusing on what matters most and those who need it most; and
 - increasing public accountability through improved transparency.
- 1.20 The Government will be working with states, territories and non-government education authorities to focus on how to use the record levels of funding to improve the quality of education in schools and lift student outcomes. For example in May 2016, the Australian Government committed

⁵ Dandolo Partners, *Evaluation of the National Partnership on Youth Attainment and Transitions: A report for the Department of Education*, 16 January 2014, <https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/np_yat_final_evaluation_report.pdf> accessed 16 August 2017, p. 21.

⁶ See <<https://www.education.gov.au/quality-schools-quality-outcomes>> accessed 31 October 2017.

\$3 million to improving career advice by working with industry and schools to develop a new National Career Education Strategy.

1.21 The strategy:

...will aim to ensure students are 'work ready', prepared for life beyond school and equipped with the 21st century skills needed for the jobs of today and into the future.

Young people's school education must set them up with the skills, knowledge and attitudes they need to succeed in the workplace. Career education is student-centred and an important element in preparing young people to successfully transition from school to further education, training or employment or a combination of these, and should be a priority in schools, from primary through to senior secondary school.⁷

Youth Jobs PaTH

- 1.22 Youth Jobs PaTH is a program designed and run by the Australian Government Department of Education to support young people to gain the skills and work experience they need to get and keep a job. It also supports employers to host internship placements and provides them with incentives when they hire a young person. Youth Jobs PaTH has three elements: Prepare – Trial – Hire.⁸

Prepare

- 1.23 Prepare helps young people (those under 25) become job ready by providing intensive pre-employment training:

Employability Skills Training (EST) gives young people the opportunity to enhance their employability through two different blocks of targeted training. Participating in training will help young people understand the expectations of employers in both the recruitment process and as a new employee in the workplace.⁹

- 1.24 There are a number of training block courses that assist young people to become job ready:

Training 1 courses will equip young people with pre-employment skills and prepare them to meet the expectations of employers. Training 2 courses will

⁷ Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, *Submission 76*, p. 18.

⁸ See <<https://www.employment.gov.au/youth-jobs-path>> accessed 6 September 2017.

⁹ See <<https://www.employment.gov.au/youth-jobs-path>> accessed 6 September 2017.

focus on job preparation and will equip young people with advanced job hunting skills, career development, interview skills and the opportunity to participate in Industry Awareness Experiences. These experiences will provide job seekers with an insight into the tasks and duties of different industries. Young people can do one or both of the courses. Each block is 75 hours of face-to-face training over three weeks.¹⁰

- 1.25 The training is not regulated or accredited under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and nor does it lead to any qualification recognised under the AQF.

Trial

- 1.26 Trial provides young people with voluntary internship opportunities to help them gain real work experience in Australian businesses:
- Employers can trial a young person in an internship for between 4 and 12 weeks to see how they fit into the team and if they are suitable for ongoing employment. Interns are unpaid by the business and receive a fortnightly incentive paid by the government.
 - The business receives an upfront payment of \$1,000 in recognition of the costs of hosting the internship. Additionally, the intern is covered by insurance paid by the Government through the Department of Employment.¹¹

Hire

- 1.27 Hire provides a financial incentive of up to \$10,000 (GST inclusive) paid over six months to employers who hire eligible young job seekers. As part of Hire, the new Youth Bonus wage subsidy became available from 1 January 2017 for employers who hire eligible job seekers 15 to 24 years of age. In addition all wage subsidies were made simpler to access and manage. Wage subsidies can be packaged with Australian Apprenticeships Incentives Programme payments, to further encourage employers to create apprenticeship and traineeship opportunities.¹²

Higher education participation and partnerships

¹⁰ See <<https://www.employment.gov.au/youth-jobs-path>> accessed 6 September 2017.

¹¹ See <<https://www.employment.gov.au/youth-jobs-path>> accessed 6 September 2017.

¹² See <<https://www.employment.gov.au/youth-jobs-path>> accessed 6 September 2017.

- 1.28 The Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP) aims to ensure that Australians from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds who have the ability to study at university have the opportunity to do so.¹³ Reforms to (HEPPP) provided for in the 2016-17 and 2017-18 Budgets are outlined below.

HEPPP Reforms - 2016-17 Budget

- 1.29 In the 2016-17 Budget the Government announced it would ‘achieve efficiencies of \$152.2 million over four years from 2016-17 from the Higher Education Participation Program’ to fund budget repair, the Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, and the International Education Strategy. It went on to say that it would ‘continue to provide \$553.2 million under the Program’.¹⁴

HEPPP Reforms - 2017-18 Budget

- 1.30 From 1 January 2018, the Government reformed HEPPP into two components—the Access and Participation Fund and the National Priorities Pool. The Participation and Partnership components of HEPPP will be combined to form the Access and Participation Fund, with universities required to allocate a minimum amount of funding to partnership activities.¹⁵
- 1.31 Funding from the Access and Participation Fund to be provided in two streams:
- a legislated loading of \$985 (indexed) per low SES student will be introduced to provide funding that is certain, calibrated to university need and able to facilitate longer term planning and projects, and
 - performance funding (\$13.3 million per year indexed) for universities that improve their average success rates for low SES or Indigenous students.¹⁶

¹³ See <<https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-participation-and-partnerships-programme-heppp>> accessed 10 November 2017.

¹⁴ See <https://www.budget.gov.au/2016-17/content/bp2/html/bp2_expense-10.htm> accessed 8 May 2018.

¹⁵ See <<https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-participation-and-partnerships-programme-heppp>> accessed 10 November 2017. The Australian Government's proposed higher education reform package remains in the Senate

¹⁶ See <<https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-participation-and-partnerships-programme-heppp>> accessed 10 November 2017.

- 1.32 The National Priorities Pool will have an allocation of \$9.5 million per year (indexed) and the Government intends it to have a greater focus on rigorous evaluative research and encourage outreach collaboration between universities.¹⁷
- 1.33 The reforms are intended to increase accountability through better development of a HEPPP evaluation framework and streamlining administrative and reporting requirements.¹⁸

Core skills for work developmental framework

- 1.34 The Core Skills for Work Developmental Framework (CSfW) describes the core non-technical skills that have been identified by Australian employers as important for successful participation in work.
- 1.35 The CSfW can be used in a number of ways. For example:
- Educators, trainers and those who work with job seekers can use the framework to develop a common language and understanding about the skills and knowledge employers are looking for, and assist people looking for work to clearly describe their strengths, as well as areas for improvement.
- Educators, trainers and those who work with job seekers can use the framework to develop resources and programmes that support people to develop the skills and knowledge that employers want.¹⁹

Preparing secondary students for work

- 1.36 *Preparing Secondary Students for Work* is a document by the Educational Council that sets out a framework for vocational learning and vocational education and training (VET) delivered to secondary students. It addresses issues that the Committee has been interested in in a number of its previous inquiries as well as this inquiry.

¹⁷ See <<https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-participation-and-partnerships-programme-heppp>> accessed 10 November 2017.

¹⁸ See <<https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-participation-and-partnerships-programme-heppp>> accessed 10 November 2017.

¹⁹ Australian Government, Department of Industry, Innovation, Climate Change, Science Research and Tertiary Education and Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, *Core Skills for Work Framework*, 2013, p. 14. See <<https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/cswf-framework.pdf>> accessed 11 December 2017.

1.37 The framework is a theoretical and policy document that outlines its main findings under the following headings:

- Clarity;
- Collaboration;
- Confidence; and
- Core systems.

1.38 The information is presented in a clear and concise way and it is worth setting out the key points made under these headings in full:

Clarity of terminology, purpose and expectations for vocational learning and VET delivered to secondary students requires that:

- schools, school systems, employers and RTOs²⁰ incorporate the distinction between vocational learning and VET into what they do and how they communicate
- schools, school systems, employers and RTOs recognise the different purpose of work experience and structured work placements, and the different outcomes expected from them.²¹

Collaboration is most effective in supporting vocational learning and VET delivered to secondary students when:

- schools create opportunities for student engagement with employers;
- schools, school systems, RTOs and employers understand the benefits of collaborating and seek opportunities to do so;
- consultation is an integral part of national, state and territory policy development processes;
- consultation on changes to the VET system includes schools and school systems; and
- school systems, VET regulators, training package developers and other stakeholders collaborate to resolve issues at the intersections between policies.²²

²⁰ Registered Training Organisations.

²¹ Education Council, *Preparing Secondary Students for Work*, 2014, p. 8. See <https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/preparing_secondary_students_for_work_2014.pdf> accessed 20 November 2017.

²² Education Council, *Preparing Secondary Students for Work*, 2014, p. 11. See <https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/preparing_secondary_students_for_work_2014.pdf> accessed 20 November 2017.

Confidence in vocational learning and VET delivered to secondary students is greater when:

- students and parents have accurate, up-to-date, impartial and student-friendly information about vocational learning, VET and school-based apprenticeships and traineeships;
- teachers and career advisers have opportunities to update their knowledge of current workplaces and practices;
- employers have opportunities to be involved in the design, delivery and assessment of vocational learning and VET;
- mechanisms exist to engage with employers and industry to determine which VET qualifications are appropriate to deliver to secondary students and in what circumstances;
- RTOs give school students and parents accurate information about individual VET qualifications, including benefits, costs and future implications;
- schools, employers and RTOs collaborate to ensure streamlined arrangements for individual school-based apprentices and trainees;
- schools, employers and RTOs promote the benefits of school-based apprenticeships and traineeships to students and parents
- employers are involved in the provision of work placement opportunities.²³

Core systems improve vocational learning and VET delivered to secondary students when:

- school systems support schools with advice on the different ways they can make VET available to their students;
- governments, working with training package developers, require training packages to provide clear guidance about whether the package is suitable for school-age students (including any preconditions); what settings are suitable for delivery (and any special requirements); what settings are suitable for assessment (and any special requirements); and what are the requirements for structured work placements;
- schools coordinate work experience and structured work placement opportunities, and offer the VET courses that students and employers need;
- policies provide a supportive environment that minimises costs and red tape, and facilitates innovation and local flexibility

²³ Education Council, *Preparing Secondary Students for Work*, 2014, p. 18. See <https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/preparing_secondary_students_for_work_2014.pdf> accessed 20 November 2017.

- short-, medium- and long-term measures of success recognise the many purposes of VET delivered to secondary students, and are based on standards similar to the measures of success for non-VET subjects in secondary schooling.²⁴

Skilling Australians fund

1.39 In the course of this inquiry the Committee received evidence on apprenticeships and traineeships and it notes that the Skilling Australians Fund is a commitment by the Australian Government to ongoing funding for vocational education and training.²⁵

1.40 The Australian Government Department of Education and Training and the Department of Employment's submission points to the fact that apprenticeships and traineeships are a priority for the fund:

The Skilling Australians Fund, announced at the 2017–18 Budget, will build the skills for the workforce of the future by prioritising training for apprenticeships and traineeships in occupations in high demand with future growth potential, including in regional Australia.²⁶

1.41 The Australian Government estimates that:

... \$1.5 billion will be available for the ongoing Fund from 2017–18 to 2020–21. With matched funding from states and territories, this will support up to 300,000 apprenticeships, traineeships, pre-apprenticeships and higher apprenticeships.²⁷

1.42 From 2018-19, revenue for the Fund will be determined by the 'training fund contribution levy', which in turn is determined by the quantity of certain types of skilled work visas. Accordingly, the amount of \$1.5 billion can only be an estimate, and is subject to significant change, if the number of visas changes. That is to say, the exact amount that will be included in the fund cannot be predicted with certainty.

²⁴ Education Council, *Preparing Secondary Students for Work*, 2014, p. 15. See <https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/preparing_secondary_students_for_work_2014.pdf> accessed 20 November 2017.

²⁵ See <<https://www.education.gov.au/skilling-australians-fund>> accessed 21 December 2017.

²⁶ Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, *Submission 76*, p. 5.

²⁷ See <<https://www.education.gov.au/skilling-australians-fund>> accessed 21 December 2017.

- 1.43 The establishment of this fund should also be considered against the context of the Government's cuts of more than \$2.8 billion from TAFE, skills and training since coming to office.

Studies, research and reports

- 1.44 The following section lists some key reports and studies that informed the Committee's deliberations. The list is not exhaustive and separate reports dealing with specific issues are dealt with in their respective chapters.

The new work smarts: thriving in the new work order

- 1.45 The Foundation for Young Australians' (FYA) report *The New Work Smarts: Thriving in the New Work Order*²⁸ is the fifth instalment of the FYA's New Work Order research series which has explored the ways in which automation, globalisation and flexibility are changing the way Australians work, and the implications of these shifts for young Australians.
- 1.46 The report's stated aim is as follows:
- Through identifying the skills that will be in most demand across the economy in 2030, this report seeks to increase the match between the skills workers possess and the skills they will need.²⁹
- 1.47 The issues addressed in the report and the context in which it was written – that of a changing work environment – were central to the inquiry. The inquiry was concerned with the education system and the report makes a strong case for the way in which progressive education systems must work in the future:
- Around the world, the most progressive education systems are focusing on developing the 'new work smart' workforce of the future. They offer immersive, project based and real-world learning experiences that go beyond the classroom environment, such as working with local businesses or facilitating art and film projects in local communities. These learning experiences are best suited to developing the future-proof enterprising and career management skills that will be most in demand and most highly

²⁸ Foundation for Young Australians, *The New Work Smarts: Thriving in the New Work Order*, <https://www.fya.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/FYA_TheNewWorkSmarts_July2017.pdf> accessed 16 August 2017.

²⁹ Foundation for Young Australians, *The New Work Smarts: Thriving in the New Work Order*, p. 3, <https://www.fya.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/FYA_TheNewWorkSmarts_July2017.pdf> accessed 17 August 2017.

portable in the future of work, and instil in young people the enthusiasm for ongoing learning that will be critical for their future success.³⁰

International assessment of adult competencies

1.48 The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development measures adult skills and competencies through the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) survey.³¹

1.49 The adult skills and competencies measured include:

- literacy;
- numeracy and problem solving skills, with a particular focus on skills used at work;
- computer and 'information age' skills; and,
- drivers of low literacy performance.³²

1.50 The *Country Note – Survey of Adult Skills first results*³³ on Australia lists the following key issues:

- Adults (aged 16-65) in Australia show above-average proficiency in literacy, and problem solving in technology-rich environments compared with adults in the other countries participating in the survey, but only show average proficiency in numeracy.
- Foreign-language immigrants in Australia have lower levels of literacy proficiency than the native-born and native-language Australians, although the difference observed is amongst the lowest across the participating countries.
- The link between higher literacy and such social outcomes as trust in others, participation in volunteer and associative activities, belief that an individual can have an impact on the political process, and better health is stronger in Australia than in most other countries.

³⁰ Foundation for Young Australians, *The New Work Smarts: Thriving in the New Work Order*, p. 8, <https://www.fya.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/FYA_TheNewWorkSmarts_July2017.pdf> accessed 17 August 2017.

³¹ See <<https://www.employment.gov.au/programme-international-assessment-adult-competencies-piaac>> accessed 6 September 2017.

³² See <<https://www.employment.gov.au/programme-international-assessment-adult-competencies-piaac>> accessed 6 September 2017.

³³ OECD, *Australia, – Country Note – Survey of Adult Skills First Results*: p.1.

- Australia shows a good match between the literacy proficiency of workers and the demands of their jobs.

Understanding how Gen Z transition into further education and employment

- 1.51 Year13, Australia's largest digital platform for high-school leavers, conducted research into how young people are feeling about the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR), parents and career advisors, employment, higher education and VET.
- 1.52 Year13's surveys saw over 7,300 responses and the results were compiled in the research paper '*After the ATAR: Understanding How Gen Z Transition into Further Education and Employment*', released on July 27, 2017. The Committee accepted this report as Exhibit One.
- 1.53 The 'key takeaways' of the report were as follows:
- 55 per cent of students think their school cares more about their ATAR then (sic) them as students;
 - 89 per cent of students use their phone during class;
 - 51 per cent of youth identify a need to see a mental health professional;
 - 49 per cent don't feel threatened at all by automation;
 - 39 per cent don't see apprenticeships and degrees as equal; and,
 - 62 per cent of university students have considered dropping out.³⁴
- 1.54 The above reports, coupled with submissions received and evidence taken at hearings, informed the Committee during its deliberations and in preparation of this final report.

³⁴ Year13, '*After the ATAR: Understanding How Gen Z Transition into Further Education and Employment*', *Exhibit 1*, p. 10.

2. Teaching and teachers

- 2.1 This chapter considers issues including the status of the teaching profession, attracting talent to teaching, pre-qualification learning and development, post-qualification and in-service learning and development, and the potential impediments to teachers honing their craft, furthering their professionalism, and deploying their skills well.
- 2.2 A student's teacher will have the greatest impact on a student's achievement. Dr Peter Goss makes this point starkly when he states:

In the Australian context, a student with a teacher in the top 10 per cent of teachers in the country can achieve in half a year what a student with a bottom 10 per cent teacher achieves in a full year.¹

Entry into undergraduate study

- 2.3 Given the impact that teachers can have on students' achievement, the Committee was interested in the university entrance score required for a degree in education. The following table compares the entrance scores for a degree in education with arts and law at a number of universities. Scores are expressed as an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) which is a mark out of 100.

¹ Leigh, A, 2010, cited in Jensen, B, 2010 in Goss, P., 'Towards an adaptive education system in Australia', *Exhibit 2*, p. 4.

Table 2.1 Comparison of university entrance scores

University	Education	Arts	Law
Charles Sturt	70.00	65.00	N/A
Griffith	72.75	63.55	83.70
La Trobe	60.00 ² -78.25 ³	50.00	80.00
Macquarie	75.00	75.00	97.00
Southern Cross	70.00	68.00	89.00

Source: Universities Admissions Centre, Cut-offs for Main Round offers, 2016-17 admissions⁴

2.4 In addition the Committee asked witnesses in Brisbane about the requirements for admission to an undergraduate education course. The Queensland equivalent to the ATAR is the OP (overall position) expressed as a rank between 1 and 25. The OP required was between 9 and 15.

2.5 The Committee received evidence to suggest that the university entrance score needed for teaching was more an issue of economics, remuneration and status, than ability. Professor Doune Macdonald Pro Vice-Chancellor, Teaching and Learning, University of Queensland drew these points together when she stated:

Apart from the money, I think there's a status issue about teaching. We know from some of the international research that where teachers are held in high regard, such as in some of the Scandinavian countries, where they are also well paid, they are attracting some of the highest school leavers in terms of academic entry. There is a mix of factors, but certainly status is another one.⁵

2.6 Dr Kenneth Young, Lecturer in Education, University of the Sunshine Coast, argues that a university entrance score is not as important as the personal qualities a student may bring to their teaching course and career:

² B Education (Primary).

³ B Education (Secondary).

⁴ See <<http://www.uac.edu.au/documents/atar/2017-cutoffs-main.pdf>> accessed 20 December 2017.

⁵ Professor Doune Macdonald, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Teaching and Learning, University of Queensland, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 November 2017, p. 4.

I've seen plenty of people who've come through as an undergraduate student that might have an OP of 15 or 14, and that may not set them in the top percentile, but they bring with them an enormous amount of dedication and the capacity to work professionally and effectively with young people...⁶

- 2.7 Dr Young also outlined the extra developmental/academic barriers that must be cleared by students before they can progress to being teachers:

For the students that are looking for program completion and teacher registration now, everyone has to pass the LAN-type test, which places them in the top 30 per cent for literacy and numeracy in Australia. Coming through QTAC, they now have to do a non-academic performance analysis to see if they're the right sort of person to come into teaching. As of next year, another hoop to jump through is the graduate teacher performance assessment task, and the final placement of their teacher program where they are moderated as to whether they are an appropriate teacher. There are a whole heap of hoops to jump through.⁷

- 2.8 This evidence suggests that, whatever the university entrance score, a teaching degree allows students to learn and grow into the role of a teacher. Suggestions such as 'raising the university entrance score for teaching' may not, without a change in remuneration and attitudes to teaching result in better teachers.
- 2.9 The Committee sought more evidence as to how to measure the impact of teachers.

Supporting teachers to understand and measure gain

- 2.10 The evidence above suggests better teachers are ones who have a better impact on their students. This raises the question of how one should measure such impact? The Grattan Institute suggested that teacher impact should be judged by school, cohort and student gain, an issue discussed in the next chapter:

Analysing impact is all about student gain. We shouldn't judge teacher impact by how much students know, but by how much students have learned.⁸

⁶ Dr Kenneth Young, Lecturer in Education, University of the Sunshine Coast, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 November 2017, pp. 4 – 5.

⁷ Dr Kenneth Young, Lecturer in Education, University of the Sunshine Coast, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 November 2017, p. 5.

⁸ Grattan Institute, *Submission 54*, p. 3.

- 2.11 Ms Julie Sonneman, Fellow, School Education, Grattan Institute, spoke at length about the importance of focussing on ‘student progress in school as opposed to just achievement at a point in time’ and stated that this:

...can help students develop a broader growth mindset and re-enforces the value of effort and persistence, which are shown to be related to later success in life and work.⁹

- 2.12 In addition, Ms Sonneman suggested that:

... a focus on progress measures in school can help improve teaching through the fact that it can help teachers assess the impact of their learning strategies and which are working best.¹⁰

- 2.13 These considerations beg the question as to how teachers can measure and understand their students’ progress. The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL), in focussing on what teachers need day-to-day to measure the gain of their students, stated that:

Australian teachers need to be able to easily access individual and in-time data on the growth of students’ learning if they are to be able to make professional judgements about how best to address student needs. However, the time, capacity and expertise required for teachers to undertake high quality formative assessment is significant. Therefore work is needed to support teachers to quickly and accurately assess student progress at any time, enabling teachers to better measure the impact of their practice. Exploration of a technological solution, together with appropriate implementation support, may be a way to address this. Work in this area will help teachers ensure that every student gains at least one year’s growth for every year of schooling.¹¹

Professional development, and time pressures

- 2.14 Dr Goss argues that ‘only the highest-impact (fittest) teaching approaches should survive and spread’.¹²
- 2.15 According to Dr Goss teachers need ‘time, tools and training along with teamwork and trust’.¹³

⁹ Ms Julie Sonneman, Fellow, School Education, Grattan Institute, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne 18 September 2017, p. 2.

¹⁰ Ms Julie Sonneman, Fellow, School Education, Grattan Institute, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne 18 September 2017, p. 2.

¹¹ Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, *Submission 68*, p. 1.

¹² Dr Peter Goss, ‘Towards an adaptive education system in Australia’, *Exhibit 2*, p. 4.

- 2.16 The Committee received some evidence on the time teachers spend in the classroom and how that time is used and on the importance of professional development for teachers.
- 2.17 Dr Young suggested that the time teachers spend actually teaching is affected by the time they spend dealing with social issues and suggested that half of their time is spent teaching whilst the other half of their time:
- ... has nothing to do with teaching; it's about dealing with social issues that are going on at school. It's student care. It's a whole range of other things.¹⁴
- 2.18 In response to the suggestion that schools could perhaps require more social workers to free up teachers' time, Ms Robyn Anderson, Senior Research Associate, Queensland University of Technology, commented that she had visited a school in Europe where teachers taught and that any other extracurricular activity was carried out by other staff.¹⁵
- 2.19 Dr Young also expressed the desire for teachers to undertake professional development and the barriers to them doing so:
- ... teachers are desperate and very willing to do professional development. They will take as much as they can possibly do. I am probably speaking now from a DET point of view, which is the schools that I am most familiar with. Getting release of any kind during the day for a teacher from those schools is basically impossible. So, at the moment, the model probably for most state school teachers is they are doing professional development off their own bat, in their own time, usually at their own cost...¹⁶
- 2.20 The evidence suggests that better teachers have a higher impact and that this impact is best measured by school, cohort and student gain. Currently the major measurements of student gain in schools are the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

¹³ Dr Peter Goss, 'Towards an adaptive education system in Australia', *Exhibit 2*, p. 14.

¹⁴ Dr Kenneth Young, Lecturer in Education, University of the Sunshine Coast, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 November 2017, p. 10.

¹⁵ Ms Robyn Anderson, Senior Research Associate, Queensland University of Technology, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 November 2017, p. 11.

¹⁶ Dr Kenneth Young, Lecturer in Education, University of the Sunshine Coast, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 November 2017, p. 8.

Action now, classroom ready teachers report

2.21 The Committee notes the *Action Now, Classroom Ready Teachers - Report of the Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group (TEMAG)* which stated that:

The evidence is clear: enhancing the capability of teachers is vital to raising the overall quality of Australia's school system and lifting student outcomes. Action to improve the quality of teachers in Australian schools must begin when they are first prepared for the profession.¹⁷

2.22 The report made the following key findings of fact:

- National standards are weakly applied – the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (Professional Standards) and the Accreditation of Initial Teacher Education Programs in Australia: Standards and Procedures provide a strong foundation for quality assurance and improvement to initial teacher education. However, they are not being effectively applied and implementation timeframes are too slow.
- Need to lift public confidence in initial teacher education – Australians are not confident that all entrants to initial teacher education are the best fit for teaching. This includes the balance of academic skills and personal characteristics needed to be suitable for teaching.
- Evidence of poor practice in a number of programs – Not all initial teacher education programs are equipping graduates with the content knowledge, evidence-based teaching strategies and skills they need to respond to different student learning needs.
- Insufficient integration of teacher education providers with schools and systems – Providers, school systems and schools are not effectively working together in the development of new teachers. This is particularly evident in the professional experience component of initial teacher education, which is critical for the translation of theory into practice.
- Inadequate application of standards – Initial teacher education providers are not rigorously or consistently assessing the classroom readiness of their pre-service teachers against the Professional Standards.
- Insufficient professional support for beginning teachers – Not all graduate teachers are adequately supported once they enter the profession. This means a number of beginning teachers do not reach their full potential, and some may choose to leave the profession.

¹⁷ Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers*, December 2014, p. viii.

- Gaps in crucial information, including workforce data – Useful information on the effectiveness of initial teacher education and students entering and graduating from initial teacher education is lacking. This hinders both continuous improvement, and workforce planning, including the ability to address shortages in specialist subject areas.¹⁸

Committee comment

2.23 The Committee feels that the report *Action Now, Classroom Ready Teachers* provides important recommendations in relation to bettering teacher quality and therefore adopts the following recommendations from that report:

- Standards for the quality of initial teacher education be set high, programs rigorously assessed and requirements made transparent.
- The Australian Government acts on the sense of urgency to immediately commence implementing actions to lift the quality of initial teacher education.
- The Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership be reconstituted to undertake a stronger role to ensure high standards of initial teacher education in Australia.
- The Australian Government establish a national initial teacher education regulator through a reconstituted Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership to overhaul and manage the accreditation of initial teacher education programs, and work with the states and territories to ensure rigorous accreditation processes operate effectively with teacher registration.
- Initial accreditation of programs requires higher education providers to demonstrate that their programs have evidence-based pedagogical approaches, effective integration of professional experience, rigorous and iterative assessment of pre-service teachers throughout their education, and final assessments that ensure pre-service teachers are classroom ready. Higher education providers provide a set of measures that assess the effectiveness of their programs in achieving successful graduate outcomes.
- Higher education providers use the national literacy and numeracy test to demonstrate that all pre-service teachers are within the top 30 per cent of the population in personal literacy and numeracy.

¹⁸ Teacher Education Ministerial Advisory Group, *Action Now: Classroom Ready Teachers*, December 2014.

- Higher education providers equip pre-service teachers with data collection and analysis skills to assess the learning needs of all students.
- Higher education providers equip all primary and secondary pre-service teachers with a thorough understanding of the fundamentals of teaching literacy and numeracy.
- Higher education providers equip all primary pre-service teachers with at least one subject specialisation, prioritising science, mathematics or a language. Providers publish specialisations available and numbers of graduates from these programs.
- Higher education providers deliver integrated and structured professional experience throughout initial teacher education programs through formalised partnership agreements with schools.

2.24 The Committee largely adopts these recommendations.

2.25 In relation to professional development the Committee notes that this needs to be a recognised part of a teacher's role. An atmosphere in which time taken for professional development is seen as just as important as actual teaching time should be fostered in schools. Time should be dedicated for teachers to undertake courses in professional development.

2.26 The Committee is swayed by evidence that there needs to be more opportunity for teachers to undertake professional development, to hone their craft, and to better prepare to practice it. The Committee is also persuaded that there should be more social support/social workers in schools so teachers can get on and teach.

2.27 The committee acknowledges the importance of raising the status of the teaching profession in attracting the best possible people to it. This means valuing the work that teachers do, ensuring teachers' remuneration reflects the value placed on education, freeing teachers up to allow them to focus on teaching, and acknowledging outstanding teachers.

Committee recommendations

2.28 Having regard to the evidence above the Committee makes the following recommendations. The Committee notes that the majority of recommendations in the Gonski *Review of Funding for Schooling* report (2011) are reflected in this report.

Recommendation 1

- 2.29** The Committee recommends that standards for the quality of initial teacher education be set high, programs rigorously assessed and requirements made transparent.

Recommendation 2

- 2.30** The Committee recommends that the Australian Government immediately commence implementing the recommendations made herein that are directed to lifting the quality of initial teacher education.

Recommendation 3

- 2.31** The Committee recommends that the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership be reconstituted to undertake a stronger role to ensure high standards of initial teacher education in Australia.

Recommendation 4

- 2.32** The Committee recommends that the Australian Government establish a national initial teacher education regulator through a reconstituted Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership to overhaul and manage the accreditation of initial teacher education programs, and work with the states and territories to ensure rigorous accreditation processes operate effectively with teacher registration.

Recommendation 5

- 2.33** The Committee recommends that in accrediting programs, higher education providers be required to be able to demonstrate that their programs have evidence-based pedagogical approaches, effective integration of professional experience, rigorous and iterative assessment of pre-service teachers throughout their education, and final assessments that ensure pre-service teachers are classroom ready.

Recommendation 6

- 2.34** The Committee recommends that Higher Education providers:
- use the national literacy and numeracy test to demonstrate that all pre-service teachers are within the top 30 per cent of the population in personal literacy and numeracy by the conclusion of their pre-service study; and

- equip pre-service teachers with the training necessary to work within teams that assess the learning needs of all students.

Recommendation 7

2.35 The Committee acknowledges the non-teaching demands on teachers' time, and, with a view to enabling teachers to devote their time to honing and practising their profession and craft, and planning to do same, recommends that the Australian Government, through COAG:

- support and implement a policy to provide more youth workers, social workers and other professionals with specialist experience in supporting young people to transition and/or social support in schools; and
- work to ensure that teachers have reasonable opportunities within working hours for ongoing professional development, and planning.

Recommendation 8

2.36 The Committee recommends that initial teacher education be updated on an ongoing basis through continuing professional development, to ensure that teachers are trained in best-practice approaches and up-to-date thinking. To facilitate this, the Committee recommends that:

- stakeholders including parents' groups, education unions, industry, government, VET providers and universities be engaged in setting requirements for continuing professional development; and
- teachers be given such workload relief as is necessary to make more thorough ongoing development possible.

Recommendation 9

2.37 Acknowledging the importance of raising the status of the teaching profession, the Committee recommends that:

- teachers' working conditions and pay be sufficient to both attract and retain good teachers; and
- consideration be given to ensuring both opportunities for professional development and career paths.

3. Measurements of gain in school

- 3.1 This chapter focusses on the first of the inquiry's Terms of Reference. It begins with a description of the current main measurements of school attainment in Australia, sets out the evidence in relation to these and goes on to focus on 'measurements of gain'.
- 3.2 'Measurement of gain' refers to a student's educational journey over time rather than, for example, an exam which is a snapshot in time. The terms 'gain' plus 'performance' should be contrasted with achievement and attainment. Gain and performance are what the Committee sees as 'measurements of gain' and are a temporal measure of the impact of education whereas achievement and attainment are a snapshot in time.
- 3.3 The importance of this kind of measurement is outlined by Dr Peter Goss in his work *Towards an adaptive education system in Australia* which states:
- ...teachers and schools must be better able to track the progress of their students over time. Putting the right data in the hands of teachers helps them judge their impact on learning and, in turn, fosters individual professional responsibility and collective efficacy, the best forms of accountability.¹
- 3.4 The Committee's view is that in the absence of context, analysis, and interpretive skills, data is of very limited use. If teachers are to be given more raw information they need the time, skills and knowledge to make good use of it.
- 3.5 The Committee was interested in the entirety of a young person's school experience. As student's educational attainment can decline at any point from kindergarten to year 12, making sure that there are appropriate measurements of gain in place is important in all years of student education.

¹ Peter Goss, 'Towards an adaptive education system in Australia', *Exhibit 2*, p. 22.

- 3.6 This chapter will now outline the current main measurements of gain in schools, the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) and the Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

ATAR and NAPLAN as measurements of gain in schools

National assessment program

- 3.7 The National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) is an annual assessment for students in Years 3, 5, 7 and 9. It has been part of the school calendar since 2008.²
- 3.8 NAPLAN tests the sorts of skills that are essential for every child to progress through school and life, such as reading, writing, spelling and numeracy. The assessments are undertaken nationwide, every year, in the second full week in May.³
- 3.9 NAPLAN is made up of tests in the four areas (or ‘domains’) of:
- reading;
 - writing;
 - language conventions (spelling, grammar and punctuation); and,
 - numeracy.⁴
- 3.10 NAPLAN tests skills in literacy and numeracy that are developed over time through the school curriculum.⁵
- 3.11 NAPLAN results (or NAPLAN scale scores) are reported using five scales, one for each of the domains of reading, writing, and numeracy, and two for the language conventions domain (one scale for spelling, and one for grammar and punctuation). Each scale spans all year levels from Year 3 to Year 9 with scores that range from approximately zero to 1000. It is possible for a NAPLAN scale score to be negative.⁶

² See <<https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan>> accessed 12 September 2017.

³ See <<https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan>> accessed 12 September 2017.

⁴ See <<https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan>> accessed 12 September 2017.

⁵ See <<https://www.nap.edu.au/naplan>> accessed 12 September 2017.

⁶ See <<https://www.nap.edu.au/results-and-reports/how-to-interpret/score-equivalence-tables>> accessed 22 December 2017.

Australian tertiary admission rank

- 3.12 Tertiary institutions in Australia have found that a selection rank based on a student's overall academic achievement is the best single predictor of success for most tertiary courses.⁷
- 3.13 The Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) provides a measure of a student's overall academic achievement in relation to that of other students. It is calculated solely for use by institutions, either on its own or with other selection criteria, to rank and select school leavers for their courses.⁸
- 3.14 The ATAR is a rank, not a mark.⁹
- 3.15 The Committee received evidence that indicated that NAPLAN and ATAR may not be the best measurements of student gain. They are measurements that show how much a student knows at a point in time, rather than, as discussed above, how much a student has *increased* their knowledge.
- 3.16 AITSL opined that NAPLAN and PISA are focussed on the macro level of national trends that do not assist teachers in their day-to-day work. AITSL commented that:

Current national student performance measures, including NAPLAN and PISA, provide a big picture view of a particular point in time. While data of this nature can be useful in understanding student performance at the national level and identify trends over time to inform system policies and resourcing, it does not help to inform a teacher's day-to-day approach to targeting strategies for improving the rate of learning for an individual or group of students.¹⁰

- 3.17 The National Apprenticeship Employment Network (NAEN) describe the current measurement tools of gain in schools as 'patchy and inconsistent across the country'.¹¹
- 3.18 The Grattan Institute, quoting its report, *Targeted teaching* states:
- The best schools in Australia are not necessarily those with the best ATAR or NAPLAN scores. They are those that enable their students to make the greatest progress in learning. Whatever a student starts from on the first day of the year, he or she deserves to have made at least a year's worth of progress

⁷ See <<http://www.uac.edu.au/atar/>> accessed 12 September 2017.

⁸ See <<http://www.uac.edu.au/atar/>> accessed 12 September 2017.

⁹ See <<http://www.uac.edu.au/atar/>> accessed 12 September 2017.

¹⁰ Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, *Submission 68*, p. 1.

¹¹ National Apprentice Employment Network, *Submission 46*, p. 1.

by the end of it. Any less, and our students will fail to reach their full potential. Sadly that is too often the case.¹²

3.19 The University of New South Wales (UNSW) submitted that:

[M]easurements of gain, such as ATAR and NAPLAN are unreliable predictors of future academic success and capability. In fact, research suggests that such standardised scores may act as an academic de-motivator, offering only a form of 'false currency' by which students assess their suitability for Higher Education and certain occupations, with an unreliable sense of their academic worth.¹³

3.20 The University of Technology Sydney (UTS) state that they:

...remain concerned at the current fixation of education authorities and the general public on the results of mass testing such as the Australia-wide NAPLAN and the international PISA tests. Our concern is that the emphasis on mass testing appears to assign a value to what is being tested at the expense of other aspects of learning; and that the testing of a narrow set of literacy and numeracy skills – as in NAPLAN – does not, and should not be interpreted as a fulsome description of a student's abilities or capacities.¹⁴

3.21 NAPLAN is not, however, considered consistently effective. Indeed, Ms Robyn Anderson, Senior Research Associate, Queensland University of Technology told the Committee that NAPLAN is:

...unreliable for children under the age of eight. They tend to rely on memory. Their thinking skills aren't well developed. There's a real crossover there. Their memories get full and they often start falling off in their abilities after year 3.¹⁵

3.22 Professor Christine Ure, Alfred Deakin Professor and Head of School of Education, Deakin University observed that:

... schools just advertise their year-12 ATAR scores and that is really the social measure of the quality of that school, whereas it is about how well they connect students to understanding what work life is about. Again, going back

¹² Grattan Institute, *Submission 54*, p. 2.

¹³ The University of New South Wales, *Submission 27*, p. 1.

¹⁴ University of Technology Sydney, *Submission 29*, p. 3.

¹⁵ Ms Robyn Anderson, Senior Research Associate, Queensland University of Technology, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 November 2017, pp. 17-18.

to issues about measures, we don't have measures for that and we don't even have expectations for schools to be delivering that to students.¹⁶

- 3.23 Conversely, the NSW Adult Literacy and Numeracy Council (NSWALNC), a membership based organisation representing adult literacy and numeracy practitioners, researchers, program managers, teacher educators and provider organisations, does see value in tests such as NAPLAN. However:

...focussing on these skills in isolation of the different contexts in people's lives are unlikely to lead to long term benefits.¹⁷

- 3.24 The Grattan Institute's submission suggests an employer is more interested in the effort and persistence a student has shown across their school rather than their grades viewed in isolation:

Imagine an employer, faced with two recent school or university graduates with equally good (but not great) grades. Should they employ the student who had worked hard and improved their grades over time, or the student who used to have great grades but has been cruising? For most jobs, I would employ the former. If nothing else, I would be more confident that the first student understands the value of effort and persistence in life.¹⁸

- 3.25 The evidence suggests that NAPLAN and ATAR may not be best suited for the particular purpose of measuring a school, student or cohort gain. However, as the next section shows, evidence from the Grattan Institute suggested that the data provided through NAPLAN *could* be better used to track student performance.

A new NAPLAN measure: years of progress

- 3.26 The Grattan Institute's *Widening Gaps: What NAPLAN tells us about student progress, Technical Report (Widening Gaps)* seeks to measure and compare relative student progress on the NAPLAN test 'in a way that is robust, easy to interpret, and comparable across different groups of students'.¹⁹ Commenting on NAPLAN scale scores it states the following:

¹⁶ Professor Christine Ure, Alfred Deakin Professor and Head of School of Education, Deakin University, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 17.

¹⁷ NSW Adult Literacy and Numeracy Council, *Submission 41*, p. 2.

¹⁸ Grattan Institute, *Submission 54*, p. 2.

¹⁹ The Grattan Institute, *Widening Gaps: What NAPLAN tells us about student progress, Technical Report* by Dr Peter Goss, Grattan Institute School Education Program Director, and Dr Cameron

While the scores are used to indicate whether a student is above NAPLAN national minimum standards for each year level, they have no other direct interpretation. The scores are an estimate of student skill level at a point in time, a latent concept – the numbers themselves have no particular meaning. Nor are the scores comparable across assessment domains.²⁰

3.27 Grattan Institute’s submission, quoting the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), states that:

Students generally show greater gains in literacy and numeracy in the earlier years than in the later years of schooling, and that students who start with lower NAPLAN scores tend to make greater gains over time than those who start with Higher NAPLAN scores.²¹

3.28 Their submission states that the *Widening Gaps* report:

...presented a new measure, ‘years of progress’, which benchmarks student performance in NAPLAN to the typical student. It allows us to see if students are catching up or falling further behind relative to others.²²

3.29 The submission repeats two recommendations, which it suggests remain relevant today, from the *Widening Gaps* report:

- Adopt Grattan’s new ‘years of progress’ approach to better understand relative student progress and learning gaps; and
- Use analysis of relative student progress to inform system priorities, resource allocation and needs-based funding policies.²³

3.30 NAPLAN and ATAR are large scale testing regimes that produce large amounts of data. NAPLAN in particular, with its scale score, may not be best suited to measuring individual students’ gain though evidence suggests that NAPLAN data can be used to provide measurements of student gain relative to a statistically typical or benchmark student.

Chisholm, Grattan Institute Senior Associate, March 2016, p. 3, <<https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/937-Widening-gaps-technical-report.pdf>> accessed 23 November 2017.

²⁰ The Grattan Institute, *Widening Gaps: What NAPLAN tells us about student progress*, Technical Report by Dr Peter Goss, Grattan Institute School Education Program Director, and Dr Cameron Chisholm, Grattan Institute Senior Associate, March 2016, p. 6, <<https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/937-Widening-gaps-technical-report.pdf>> accessed 23 November 2017.

²¹ ACARA, 2016, Interpreting NAPLAN Results quoted in Grattan Institute, *Submission 54*, p. 5.

²² Grattan Institute, *Submission 54*, p. 7.

²³ Grattan Institute, *Submission 54*, p. 8.

- 3.31 The following evidence tackles the issue of what alternatives to NAPLAN and ATAR could be used as measurements of gain in schools.

Alternatives to NAPLAN and ATAR as measurement of gain in schools

- 3.32 Whilst the evidence above suggests that there should be alternatives to NAPLAN and ATAR as a measurement of gain in schools, no evidence pointed to an existing data measurement that could be used. Evidence to the Committee focussed on what could be measured to indicate student gain.
- 3.33 Ms Sonneman states that the focus of measure needs to move from big data such as NAPLAN and from traditional academic domains:

We believe that, in Australia, there's been a large focus on big data—so the use of NAPLAN and standardised tests—as opposed to small data, data in the hands of teachers, to actually assess where students are at in their progress and how to improve their teaching. We've also focused a lot on the traditional academic domains, rather than the 21st century skills, such as creativity and resilience and communications skills. This is not necessarily because we haven't articulated or clear goals for achieving those skills but is mainly because trying to measure progress in those skills is still in its infancy, although things are moving.²⁴

- 3.34 The NSWALNC expressed concern with a focus on measurements of gain in school as they see 'education as a foundation for lifelong learning'.²⁵ NSWALNC contend that:

... for measurements of gain in school to be in any way predictive of success in the workplace, those measurements need to encompass that broad range of cognitive and affective skills; the 'soft' employability skills. Unfortunately, such measurements have proven difficult to devise and the focus has been placed on performance of literacy and numeracy skills since this is easily assessable; the underpinning constituents of competence such as social and affective skills are therefore neglected.²⁶

- 3.35 The NSWALNC asserts that generic measurement of literacy and numeracy skills is not a 'useful approach' and suggested that the:

²⁴ Ms Julie Sonneman, Fellow, School Education, Grattan Institute, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 2.

²⁵ NSW Adult Literacy and Numeracy Council, *Submission 41*, p. 1.

²⁶ NSW Adult Literacy and Numeracy Council, *Submission 41*, p. 1.

... the relationship between literacy, numeracy and workplace performance cannot be understood without a socio-cultural perspective. The literacy and numeracy skills required in any particular workplace, and indeed any particular role within that workplace, cannot be understood without reference to that specific context.²⁷

- 3.36 Measurements of gain such as the OLNA (Western Australia's online literacy and numeracy assessment) and workplace learning feedback are, according to the National Apprentice Employment Network (NAEN):

... far more valuable to an employer, as they demonstrate both the baseline literacy and numeracy skills of the individual, in addition to the enterprising/soft skills required to adapt to a workplace environment.²⁸

- 3.37 The NAEN expressed concern that:

[W]hile the ATAR remains the pinnacle measure of success in schools, and attributes to the ranking of the school in the broader education environment, then the emphasis will continue to be on academic gain and not on the holistic growth and readiness of the student to manage life post-school, in whichever direction they choose to pursue.²⁹

- 3.38 The NAEN believe that:

[M]ore emphasis is required on the measurement of behavioural traits that employers seek, including qualities such as positive attitude, resilience, persistence, consistency of improvement and initiative.³⁰

- 3.39 In NAEN's opinion school ranking systems:

... should be revisited and schools should be ranked on broader measures than ATAR achievements.³¹

- 3.40 Year13, a group who utilise digital tools and processes with stakeholders to effectively engage and inform young people online about opportunities post year 12, argue that:

Measurement of gain in school is currently limited to academic success in the ATAR when we think about something measurable that is taken beyond the

²⁷ NSW Adult Literacy and Numeracy Council, *Submission 41*, pp. 1-2.

²⁸ National Apprentice Employment Network, *Submission 46*, p. 1.

²⁹ National Apprentice Employment Network, *Submission 46*, p. 1.

³⁰ National Apprentice Employment Network, *Submission 46*, p. 1.

³¹ National Apprentice Employment Network, *Submission 46*, p. 1.

school grounds. Australian youth are becoming increasingly aware that their worth and intelligence is more than just the ATAR, despite their schools telling them otherwise. This is resulting in incredible disengagement within school classrooms, increased mental health issues and general distrust in the education system and wider government.³²

- 3.41 Year13 submit that young people should be provided other opportunities to highlight their unique characteristics and personalities and that a:

... more holistic education, where there are clearer and broader measurements of gain is integral in order for students to smoothly enter employment, further education and general life.³³

- 3.42 The Mitchell Institute agreed with the above proposition and state that:

...measures of academic achievement are the key priority – as demonstrated by the emphasis that many schools place on lifting National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) results and Australian Tertiary Admission Ranks (ATAR). These proxy measures of achievement tend to drive the priorities of teachers, school leaders and education departments, and are used as the main indicator of both student learning, and school and system effectiveness.

While literacy and numeracy are core foundations of learning, the research is clear that young people need more to thrive in the workforce and over their lifetime.³⁴

- 3.43 The evidence above suggests that NAPLAN, and ATAR in particular, are not considered to be the best measurements of gain of students in education. It is also clear that studying for, and the skills tested in ATAR, do not necessarily provide, in the eyes of some employers, the best grounding for employment.

‘Soft skills’

- 3.44 The Mitchell Institute’s submission described soft skills as follows:

Capabilities, which are also widely referred to as non-cognitive skills, enterprise skills, 21st Century skills or soft skills, are the set of skills,

³² Year 13, *Submission 72*, p. 2.

³³ Year 13, *Submission 72*, p. 2.

³⁴ Mitchell Institute, *Submission 19*, p. 2.

behaviours and dispositions which enable individuals to translate their knowledge and skills into meaningful action in changing contexts.³⁵

3.45 The Australian Curriculum uses the term ‘General Capabilities’:

The seven General Capabilities in the Australian Curriculum are: Literacy, Numeracy, ICT Capability, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Intercultural Understanding and Ethical Understanding.³⁶

3.46 The Committee has decided to use the term ‘soft skills’ to encompass non-cognitive skills, enterprise skills and 21st Century skills. The Committee notes that care ‘needs to be taken in the context and exact nature of the definitions.’³⁷

3.47 The Committee received much evidence on the issue of soft skills, 21st Century skills or enterprise skills in its recent inquiry into innovation and creativity. The evidence to this inquiry, some of which is quoted below, was broadly similar to evidence received by the Committee previously.

3.48 In its report for the Innovation and Creativity Inquiry, the Committee recommended that Skills Service Organisations:

...require Vocational Education and Training providers to explicitly assess students’ development of soft skills such as effective communication, team work and problem solving in all relevant qualifications...³⁸

3.49 TAFE Queensland submitted that:

The most significant barrier that employers suggest in engaging school students in a school- based apprenticeship or traineeship, is the lack of soft skills many students possess. Feedback received through TAFE Queensland’s industry engagement activities indicates employers feel school leavers are not provided with the necessary employability skills as part of their schooling to be taken on as apprentices/trainees. This includes a lack of understanding of being work ready, for example:

- Punctuality;

³⁵ Mitchell Institute, Submission 19, p. 1.

³⁶ Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, *Supplementary Submission 76.1*. p. 6.

³⁷ Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, *Supplementary Submission 76.1*. p. 6.

³⁸ Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Training, *Innovation and creativity: Inquiry into innovation and creativity: workforce for the new economy*, Parliamentary Paper: 61/2017, p. 74.

- Willingness to accept authority and critical feedback;
- Use of mobile phones and social media in the workplace.³⁹

3.50 The University of New South Wales makes the point that Work Integrated Learning (WIL) is one way in which students can be helped to gain soft skills. Their submission states:

WIL provides an opportunity for students not only to apply theory to practice, but also to focus upon and develop essential non-technical or 'soft' skills relating specifically to the industry in which they will eventually be employed, and positioning them to navigate more strategically a shifting labour market.⁴⁰

3.51 WIL is another issue on which the Committee took a great deal of evidence during its Innovation and Creativity Inquiry. Having considered that evidence the Committee recommended that:

- Australian Government funding to VET maximises the provision of work integrated learning opportunities⁴¹; and
- the Department of Employment investigate options for a national work integrated learning framework which includes reporting requirements.⁴²

3.52 Year13 informed the Committee of the frustration of young people whose:

... soft skills often go unrecognised and are consequently undervalued, and they maintain a negative association with their senior schooling years and the ATAR. This drastically encourages disengagement in the classroom, and there is an urgent need for a shift in the system to accommodate the future of work.⁴³

3.53 State Local Learning & Employment Networks (LLEN) succinctly summed up the evidence suggesting WIL is integral to the gaining of soft skills when they pointed out that:

³⁹ TAFE Queensland, *Submission 42*, p. 6.

⁴⁰ University of New South Wales, *Submission 27*, p. 6.

⁴¹ House of Representatives, Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Training, *Innovation and creativity: Inquiry into innovation and creativity: workforce for the new economy*, Parliamentary Paper: 61/2017, p. 70.

⁴² House of Representatives, Standing Committee on Education, Employment and Training, *Innovation and creativity: Inquiry into innovation and creativity: workforce for the new economy*, Parliamentary Paper: 61/2017, p. 92.

⁴³ Year 13, *Submission 72*, p. 5.

Immersion of school students within the work place enhances the understanding of a modern workplace and the 'soft skills' required and supports their pathways into further education, training and or employment.⁴⁴

3.54 TAFE Directors Australia pointed out that:

...high-quality VET qualifications combine the hard and soft skills employers need with the knowledge that underpins those skills. This means that holders of these qualifications won't need to be retrained as often or for as long as many of their peers.⁴⁵

3.55 The Committee discussed whether soft skills or 21st Century Skills could be tested under NAPLAN and the evidence provided by Ms Anderson was that '[I]t costs a lot of money.'⁴⁶

3.56 Soft skills can make the difference between a young person getting employed and not getting employed. However, these skills are difficult to teach and assess. They are usually 'picked up' in the workplace and, therefore, it greatly benefits students to have more access to workplaces to be able to show prospective employers that they have such skills.

3.57 However, it is difficult to measure gain in relation to soft skills. For example, Mr David Pattie from the Department of Education and Training told the Committee that

...we definitely measure literacy and numeracy. We deliver it as part of the curriculum. These 21st century skills are a bit more difficult to measure.⁴⁷

3.58 Ms Beth Blackwood from the Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia said:

...there is still only rudimentary means of being able to measure those soft skills, there is undoubtedly an emphasis for all students, whether they take those VET programs or whether they take the university pathway, to acquire

⁴⁴ State Local Learning & Employment Networks, *Submission 37*, p. 2.

⁴⁵ TAFE Directors Australia, *Submission 33*, p. 5.

⁴⁶ Ms Robyn Anderson, Senior Research Associate, Queensland University of Technology, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 November 2017, p. 16.

⁴⁷ Mr David Pattie, Acting Group Manager, Improving Student Outcomes Group, Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, Canberra, 4 September 2017, p. 5.

those skills. We know they need them to be adaptive in this industrial environment.⁴⁸

Committee comment

- 3.59 It is imperative that passionate and competent teachers are supported and recognised for the excellent work they do. Evidence to the Committee shows that better teachers are ones who have a better impact on their students. The key then, is how to measure this impact.
- 3.60 Measuring teacher impact on individual students is not easy and the Committee found that there are tests currently used to assess where students are at in their progress which, in turn, shows teacher impact.
- 3.61 The Committee sees a need for work to be done on how data from NAPLAN and ATAR can be better used, as NAPLAN data is with the Grattan Institute's *Years of Progress*, as a measure of student gain.
- 3.62 As the Grattan Institute's evidence shows, NAPLAN data can be used to provide better measurements of student gain. NAPLAN and ATAR should be viewed as important data sets that can be manipulated to provide different types of reporting. Research should be undertaken to look at the data sets provided by NAPLAN and ATAR testing and the different measurements that may be gained by using those data sets.
- 3.63 As the evidence cited above shows, there is a need for measurements of gain, referring to a student's educational journey over time. Such measurements would be supported by students and employers.
- 3.64 Whilst the Committee acknowledges the importance of soft or 21st Century skills, teaching these skills should not come at the cost of teaching literacy and numeracy. Literacy, digital literacy and numeracy are the bedrock upon which all careers rely. School curriculums should have units of study that increase a student's skills and capabilities in these areas as well as the areas of soft skills.
- 3.65 One of the most important ways in which a student can be prepared for work is to engage in work. Although not quantifiable in the way ATAR is, work experience should be seen as an excellent measure of gain.

⁴⁸ Ms Beth Blackwood, Chief Executive Officer, Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, Canberra, 4 September 2017, p. 15.

3.66 In the VET arena integrating this can be best achieved with Work Integrated Learning (WIL). As shown above, the Committee has already considered, and made recommendations on, this issue. However, it feels that more work could be done at the secondary school level to assist students in recognising their career goals and their areas of strength such as giving students the ability to participate in:

- work experience and volunteer work;
- adult learning environments; and
- career assessment and career guidance activities.

Committee recommendations

3.67 Having regard to the evidence above the Committee makes the following recommendations.

Recommendation 10

3.68 **The Committee recommends that further research be undertaken into the better use of NAPLAN and ATAR for the purpose of measuring gain, with appropriate metrics to be included as part of NAPLAN reports.**

Recommendation 11

3.69 **The Committee recommends that further research be undertaken into measurements of gain, referring to a student educational journey over time. Without limiting the foregoing, the Committee recommends that research be undertaken as to how to measure gain in relation to the teaching and learning of soft skills.**

Recommendation 12

3.70 **The Committee recommends that schools incorporate into their curriculum literacy, digital literacy, numeracy and soft skills to prepare students for post-school education, training and work.**

Recommendation 13

3.71 **The Committee recommends that stakeholders work together to enable secondary schools to increase delivery of:**

- work experience and volunteer work;
- adult learning environments; and

- career assessment and career guidance activities in order to assist students in recognising their career goals and their areas of strength.

Recommendation 14

3.72 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government review the differing ways in which industry connections are organised in schools compared with in VET and compared with in higher education, with a view to:

- considering what constitutes best-practice;
- looking at ‘what works’ to maximise access to quality work-integrated learning opportunities;
- identifying ways that both education providers and industry can be proactive in establishing work integrated learning opportunities; and
- considering how best to measure the success or otherwise of work-integrated learning arrangements.

4. Opportunities to better inform and support students in relation to post-school education and training

Australian government schemes

- 4.1 The Committee received evidence about Youth Jobs PaTH known as PaTH (Prepare – Trial – Hire). The policy intent and program of PaTH is outlined in chapter one. The following section looks at some of the evidence received on PaTH.

Youth jobs

- 4.2 The Australian Government ‘introduced the \$763 million Youth Jobs PaTH as part of the Youth Employment Package in the 2016–17 Budget.’¹
- 4.3 The Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment’s joint submission shows that:

As at 25 July 2017, 1,790 unique Internship vacancies have been advertised via the jobactive website. 979 internship placements have commenced of which 515 were still active. While the program is still bedding down following its implementation, the program is showing early signs of success with 188 young people gaining employment as a result of the program.²

¹ Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, *Submission 76*, p. 23.

² Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, *Submission 76*, p. 23.

4.4 Of the 464 (979 minus 515) ended internships:

- 234 completed; of which
 - 80 per cent (188) gained employment (179 with the host business and 9 found other employment); and
 - 20 per cent (46) completed the internship without gaining employment.
- 183 were ended early without employment; of which
 - 59 per cent (108) were ended early by interns; and
 - 41 per cent (75) were ended early by businesses.
- 47 were ended pending the outcome of the Internship.³

4.5 A majority of “interns” gaining employment were employed in ‘Accommodation and Food Services’ (58), ‘Other Services’ (27) and ‘Retail Trade’ (44).⁴

4.6 The Committee was interested in finding out if these roles were full time or casual. The Department of Employment stated that it:

...does not yet have information on the tenure of employment for people who complete an internship and are offered employment. ⁵

4.7 The Departments also told the Committee that PaTH will be evaluated:

The evaluation will be conducted over two stages to capture early results, as well as available evidence on outcomes as the program operates over time. Work on an interim evaluation is expected to be completed by December 2018, with insights gained helping to inform policy and program improvement. This will be followed by work on a final evaluation to be completed by the end of 2019. The final evaluation will assess the effectiveness and appropriateness of the Youth Jobs PaTH program. ... Both stages of the evaluation will complement program monitoring and assurance activities, drawing on administrative data, quantitative surveys and in-depth interviews and focus groups. This will include capturing employer and participant perspectives on why placements may have ended early.⁶

³ Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, *Supplementary Submission 76.1*, p. 8.

⁴ Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, *Supplementary Submission 76.1*, p. 4.

⁵ Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, *Supplementary Submission 76.1*, p. 3.

⁶ Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, *Supplementary Submission 76.1*, p. 9.

- 4.8 Ms Benedikte Jensen, Group Manager, Labour Market Strategy Group, Department of Education and Training, explained to the Committee that Youth Jobs PaTH's employability skills training is focussed on addressing the core skills, including soft skills, which employers ask for.⁷
- 4.9 According to Ms Jenny Lambert, Director, Employment Education and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry:
- [T]he benefit of PaTH is that it gives an opportunity for both sides to actually ask: 'Is this the right fit for the young person? Is it the right type of job that they like to do? Are the peers that they're going to work with and the employer that they're going to work for the right fit for them?' Similarly, it gives the host business an opportunity to try that out.⁸
- 4.10 Additionally, Ms Lambert explained that the program offers employers the opportunity to see whether having an extra employee will be worthwhile for them. The program means that the benefit of an extra staff member can be demonstrated to an employer within their business on a day to day basis.⁹
- 4.11 In discussing the level of subsidy employers using PaTH are able to access, Ms Lambert explained to the Committee the way in which the subsidies work:
- The subsidies are almost the third base. If you've engaged with the system and you think these jobseekers are worth considering, the wage subsidy is a third-level issue, if you like. You've got to get through the first two bases first. I think subsidies can make a difference. The \$10,000 does seem to be a bit of a trigger point to actually get them to proactively seek out the system.¹⁰
- 4.12 Ms Lambert also explained that subsidies are important because they engender a change of behaviour by employers who would otherwise not proactively engage with the system. She also noted that '[S]ubsidies and

⁷ Ms Benedikte Jensen, Group Manager, Labour Market Strategy Group, Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, Canberra, 4 September 2017, p. 7.

⁸ Ms Jenny Lambert, Director, Employment Education and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 23.

⁹ Ms Jenny Lambert, Director, Employment Education and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 23.

¹⁰ Ms Jenny Lambert, Director, Employment Education and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 28.

incentives alone are not going to do it; you still have to find the suitable people'.¹¹

- 4.13 Whilst supportive of PaTH, the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) believe that there are 'significant areas that still need to be addressed in the program in order to make it more successful'¹². ACCI suggested:

- Training opportunities must be directly connected to the placement opportunities. Job seekers should not attend a training program unless internships have already been lined up.
- Training providers should be incentivised to place the attendees of the training program into work, internship or work experience.
- Employment service providers need to be active in filling hosted opportunities posted independently on the system to encourage further engagement of employers with the Jobactive system.¹³

- 4.14 The Australian Services Union was critical of the program, saying:

... we want to try to make someone's first job something that not only has dignity but also is a good experience. I understand that the study produced by the Young Workers Centre this year found that there are low levels of knowledge about the minimum wage, payslips and the information that they should contain, and the fact that there are implications around working cash in hand. So we want to try to get people into their first role with some dignity—that's definitely not happening with the \$4-pathway-type policy at the moment—and, when they are employed, knowing what their basic rights are.¹⁴

Career advisors

- 4.15 One of the main ways that students will receive information on post-school education and training is through career advisors. Career advisors are:

...qualified secondary teachers who have undertaken an approved course of study in careers education. They provide information, guidance and advice to help students explore their education and career options, create a resume,

¹¹ Ms Jenny Lambert, Director, Employment Education and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 28.

¹² Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission 51*, p. 22.

¹³ Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission 51*, p. 22.

¹⁴ Mr Robert Potter, Assistant National Secretary, Australian Services Union, *Transcript of Evidence*, Sydney, 19 September 2017, p. 26.

search for jobs, apply for jobs and/or apply for further study. Careers advisers liaise with parents, teachers, employers, community agencies and training providers.¹⁵

- 4.16 The University of Wollongong (UOW) highlighted the importance of quality career advisors who:

... can motivate students toward successful further education, training or employment and enables them to make well informed career decisions. It gives them invaluable insights into the world of work and what education and training paths they need to undertake to achieve their career goals.¹⁶

- 4.17 The National Roads and Motorists Association (NRMA) provided evidence on the disconnect between the need for career advice and the amount of such advice provided. It stated:

Considering that we, as a community, spend around 13 years educating our youth to be an active part of the community by finding a job but only spend approximately one to six weeks collectively in that period on informing them of what is available for career choice towards the end of their schooling. There is a clear disconnect between providing suitable and appropriate career advice and making sure students are job-ready upon leaving school. Most of the information provided is on standard trade courses such as Hair Dressing, Childcare, Plumbing, and Electrical and so on. But that is merely scraping the surface on the wide range of career possibilities available for students to pursue.¹⁷

- 4.18 The NRMA also suggests a need for VET advisors (mentors) to go to schools or support career advisors to:

...present in an accessible form how the VET sector works and the relationships with *training.gov.au* and Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) and gaining the right qualification for their career.¹⁸

- 4.19 The University of New England added:

Students in schools that provide qualified and well-resourced careers teachers have significantly better prospects. Work experience and mentoring are proven strategies. Unfortunately, the latest research shows investment by

¹⁵ See <<https://www.teach.nsw.edu.au/exploreteaching/types-of-teachers/specialist-teachers/career-adviser>> accessed 8 January 2017.

¹⁶ University of Wollongong, *Submission 31*, p. 6.

¹⁷ NRMA, *Submission 57*, p. 2.

¹⁸ NRMA, *Submission 57*, p. 3.

schools in career resourcing is in decline, with 1 in 4 careers teachers having had their time allocation decrease in the last 3 years.¹⁹

4.20 Year13 informed the Committee about the kind of enhancements to their roles that career advisors would like to be able to implement or take part in:

Career advisors have stated that they would like to enhance their roles through: additional time to spend with students (77%), greater contact with employers/industry (68%), networking with other career professionals (64%), additional time with staff to develop integrated career curriculum (62%), other professional training and/or development (57%).²⁰

4.21 The survey showed that:

Despite the fact that most students believe having a career advisor is beneficial and helps in preparing them for the transition from school, many indicated that more one-on-one time with a career advisor and more personalised advice was necessary, and that career advisors needed to have an understanding of a more diverse range of options in order to cater for every student effectively.²¹

4.22 Year13's conclusion is concerning:

With such limited time, funding, and with 52% of career advisors working part-time it is no wonder that, according to Year13's research, only 26% of young people turn to them for career advice.²²

4.23 Youth Off the Streets, a non-denominational organisation supporting young people (aged 12-25) facing homelessness, substance dependency, abuse and other issues is critical of a perceived under resourcing of career advisors and point out the lack of such specialised roles in disadvantaged schools:

Education professionals and governments rarely view the inclusion of job-readiness programs in school curricula as a priority for students seeking to transition to the workforce. In addition, most teachers, School Careers Advisors and Transition Officers are under-resourced and time-poor, making an emphasis on employment transition problematic. Many disadvantaged schools do not have people filling these specialised roles.²³

¹⁹ University of New England, *Submission 13*, pp. 2-3.

²⁰ Year13, *Submission 72*, p. 2.

²¹ Year13, *After The ATAR: Understanding How Gen Z Transition into Further Education and Employment*, *Exhibit 1*, p. 21.

²² Year13, *Submission 72*, p. 2.

²³ Youth Off the Streets, *Submission 35*, p. 2.

- 4.24 Ms Jenny Lambert, Director, Employment Education and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, informed the Committee that:

There are a lot of opportunities in the apprenticeships and traineeships areas, particularly in traineeships, with the increase in servicing and health areas, where traineeships are so important. We certainly need to be very conscious of providing people with career advice and guidance.²⁴

- 4.25 Ms Lambert suggested that there are other people in the system who could act as career advisors:

... if you think of most principals, they go from school to university themselves and then into school and rise up through the ranks. Their interaction with industry is usually very limited. The interaction with schools is quite often through the P&C [Parents & Citizens] raising money through the local raffles or trivia nights or whatever. So principals need to have better skills to reach out to industry. I think that would be a really important mechanism, getting the school leadership more comfortable with that relationship—what it can deliver to students and why it's important to students.²⁵

- 4.26 The University of New England pointed to a gap in career advisors (referred to as careers teachers) once students leave school:

While school based careers teachers provide assistance for students who are still at school, once they leave there is really nothing in the way of professional quality career advice and support available. 'Getting a job' is not a single event. In the current economic climate, many jobs are part time, casual, short-term, and downsizing and retrenchments are common. It takes longer for young people to find a job, and they can expect to regularly experience periods where they are unemployed or underemployed. Career transitions can happen at any time, so access to quality career support throughout life would be a great support.²⁶

- 4.27 Women in Adult and Vocational Education (WAVE) echo the above and add gender issues to the mix of knowledge a career advisor must have:

²⁴ Ms Jenny Lambert, Director, Employment Education and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 19.

²⁵ Ms Jenny Lambert, Director, Employment, Education and Training, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 22.

²⁶ University of New England, *Submission 13*, p. 2.

Careers practitioners in schools need to be qualified, meet Career Industry Council of Australia (CICA) professional standards, be fully conversant with labour market trends and issues (including gender issues), and update their skills and knowledge regularly.²⁷

- 4.28 Properly trained and resourced career advisors are an important way to inform and support students, and their parents, on post-school education and employment opportunities.
- 4.29 Despite the employment opportunities available via the VET pathway, the Committee received evidence that Australia's current education system is very much geared to a transition to university.

Transitioning to university

An education system geared to university

- 4.30 A recurring theme in evidence to the Committee outlined below was that Australia's education system has focussed on preparing students for university to the detriment of vocational skills. Associate Professor Ruth Schubert, Associate Director, LH Martin Institute, University of Melbourne, explained this phenomenon to the Committee:

We've put so much effort in Australia into increasing the numbers in higher education that we're getting what we've tried to achieve and we haven't focused on higher vocational education. The emerging jobs around the world are in higher technical vocational education, not necessarily in degree based education. We shouldn't beat ourselves up. We've actually achieved what we set out to do. We've focused on economic skills—literacy and numeracy, the traditional skills. We haven't focused on the other skills. We are paying the price in that sense because we don't have a tertiary system that gives equal weight to the higher technical vocational skills, where other systems around the world have put their effort. We've got too many people going into degree based qualifications when they perhaps don't necessarily need to be yet. We've created many problems here with our system. We're not very efficient or effective.²⁸

- 4.31 Professor Richard James, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Undergraduate and Academic), and Deputy Provost, University of Melbourne, sees this focus on

²⁷ WAVE, Submission 48, pp. 3 - 4.

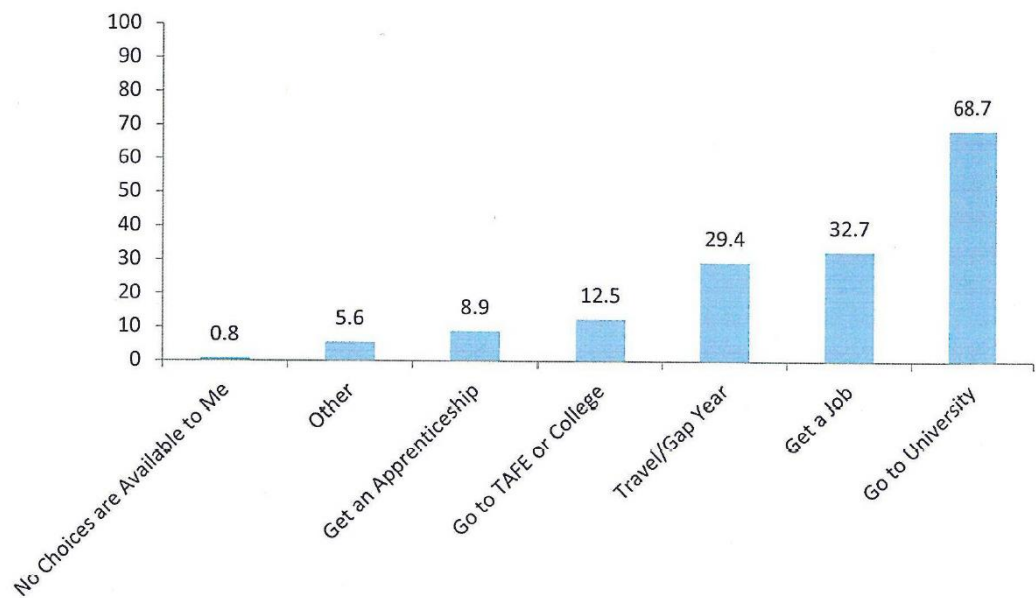
²⁸ Associate Professor Ruth Schubert, Associate Director, LH Martin Institute, University of Melbourne, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 5.

academia as result of the demand driven higher education system which he states has:

...opened up a chasm between vocational education and training and higher education. It's an unfortunate consequence of an otherwise desirable demand-driven system for universities. That chasm in status means that most young people will aspire to going to university, and maybe that's not a bad thing for some; it's possibly a bad thing for others. The chasm has also become, rather awkwardly, a kind of pedagogical chasm as well or a difference in pedagogical beliefs and culture—one that's primarily typically academic and holistic in focus, as the university would argue, in a largely competency based vocational education and training system.²⁹

4.32 Figure 4.1 below illustrates just how powerful the attraction of university is:

Figure 4.1 Percentage of post school pathway for 2016 students



Source: Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, Submission 76, p.11.

4.33 With this focus on university, those students who do not want to go to university need to be more fully included in the secondary school system. Professor John Polesel, Director, Centre for Vocational and Educational

²⁹ Professor Richard James, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Undergraduate and Academic), and Deputy Provost, University of Melbourne, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 5.

Policy and Associate Dean (International), Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, spoke to the Committee on this issue:

If you look at 100 kids who start year 7, only about 40 of them are going to go to university. Yet, if you go into any of our secondary schools, it's all about the university dream. So I think our schools need to provide real choice and a greater variety of programs. They need to be more inclusive for those young people who are not intending to go to university or just won't get there. I think in many cases providing a more adult and welcoming environment at the upper secondary level is really important, particularly for kids who are disengaged and who don't feel that they are welcome within the highly academic sort of program where they're still being treated as children when they're in year 11 and year 12. So I think we need more diversity in our upper secondary schools and less of an exclusive focus on university entry.³⁰

4.34 The National Apprentice Employment Network (NAEN) describes an:

inherent bias towards university, given that all providers in the school sector are, themselves, university educated and as a rule of thumb, have little to no exposure to the apprenticeship and traineeship sector, or the broader vocational education and training sector.³¹

4.35 The NRMA agrees with this:

the education system continues to be strongly geared towards students completing the HSC and securing an Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) to attend university even though a majority of students are likely to pursue straight to work opportunities or vocational educational and training (VET) in their post-school lives.³²

4.36 The Committee took some evidence, though it was not conclusive, that this bias towards university relates to some attrition in university enrolments.³³

³⁰ Professor John Polesel, Director, Centre for Vocational and Educational Policy and Associate Dean (International), Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 8.

³¹ National Apprentice Employment Network, *Submission 46*, p. 2.

³² NRMA, *Submission 57*, p. 1.

³³ See Professor Richard James, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Undergraduate and Academic), and Deputy Provost, University of Melbourne, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne 18 September 2017, p. 13,

According to Professor James, this is something that ‘we need to examine more closely.’³⁴

- 4.37 Evidence to the Committee suggests that universities do not have a problem attracting students. Recommending university to all students, regardless of their fit for such a learning environment is a live issue in Australia’s education system.
- 4.38 In relation to VET, the Committee received evidence suggesting that there is a problem with VET’s status as perceived by parents and students who underestimate the employment opportunities stemming from VET. This is discussed below and elsewhere in this report.

Making a successful transition to university

- 4.39 The Committee received evidence about a range of factors that affect students’ ability to successfully transition from school to university.
- 4.40 Professor Richard James, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Undergraduate and Academic), and Deputy Provost, University of Melbourne described the problem:

I would just add that there is plenty of evidence that something is not working here, whether it’s rational career advice or whole community consciousness around the rush to higher education. The evidence is in attrition rates in first year. Attrition rates are contested, and people dispute what they mean and so on but, at the same time, think of the great expectation that young people should try to get into university, if they can, and then marry that with the dropout rates that can be between 10, 15, 20 and 25 per cent — and, in one case a couple of years ago, 30 per cent — in first year.³⁵

- 4.41 The work that is or could be done in and at schools to prepare students for university life is a factor in the smoothness of the transition. For example, the University of Queensland submitted that students’ expectations could be misaligned with the reality of university, and that they needed to better understand what would be required of them: greater independence and responsibility, and being a self-directed learner. UQ also submitted that

³⁴ See Professor Richard James, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Undergraduate and Academic), and Deputy Provost, University of Melbourne, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne 18 September 2017, p. 14.

³⁵ Professor Richard James, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Undergraduate and Academic), and Deputy Provost, University of Melbourne, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, pp. 12-13.

program selection [prior to commencement] was important for future success (with frequent program changes being an indicator of attrition).³⁶

- 4.42 Ms Patricia Parish, Acting Manager, Careers Service, Western Sydney University, said:

...what we see is a mismatch between their expectations once they arrive at university and what they are actually capable of. They are coming to university and their families don't know the context. They expect a certain career path when they get to university. They are disappointed when they find it is difficult and competitive and just getting to university is not enough.³⁷

- 4.43 Not all of the important factors affecting a student's success (or otherwise) in transitioning to university could be assisted by better preparation while still at school. For example, the University of Queensland submitted that the financial pressure on students affected their ability to transition to university.³⁸

- 4.44 The Regional Universities Network, noting the difference in attainment levels between the regions and the cities, cited financial pressure as a factor.³⁹ Their submission went on to state, in relation to financial pressure:

Our research shows that students at regional universities commonly have complex lives and competing priorities. Many of these students are parents, and many have other caring responsibilities. Many need to engage in paid employment whilst studying and experience significant financial pressure. The cost of study materials and travel to university, on top of the usual expenses of living, including sometimes supporting a family while on a reduced income, mean that students may have to make difficult choices about their priorities that other more traditional students do not need to make. This includes withdrawing from studies. Our research shows significant evidence of a phenomenon that is familiar to those who lead and work in regional universities and that is now increasingly evident in the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training statistics – that regional students dip in and out of study and, on average, take longer than metropolitan students to complete their awards.⁴⁰

³⁶ University of Queensland, *Submission 14*, p. 2.

³⁷ Ms Patricia Parish, Acting Manager, Careers Service, Western Sydney University, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 19 September 2017, p. 5.

³⁸ University of Queensland, *Submission 14*, p. 2.

³⁹ Regional Universities Network, *Submission 10*, p. 4.

⁴⁰ Regional Universities Network, *Submission 10*, p. 8.

Transitioning to vocational education and training

Misconceptions about vocational education and training

4.45 In parallel with the bias towards university education, the Committee heard evidence about a lack of knowledge amongst career advisors and parents about the benefits of VET.

4.46 Mr James Coward, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Restaurants and Catering Industry Association Australia, states that there is potential for the career advisors to explain the benefits of the VET sector more clearly. He added that the average salary of VET graduates is higher than that of a bachelor degree graduate but that this information is not being promoted adequately or received by students. This lack of information affects post-school choices.⁴¹

4.47 Year13 reported that:

According to a national survey of 1,010 Australians conducted by McCrindle Research, 79% of parents would prefer their children to go to university after school rather than take a VET pathway. Interestingly, in the same survey, 28% felt “the main reason Australians choose university over VET is because university graduates find work more easily.” However, 78% of VET graduates are employed immediately after completion, in contrast to only 39% of 20-25-year-old university graduates. This means that young people’s transitional choices are being negated by a preference that is largely based on biased and incorrect information.⁴²

4.48 Associate Professor Ruth Schubert, Associate Director, LH Martin Institute, University of Melbourne, pointed out that in some countries, those with higher vocational qualifications are earning more than those with degrees and articulated the educational and employment planning questions that need to be answered:

If you look at Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark and China, it is those young people who have higher vocational qualifications who have ended up with good jobs and are actually earning more money than some people with degrees. It obviously depends on the economic mix as well in terms of the country. If you look at the endpoint, what do we want? We want people to

⁴¹ Mr James Coward, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Restaurants and Catering Industry Association Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne 18 September 2017, p. 22.

⁴² Year13, *After the ATAR: Understanding How Gen Z Transition into Further Education and Employment*, *Exhibit 1*, p. 21.

have high-wage jobs and we want them to have good jobs. Therefore, we need to think about what sorts of skills they actually need to get those and drive the economy. The two are obviously closely linked.⁴³

- 4.49 Pearson and the Independent Schools Association both acknowledged there could be an underrepresentation of people from high socio-economic status backgrounds in vocational education:

Ms BUTLER: Are children from higher socioeconomic status backgrounds underrepresented in vocational education and, if so, is that a problem?

Ms Blackwood: Parental expectation probably has had a lot to play there but having been a principal of a school I have seen students, highly capable students, who could have had access directly into university who have chosen to take a vocational pathway because they know what their particular passions, interests and desires are at that point in time, and have been encouraged to do so by both the school and parents, so it is possible.

Mr Wilson: I think that would be rare. We often quote ICSEA as the advantage. Part of the ICSEA measure is students and parents are taking on university in their current job. It is a self-fulfilling stat that fills itself in because generally if my partner is a PhD and I am a graduate then I would probably expect my daughter to be one, too, but if she wants to go and be a wonderful hairdresser, open a salon, make a heap of money out of that and have a wonderful life, that is good, too. I think that is the conversation that we have to have.⁴⁴

- 4.50 The evidence above suggests university education has been accorded such a high status that this has stopped information on the opportunities that can be accessed through VET being provided to students and their parents/guardians.

Valuing and engaging with VET

- 4.51 The preceding section suggested that VET is not being valued enough and students are not being given an opportunity to properly engage with VET.

⁴³ Associate Professor Ruth Schubert, Associate Director, LH Martin Institute, University of Melbourne, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne 18 September 2017, p. 14.

⁴⁴ Ms Beth Blackwood, Chief Executive Officer, Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia, followed by Mr Bryce Wilson, Executive Board Member, Federation of Parents and Citizens Association of New South Wales Ms Beth, Chief Executive Officer, Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, Canberra, 4 September 2017, p. 17.

The Committee received evidence that one way in which the importance of VET can be conveyed is by industry engagement.

- 4.52 SYC, a not-for-profit organisation centred on employment, training and youth services, referring to research undertaken by UK think tank, Education and Employers Taskforce (UK) states that:

... higher volumes of school mediated employer engagement⁴⁵ are associated with reduced incidence of NEET⁴⁶ by up to 86 per cent.⁴⁷

- 4.53 NAEN's submission recommended that schools have the following industry engagement mechanisms in place:

- Industry presentations to classes exploring different career options, particularly raising the status and perception of vocational education and training;
- School councils be forced to have industry representation that can assist in providing a VET lens across all school decision making at a strategy level;
- Schools engage with their local vocational education providers to provide integrated strategies for transition during and post school to sustainable employment opportunities;
- Labour market information is integrated into professional development for career advisors, and schools are adequately funded to ensure career advisors have access to this training (and it be a mandatory professional development program for career advisors); and
- School models be reconsidered, and guidelines put in place, to allow students from year 9 to engage in meaningful VET programs such as school based apprenticeships, in lieu of traditional academic curriculum based subjects (with the exclusion of foundational skills such as LLN).⁴⁸

- 4.54 The NRMA explained that all possible employment opportunities be canvassed when introducing students to VET:

The system is designed to shepherd students to preferred courses such as Certificate II in Construction, or Childcare, etc. which do not pick up the employability skill of what the student actually wants to do. When we have

⁴⁵ School-mediated employer engagement is where a school has facilitated conversations with industry sectors and employers for their students and an employer has come to speak and engage with students about their career.

⁴⁶ NEET is 'Not in Education, Employment or Training'.

⁴⁷ SYC, *Submission 40*, p. 3.

⁴⁸ National Apprentice Employment Network, *Submission 46*, p. 2.

asked potential candidates of why they have completed the course they have, instead of an automotive qualification they say that it wasn't an option at their school.⁴⁹

International comparison

- 4.55 The Committee did not specifically request submissions on comparative international education systems and how they deal with the transition from school to work however the Committee did receive evidence about the vocational training approach in Denmark. Box 3.1 explains Denmark's approach to training and outcomes.

Box 4.1 Denmark's training approach and outcomes⁵⁰

There are two features of Denmark's skills system that distinguish it from Australia's: its inclusive approach to policy implementation, and its dual system of school-based education.

Denmark's vocational skills system is supported by strong cooperation between 'social partners', where government collaborates with VET providers, industry bodies and trade unions in policy development and implementation. This inclusive approach brings a number of benefits. It means that the major players in the skills sector have a greater investment in the outcomes delivered. It has also been argued that it encourages a more flexible and innovative skills sector, allowing for example apprenticeship training to move into new occupational areas such as Information Technology.

Denmark has a comprehensive model of schooling for all students up until the age of 16, and a dual system for students in the final years of secondary education. At 16, roughly 60 % of students enter the university-oriented stream of Gymnasium, with 20-30 % entering a vocational education and training stream. This differs from the singular, generalist model in Australia, where all students are provided with a comprehensive education through to the end of secondary school. It also differs from other dual systems such as that found in Germany, where a comprehensive approach is taken only in primary schooling, after which students are placed in either university-oriented or vocational-oriented

⁴⁹ NRMA, *Submission 57*, p. 3.

⁵⁰ University of Melbourne, *Supplementary Submission 59.1*, pp. 1-2.

stream. The benefits of Denmark's dual system:

- There are clear linkages between the qualifications earned in the vocational stream and employment, enabling effective transition into the labour market;
- The division between academic and vocational oriented pathways 'cannot be reduced to a simple hierarchy of status'. Partly due to positive employment outcomes, vocational pathways are highly valued by students, and are therefore defined by their unique attributes rather than by a lower status; and
- The existence of a vocational stream does not dampen aspirations for university study, largely because the dual system takes effect only in the upper years of secondary school. Relatedly, there is less of a danger that the system will re-enforce class division, as is arguably the case in Germany, which tracks children at the age of 11.

4.56 The University of Melbourne's supplementary submission noted that:

[T]here are things that can be learnt from the successes of Denmark's approach to skills, but given the considerable systemic differences, there is no straightforward way of importing the 'Danish model' into Australia.⁵¹

4.57 The lessons that can be learned are summed up as follows:

A comparison with Denmark highlights some of the shortcomings in Australia's approach. The vocational content offered in upper secondary schooling is limited, and the boundaries between academic and vocational curricula poorly defined. While maintaining a comprehensive approach through the entirety of secondary schooling appears to offer flexibility for students, the result is that post-secondary vocational education is defined by a lower status.⁵²

Vocational education and training in schools

4.58 The Australian Government's framework, *Preparing Secondary Students for Work* helps to support vocational learning and VET in secondary schools. This is often referred to as Vocational Education and Training in Schools (VETIS)

4.59 VETIS is one particular area in which students could be given a wide range of information.

⁵¹ University of Melbourne, *Supplementary Submission 59.1*, p. 2.

⁵² University of Melbourne, *Supplementary Submission 59.1*, p. 1.

- 4.60 The Shop Distributive and Allied Employees' Association (SDA) had some strong recommendations to what a school delivering VETIS needed to have:

Every school which seeks to deliver VETIS should have a trained careers advisor on staff. This advisor must be able to give accurate advice to students and parents in regard to all aspects of school to work transition. Such advice would include advising students as to the likelihood of them gaining employment post school based upon their VETIS qualification, what post school level of employment they could expect to obtain because of their VETIS qualification, what post school training they could or could not access with fee help and what post school training they would need to complete in order to obtain employment at their desired level.⁵³

- 4.61 The evidence shows that VET can provide prospective job seekers with a qualification that will gain them employment. This employment could be more lucrative and easier to get than employment for those with a university degree.

- 4.62 The inquiry heard of the value of trades training in schools. Ms Susie Boyd, President, Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of New South Wales, said:

We were discussing the trade training centres and the increase, especially in western Sydney, where I am in New South Wales. We have been doing a lot of surveys and so on with teachers, principals, students and parents in the Greater Western Sydney area. People are pushing for trade centres. We do not want to take away from TAFE. We see numbers are completely down, as revealed recently, last week. TAFE numbers are down. But as to trade centres and having actual trades within our own schools— the words are coming back that there is a lot more faith in something that is actually run by the school. With all of the bad seeds that were out there, where children were paying amounts to non-government providers and bombing out.⁵⁴

- 4.63 The National Catholic Education Commission submitted:

The delivery of VET to secondary school students and the training opportunities offered by Trade Training Centres have provided students with better access to post-school pathways and supported a significant cohort of students to transition from school to work. Generally, the cost of delivering or accessing VET is much higher than the delivery of other parts of the school curriculum. Current Commonwealth funding has not made provision for this

⁵³ SDA, *Submission 3*, p. 7.

⁵⁴ Ms Susie Boyd, President, Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of New South Wales, *Transcript of Evidence*, Canberra, 4 September 2017, p. 16.

higher cost. In the past, the Australian Technical Colleges, developed by the Howard Government, provided a recurrent funding model that enabled schools to ensure that facilities, trainers and the subsequent training provided met and kept pace with industry requirements and trends.⁵⁵

- 4.64 In addition to VET, apprenticeships and traineeships provide another pathway for students to enter employment.

Apprenticeships and traineeships

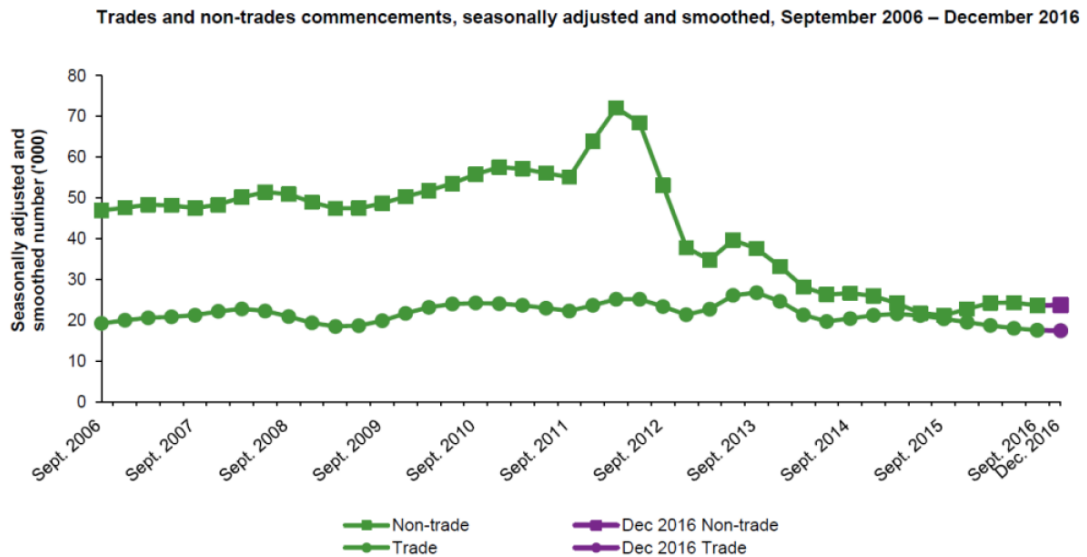
- 4.65 Apprenticeships and traineeships are an important way in which young people who do not wish to go to university are able to transition into the workforce.
- 4.66 Apprenticeships and traineeships are systemised training programs by which people are able to become qualified in a trade or particular type of job. They offer benefits, including:
- the ability to work and earn money while studying the qualification;
 - a nationally recognised qualification on completion of training;
 - a mix of off-job learning (in a classroom, online, or at an employer's premises) and on-job learning (in the workplace); and,
 - workplace experience.
- 4.67 An apprenticeship is where an apprentice learns a skilled trade under a qualified tradesperson and a traineeship is where a trainee learns a job (or vocation) under a supervisor.
- 4.68 The evidence the Committee received on apprenticeships and traineeships was not voluminous and focussed on two main areas:
- 1 The fall in uptake of apprenticeships and traineeships; and,
 - 2 The opportunity to provide better information on apprenticeships and traineeships.
- 4.69 Ms Kelly Fisher, Branch Manager, VET Market Information, Department of Education and Training told the Committee that, between 2012 and 2016, the fall in trade apprenticeships was just over 95,000 to 72,500.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ National Catholic Education Commission, *Submission 49*, p. 4.

⁵⁶ Ms Kelly Fisher, Branch Manager, VET Market Information, Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, Canberra 16 October 2017, p. 13.

4.70 For traineeships, sometimes called non-trade apprenticeships, the decline was much greater being a fall from 235,000 to 94,000.⁵⁷ Figure 3.2 illustrates these trends.

Figure 4.2 Trades and non-trade commencements, seasonally adjusted and smoothed, September 2006 – December 2016



Source: Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Submission 51, p. 19.

4.71 The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI) stated their commitment to apprenticeships because:

- They produce skills needed for the economy;
- The model is a highly valued combination of three important elements: (1) structured, nationally recognised training (2) work experience and a (3) specialised trainee/apprentice wage; and,
- They are an effective vehicle for successful transitions from school to work.⁵⁸

4.72 In relation to apprenticeships, ACCI recommends the following to reverse the decline in apprenticeship numbers:

⁵⁷ Ms Kelly Fisher, Branch Manager, VET Market Information, Department of Education and Training, *Transcript of Evidence*, Canberra 16 October 2017, p. 13.

⁵⁸ Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, *Submission 51*, p. 18.

- Supporting a national approach to apprenticeship reform, including support for tailored models that address the needs of industries, and addressing pathways from school, PaTH, and pre-apprenticeships.
- Establishing an industry-led board to oversee the Skilling Australians Fund, and ensuring the fund promotes reform, and requires individual projects to address state and industry priorities.
- Boost the reputation and profile of apprenticeships via an ongoing public awareness campaign.⁵⁹

4.73 Figure 3.3, taken from Year13's submission, suggests that the value of apprenticeships is not appropriately presented within schools.

Figure 4.3 School based apprenticeships versus ATAR – one young woman's view

The school community looked down on industry links (school-based apprenticeships), however, looking back I wish I had selected that route instead of ATAR. I could have graduated with a qualification, two years job experience and, highly possibly, an actual career. All the pressure was to go to uni and a lot of people in my year were aiming for it just to graduate... they could [have gone] to TAFE for half the amount of time, a fraction of the cost and got into the industry sooner.

- FEMALE, 19

Source: Year13, Submission 72, p. 5.

4.74 The above evidence shows that, whilst apprenticeships and traineeships are an important option for students to transition from school to work, take up is low and there is scope to better inform students of the opportunities that apprenticeships and traineeships provide.

4.75 The Committee received evidence from the Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment's submission that the:

Skilling Australians Fund, announced at the 2017–18 Budget, will build the skills for the workforce of the future by prioritising training for apprenticeships and traineeships in occupations in high demand with future growth potential...⁶⁰

4.76 Integrated Information Service (IIS) has operated the Australian apprenticeships and Traineeships Information Service (AATIS) for over 15

⁵⁹ Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Submission 51, p. 21.

⁶⁰ Department of Education and Training and Department of Employment, Submission 76, p. 5.

years, under funding from the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

- 4.77 AATIS publishes the Australian Apprenticeships Pathway website which provides apprenticeship and traineeship information which interprets training package qualifications and gathers each qualification's apprenticeship and traineeship availability data from state and territory jurisdictions. This enables searches for examples of apprenticeship and traineeship occupations available in a specific state.⁶¹

- 4.78 IIS explains that:

[W]hile higher education providers have an established profile with the school community, for the vocational sector it is a battle to find effective communication channels to careers advisers in schools. There is no direct avenue, for example, through a recognised source with acknowledged authority.

This can lead to stakeholders approaching schools using a scattergun approach. Careers Advisers can be inundated with information from a range of individual organisations using different messages and presentation styles. This lack of cohesion in the message, and the absence of information educating schools on vocational pathways, generates confusion and provides reasons to ignore the communications that are received.⁶²

- 4.79 Apprenticeships and traineeships are important programs that provide young people with a systematic training regime that includes on-the-job training. A decline in enrolments and a possible gap in the information that is provided to students on these programs suggest opportunities exist to get more students into these programs. It is hoped that Australian Government investment via the Skilling Australians Fund will increase the take up of apprenticeships and traineeships.

Indigenous students and multicultural students

- 4.80 The Committee received some evidence in relation to indigenous and multicultural⁶³ students and how best to assist them in transitioning to post school education or employment.

⁶¹ Integrated Information Service, *Submission 11*, p. 1.

⁶² Integrated Information Service, *Submission 11*, pp. 2-3.

⁶³ The term 'multicultural' in this context is used to describe a wide range of people such as recent migrants and those on humanitarian visas.

Assisting Indigenous students into post school education or employment

- 4.81 Mr Indi Clarke, Manager, Korrie Youth Council, informed the Committee that it is important to recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people have cultural needs that differ from non-Aboriginal people. Quoting Dr Muriel Bamblett in the *Not one size fits all* report he stated:

For too long Aboriginal children have been assessed using measures and assessment approaches which do not take into account their culture, beliefs, connection to community and place, spirituality and their individual experiences. Furthermore the assessment of an individual's social and emotional status independent of the family and community is an alien concept to Aboriginal people as well as being ecologically uninformed.⁶⁴

- 4.82 Mr Clarke outlined the importance of ongoing engagement with Aboriginal communities. He explained that industries and employers who embed cultural competency and cultural safety in their organisations do best in their relationships with the indigenous community. He explained that cultural competency and cultural safety can only be achieved by ongoing relationships with indigenous communities, people and businesses. He advised that an example of best practice in this area has been the police:

...look at the police: historically, it hasn't always been the best, but they're starting to embed Aboriginal employment programs and strategies for their school-based traineeships and they're pretty well in line with best practice in breaking down those barriers and creating spaces for young people to achieve what they want.⁶⁵

- 4.83 In their combined submission, Youth Disability Advocacy Service (YDAS) and the Koorie Youth Council (KYC) with the support of the Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic) (hereafter known as YDAS KYC), observed the:

...continued struggles of Aboriginal young people in educational and training spaces that do not take into account their culture, communities, families and personal experiences. Aboriginal students continue to be harmed and

⁶⁴ Mr Indi Clarke, Manager, Korrie Youth Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 40.

⁶⁵ Mr Indi Clarke, Manager, Korrie Youth Council, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 40.

discouraged by racism and lack of public understanding of their culture, heritage and circumstances.⁶⁶

4.84 The Federation of Parents and Citizens (NSW) submission pointed out that monitoring the trend of school to work transitions for indigenous students is difficult due to higher dropout rates before Year 9. Assuming that better educational outcomes improve the likelihood of successful school to work transitions, some measures associated with improved educational outcomes for indigenous students include:

- Fostering a school culture that incorporates indigenous student identity;
- Boosting the engagement of indigenous families/communities in indigenous students' education; and,
- Including indigenous perspectives in curriculum (e.g. incorporating indigenous language comprehension.)⁶⁷

4.85 The Federation also offered a caution against assuming all indigenous student populations should be treated in the same way. Attempts to improve indigenous educational outcomes frequently fail to distinguish between indigenous students in regional and metropolitan areas, and those in remote areas. The Federation pointed out that:

Such distinctions are necessary due to the unique challenges facing indigenous students in remote areas compared to those in more populated areas.⁶⁸

Assisting multicultural students into post school education or employment

4.86 The Federation for Ethnic Communities Councils' of Australia (FECCA) drew the Committee's attention to the report *Building a New Life in Australia (BNLA): The Longitudinal Study of Humanitarian Migrants* which stated that:

...children of humanitarian migrants are required to go to school or sometimes, in the case of older children, participate in other training or employment. According to the parents' report, of the 689 children 5 to 17 years of age, 676 (98.1 per cent) were enrolled in school. Of the remaining 13, four were 5 years of age and three were 17 years of age. Further questions to both

⁶⁶ Youth Disability Advocacy Service (YDAS) and the Koorie Youth Council (KYC) with the support of the Youth Affairs Council Victoria (YACVic), *Submission 77*, p. 5.

⁶⁷ Federation of Parents and Citizens (NSW), *Submission 9*, pp. 7-8.

⁶⁸ Federation of Parents and Citizens (NSW), *Submission 9*, p. 8.

child and parents indicate how well children are settling into school and their new life in Australia.⁶⁹

4.87 Ms Nadine Liddy, National Coordinator, Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network Australia observed that the key to helping young migrants and refugees is investing in VET and apprenticeships. Ms Liddy offered Germany as an example of a country who has had to re-settle many more refugees than Australia and who are 'investing billions of dollars into a very well-established VET system.'⁷⁰ Ms Liddy pointed out that:

...having adequately-funded apprenticeships, traineeships, on-the-job work experience and infrastructure to support the transition from school to work fundamentally is a really important approach.⁷¹

4.88 Mr Joseph Caputo, OAM, Chairperson, FECCA, highlighted their three key recommendations that they believed will help to improve outcomes for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) youth as they move from school to work. These are:

- fund research into the various opportunities for CALD Australian young people in the school-to work-transition;
- ensure that schools and teachers are properly resourced and trained to support CALD Australians to achieve their individual goals such as further education or employment; and,
- act to enforce appropriate and powerful protections to prevent workplace exploitation of young people, particularly young people less familiar with the Australian workplace.⁷²

4.89 The evidence shows that a well-resourced and culturally aware school and post school education systems and support are the keys to assisting multicultural students.

Language skills

⁶⁹ *Building a New Life in Australia (BNLA): The Longitudinal Study of Humanitarian Migrants*, p. 100 <https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/11_2017/17385_dss_-_bnla_report-web-v2.pdf> accessed 1 December 2017.

⁷⁰ Ms Nadine Liddy, National Coordinator, Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 38.

⁷¹ Ms Nadine Liddy, National Coordinator, Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 38.

⁷² Mr Joseph Caputo, OAM, Chairperson, Federation of Ethnic Communities Councils of Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, Canberra, 4 September 2017, p. 23.

- 4.90 The Committee also received evidence on the provision of language skills to multicultural students, particularly recently arrived migrant students. Associate Professor Sarojni Choy, Professional, Vocational and Continuing Education, Griffith University, emphasised the importance of language skills that relate to a person's vocation and the relevancy of such skills to the workplace:

... it's about mapping the language with their vocation. Learning to read and write and speak English is fine for the normal conversation, but, when it comes to doing language for work, that's where the difficulty arises. There are simple examples that we're given about how safety is compromised because they can't interpret the English language in the context of safety in the particular work practice.⁷³

- 4.91 Professor Doune Macdonald, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Teaching and Learning, University of Queensland, stated:

...the language issue isn't just one from school to the TAFE sector; there is a language issue, I believe, in universities as well. The IELTS⁷⁴ gives a certain range of skills as a qualification for entry, but often it's not operational enough, as you were suggesting, to successfully engage with a university program as well. So universities would all be spending resources on upskilling a range of students' language skills, both general language skills and skills for that particular profession. For example, UQ runs a fairly intensive language support program for pharmacy students so that they're not only able to study but, when they get to their practice placements, able to operate as a trainee professional as well.⁷⁵

Committee comment

- 4.92 The Committee was pleased to hear the general positivity of submitters and witnesses towards Youth Jobs PaTH. Whilst acknowledging the infancy of the program, the Committee is concerned about the lack of overall employment flowing from PaTH. Only 40 per cent of ended placements gained employment. This is in contrast to the fact that 80 per cent of those

⁷³ Associate Professor Sarojni Choy, Professional, Vocational and Continuing Education, Griffith University, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 November 2017, p. 3.

⁷⁴ International English Language Testing System.

⁷⁵ Professor Doune Macdonald, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Teaching and Learning, University of Queensland, *Transcript of Evidence*, Brisbane, 9 November 2017, p. 3. (IELTS - International English Language Testing System)

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- who completed placements (as to those whose placements were ended voluntarily or otherwise) gained some form of employment.
- 4.93 The Committee looks forward to seeing evaluations carried out by the Departments which should give a better explanation of why internships ended early.
- 4.94 The Committee was interested in the type of employment gained. Employment can be anything from a short-term contract in an unskilled position with little opportunity for growth to a full-time job in a skilled position with opportunity for growth. Evaluations of the program should show the type of employment generated. The Committee feels that the program should be focussed on providing long-term stable and secure employment to its participants.
- 4.95 The Committee agrees with recommendations on PaTH suggested by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.
- 4.96 For those students transitioning to university, realistic expectations about the demands that will be made of them are important, as is program selection.
- 4.97 Some factors affecting student success at university are external to the education system – such as financial pressure, particularly on those who have had to relocate to participate in higher education. This issue warrants further consideration.
- 4.98 Career advisors, alongside parents, have an important role in informing students of their post-school education and employment options. Evidence to the Committee suggested that there were not enough career advisory programs and information in schools. Therefore, the Committee recommends that the availability of career advisory programs and information within the school sector be increased.
- 4.99 The Australian Government should support career advisors to provide secondary school students and their parents with accurate information about the benefits, such as fees and employment opportunities, of all courses available through VET. This should be extended to giving parents and students accurate information on apprenticeships and traineeships.
- 4.100 The evidence suggests to the Committee that there is an ingrained culture in Australia that has seen a degradation of the importance of VET, apprenticeships and traineeships. It is important that the Australian Government looks at engaging not just the careers advisors—although they are certainly pivotal—but also engaging principals, teachers and parents in

the decision making process in relation to their children's post school education or employment. The Committee hopes that some parents and students who, perhaps as a matter of course, only consider university would feel encouraged to consider VET, an apprenticeship or traineeship.

- 4.101 The Committee believes, and the evidence received shows, that the best way to engage a student is to give them 'hands-on' experience in relation to career paths they may wish to follow. The Committee therefore recommends that schools have industry engagement mechanisms in place.
- 4.102 The Committee is concerned about the perceived lower status of VET, apprenticeships and traineeships in comparison to university. To address this, the status of VET should be raised through various means, including greater investment in VET, and considering the establishment of further trades training in schools, among other measures. Consideration should also be given to increasing marketing activity by government and industry in schools, with additional focus on promoting the financial benefits and employment outcomes achieved on completing VET qualifications. Similar marketing activity should be implemented in relation to apprenticeships and traineeships.
- 4.103 The Committee acknowledges the importance of culture and school retention in improving school to work pathways for indigenous students.
- 4.104 The Committee also acknowledges that students from recently-arrived families need different forms of support in navigating unfamiliar education systems, obtaining English language skills appropriate to their work, in addition to conversational skills, as well as culturally-aware learning environments.
- 4.105 In addition, a lack of familiarity with Australian social norms and workplace laws makes students and school-leavers from recently-arrived families more vulnerable to exploitation at work. This vulnerability can undermine the success of school to work transitions.

Committee recommendations

- 4.106 Having regard to the evidence above the Committee makes the following recommendations.

Recommendation 15

- 4.107 To make government-led work experience programs more likely to lead to good jobs, the Committee recommends that such programs:**

- incorporate defined training components which are directly connected with specific planned and agreed work-experience component(s);
- require employment service providers to ensure that employers within the current “Jobactive” system are engaged with government-led work-experience programs; and
- ensure program design takes into account the importance of promoting secure employment, compliance with industrial relations laws, the avoidance of exploitation, value-for-money in respect of any publicly-funded incentives, and ongoing accountability for employment outcomes.

Recommendation 16

4.108 The Committee recommends that the Government consider the financial pressures on university students, especially those university students who have relocated to participate in higher education, and consider what might be able to be done to ameliorate those pressures with a view to increasing retention and attainment.

Recommendation 17

4.109 The Committee recommends that the availability of career advisory programs and information within the school sector be increased, and that such counselling emphasise VET, apprenticeships and alternative post-school pathways to the same extent as higher education.

Recommendation 18

4.110 The Committee recommends that all high schools should have access to trained career advisors on staff. This advisor must be able to give accurate advice to students and parents on:

- the likelihood of them gaining employment post-school based upon their VET/VETIS or university qualification;
- what post-school level of employment they could expect to obtain because of their VET/VETIS qualification, what post-school training they could or could not access with fee help and what post-school

training they would need to complete in order to obtain employment at their desired level; and

- information on apprenticeships and traineeships.

Recommendation 19

4.111 The Committee recommends that schools, working with stakeholders (such as governments, industry, industry associations, training providers and unions), be supported to have the following industry engagement mechanisms in place:

- industry presentations to classes exploring different career options, particularly raising the status and perception of vocational education and training;
- school councils be supported to have industry representation that can assist in providing a VET perspective across all school decision making at a strategy level;
- schools engage with their local vocational education providers to provide integrated strategies for transition during and post-school to sustainable employment opportunities;
- labour market information is integrated into professional development for career advisors, and schools are adequately funded to ensure career advisors have access to this training (and it be a mandatory professional development program for career advisors); and,
- school models be reconsidered, and guidelines put in place, to allow students from year 9 to engage in meaningful VET programs which both provide vocational education and training and cover the curriculum's learning areas.

Recommendation 20

4.112 The Committee acknowledges that raising the status of VET, apprenticeships and traineeships will require significant investment and reform. The Committee recommends that consideration be given to establishing more trades training in schools. In addition, the Committee

recommends that the status of VET, apprenticeships and traineeships be raised through increased marketing activity by government and industry in schools, with additional focus on promoting the financial benefits and employment outcomes achieved on completing VET qualifications.

Recommendation 21

4.113 The Committee recommends that First Nations communities lead engagement with schools with a view to developing culturally-competent measures of attainment and gain.

Recommendation 22

4.114 The Committee recommends that retention of First Nations children beyond year 9 and to the conclusion of year 12 be a priority for schools, and education authorities, and that to facilitate this retention, schools are supported to:

- **recognise that indigenous communities are not homogenous;**
- **work with local communities and stakeholders to ensure that the learning environments they provide are culturally-competent and culturally-safe;**
- **incorporate indigenous student identity within the school; and**
- **ensure that indigenous culture is visible within the school.**

Recommendation 23

4.115 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government ensure that indigenous perspectives are included within the National Curriculum.

Recommendation 24

4.116 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, in developing VET and higher education policies, take into account the specific needs of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Recommendation 25

- 4.117 The Committee recommends that schools and teachers be adequately resourced, supported and trained to assist students from CALD backgrounds to understand the education system, understand their post-secondary options, and make appropriate choices.**

Recommendation 26

- 4.118 The Committee recommends that students from CALD backgrounds have access to information about their rights at work, as well as information about the services available to assist them in the event that they are subjected to unlawful conduct at work.**

Recommendation 27

- 4.119 The Committee recommends that schools, VET providers and higher education providers be supported to provide English language training that goes beyond conversation English to training specifically directed towards ensuring that the student has the English skills needed for success in the vocation, occupation or profession that the student seeks to enter.**

5. Students with disability

- 5.1 A key issue is students with disability. The Committee specifically requested information in relation to students with disability. Although the Committee did not receive a great deal of evidence on students with caring responsibilities, the evidence that was received was instructive, and appreciated. Accordingly, the Committee felt it was important to include this evidence in the report.
- 5.2 Accordingly, this chapter outlines programs the Australian Government have in place to support students with disability, evidence from submitters and some recommendations flowing from that evidence.
- 5.3 However, as the evidence, and the conclusions drawn from it, are limited, the following should be read in the context of the Committee's belief that additional witnesses should be given the opportunity to present to a future inquiry to inform a more considered series of recommendations, consistent with the importance of effectively responding to this challenge. The Committee is of the view that the complexity and importance of supporting students with disability warrants further consideration, to do justice to the issues that arise in relation to inclusion in education and employment for all young Australians.

Australian Government support for students with disability

National disability agreement

- 5.4 The National Disability Agreement, introduced by the Council of Australian Governments in 2009, is a high level agreement between the Australian and state and territory governments for the provision of disability services for

people with disability. It features clear roles and responsibilities for each level of government and joins these efforts together through nationally agreed objectives and outcomes for people with disability, their families and carers.¹

National disability strategy 2010-2020

5.5 The National Disability Strategy (the Strategy) sets out a ten year national plan for improving life for Australians with disability, their families and carers. It draws on the findings of extensive consultation conducted in 2008-09 by the National People with Disabilities and Carer Council and reported in *Shut Out: The Experience of People with Disabilities and their Families in Australia* (2009).²

5.6 Outcome 5, *Learning and Skills* of the Strategy states that:

People with disability achieve their full potential through their participation in an inclusive high quality education system that is responsive to their needs. People with disability have opportunities to continue learning throughout their lives.³

5.7 To support this outcome, the Strategy outlines four policy directions:

- 1 Strengthen the capability of all education providers to deliver inclusive high quality educational programs for people with all abilities from early childhood through adulthood.⁴
- 2 Focus on reducing the disparity in educational outcomes for people with a disability and others.⁵

¹ See <<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/government-international/national-disability-agreement>> accessed 15 January 2018.

² Council of Australian Government, *National Disability Strategy 2010 - 2020*, p. 8. See <https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/national_disability_strategy_2010_2020.pdf> accessed 12 December 2018.

³ Council of Australian Government, *National Disability Strategy 2010 - 2020*, p. 53. See <https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/national_disability_strategy_2010_2020.pdf> accessed 12 December 2018, also quoted by Australian Network on Disability, *Submission 70*, p. 4.

⁴ Council of Australian Government, *National Disability Strategy 2010 - 2020*, p. 53. See <https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/national_disability_strategy_2010_2020.pdf> accessed 12 December 2018, also quoted by Australian Network on Disability, *Submission 70*, p. 54.

⁵ Council of Australian Government, *National Disability Strategy 2010 - 2020*, p. 53. See <https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/national_disability_strategy_2010_2020.pdf> accessed 12 December 2018.

- 3 Ensure that government reforms and initiatives for early childhood, education, training and skill development are responsive to the needs of people with disability.⁶
- 4 Improve pathways for students with disability from school to further education, employment and lifelong learning.⁷

Disability employment services

- 5.8 In the 2017 Budget, the Australian Government announced that, over the next four years, the Australian Government will invest over \$3 billion in Disability Employment Services (DES) and associated services to help people with disability get and keep long-term jobs.⁸
- 5.9 This includes over \$300 million over the next 10 years to index provider payments in DES. This will ensure DES providers can continue to deliver the necessary support required for people with disability looking for work without these being eroded by inflation.⁹
- 5.10 These changes aim to improve the program's overall performance to help more people with disability, injury or a health condition find and maintain employment.¹⁰
- 5.11 The Australian Network on Disability (AND) submitted that 'nationally the DES system is not performing strongly enough for job seekers or employers.'¹¹ AND outlined their concerns that:

0_2020.pdf> accessed 12 December 2018, also quoted by Australian Network on Disability, *Submission 70*, p. 55.

⁶ Council of Australian Government, *National Disability Strategy 2010 - 2020*, p. 53. See <https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/national_disability_strategy_2010_2020.pdf> accessed 12 December 2018, also quoted by Australian Network on Disability, *Submission 70*, p. 55.

⁷ Council of Australian Government, *National Disability Strategy 2010 - 2020*, p. 53. See <https://www.dss.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/05_2012/national_disability_strategy_2010_2020.pdf> accessed 12 December 2018, also quoted by Australian Network on Disability, *Submission 70*, p. 56.

⁸ See <<https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/disability-employment-services>> accessed 8 December 2017.

⁹ See <<https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/disability-employment-services>> accessed 8 December 2017.

¹⁰ See <<https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/disability-employment-services>> accessed 8 December 2017.

¹¹ Australian Network on Disability, *Submission 70*, p. 6.

- there is a focus on the jobseeker at the expense of the employer; not enough time is spent understanding the employer's business and job roles/core competencies;
- too many employment service providers approaching employers and employers don't know which ones offer quality service;
- ongoing support for employment is unreliable and ineffective; and
- the system is difficult to navigate.¹²

5.12 In response, AND recommends that:

DES services need to operate a dual customer focus, equally meeting the needs of jobseekers and employers. Providers need to invest the time to better understand employers, their culture, job roles and inherent requirements to improve job matching and long-term retention. The Federal Government should fund brokerage services to make it easier for large employers to navigate multiple providers.¹³

5.13 Ms Kerrie Langford, Manager, National Employment Manager, National Disability Services (NDS) opined that:

Disability Employment Services is actually not funded to work with young people until the last year of school, and then they are funded only to work with young people with disability who have a significant disability.¹⁴

5.14 NDS's submission welcomed the ability for DES providers:

... to claim a payment for completing a PaTH internship in the new funding model to be introduced from 2018.

5.15 However, the submission pointed out disadvantages in the way this is being implemented:

Where DES providers are at a disadvantage is that the Youth Bonus wage subsidy (\$6,500 - \$10,000) is only available to job seekers who are registered with Jobactive or Transition to Work.

The disparity in the subsidies will make it more difficult for DES providers to negotiate ongoing employment for participants at the conclusion of an

¹² Australian Network on Disability, *Submission 70*, p. 6.

¹³ Australian Network on Disability, *Submission 70*, p. 7.

¹⁴ Ms Kerrie Langford, Manager, National Employment Manager, National Disability Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, Sydney, 19 September 2017, p. 32.

internship. NDS recommends that this disparity in the levels of subsidies be removed.¹⁵

- 5.16 The Committee notes that an employee registered with DES can only claim the *Restart* wage subsidy (\$10,000) but not the *Youth* or *Youth Bonus* (\$6,500) wage subsidies.¹⁶

Australian disability enterprises

- 5.17 Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs) are:

...generally not for profit organisations providing supported employment opportunities to people with disability. ADEs provide a wide range of employment opportunities and they operate within a commercial context.¹⁷

- 5.18 ADEs across Australia provide assistance to ‘approximately 20,000 people with moderate to severe disability. ADEs are funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services.’¹⁸

School leaver employment support

- 5.19 School Leaver Employment Support (SLES) is an initiative of the Australian Government designed to assist students with disability transition from school to employment. It offers individualised support for 2 years after a student finishes year 12 to help them get ready for work and plan their pathway to employment.¹⁹

Data on school students with disability

- 5.20 The annual Nationally Consistent Collection of Data on School Students with Disability (NCCD) collects information about Australian school students who receive an adjustment to address disability:

¹⁵ National Disability Services, *Submission 22*, p. 8.

¹⁶ Australian Government, Department of Employment, *Wage subsidies factsheet – employers*, 19 April 2017, p. 1. See <https://docs.employment.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/wage_subsidies_factsheet_employers_19.4.17_final.pdf> accessed 11 December 2017.

¹⁷ See <<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/for-service-providers/australian-disability-enterprises>> accessed 8 December 2017.

¹⁸ See <<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/for-service-providers/australian-disability-enterprises>> accessed 8 December 2017.

¹⁹ See <<https://www.ndis.gov.au/people-disability/sles>> and Australian Network on Disability, *Submission 70*, p. 7.

Nationally consistent information on students in Australian schools receiving adjustments for disability enables schools, education authorities, and governments to better understand the needs of students with disability and how they can be best supported at school.²⁰

5.21 AND commented on this data and their inability to find:

...precise data on the number of young people approaching school leaving (16-18) and then transitioning to employment (19-24).²¹

Ticket to work

5.22 Ticket to Work is a National initiative set up in 2014 as a pilot, through an innovation fund, by NDS. Currently funded by philanthropic organisations and a grant from Jobs Victoria²², it uses cross-sectoral collaborative partnerships to improve employment outcomes for young people with disability. The initiative is delivered through Local Ticket to Work networks including schools, employment services, post school providers and employers.²³

Ticket to Work prepares young people for the world of work and provides them with an open employment pathway in their transition from school through a combination of vocational/career development and early contact with work environments.²⁴

5.23 Specifically, Ticket to Work:

- brings together disability-specific and mainstream representatives from a variety of sectors to work strategically and collaboratively;
- supports young people to gain access to early experiences that positively influence their views of themselves as workers;
- prepares young people with disability for the workplace and gives them an employment pathway that is typical of other young adults; and,

²⁰ See <<https://www.education.gov.au/what-nationally-consistent-collection-data-school-students-disability>> accessed 12 December 2018.

²¹ Australian Network on Disability, *Submission 70*, p. 5.

²² See <<http://www.tickettowork.org.au/supporters/>> accessed January 17, 2018.

²³ See <<http://www.tickettowork.org.au/what-we-do/>> accessed January 15, 2018.

²⁴ See <<http://www.tickettowork.org.au/what-we-do/>> accessed January 15, 2018.

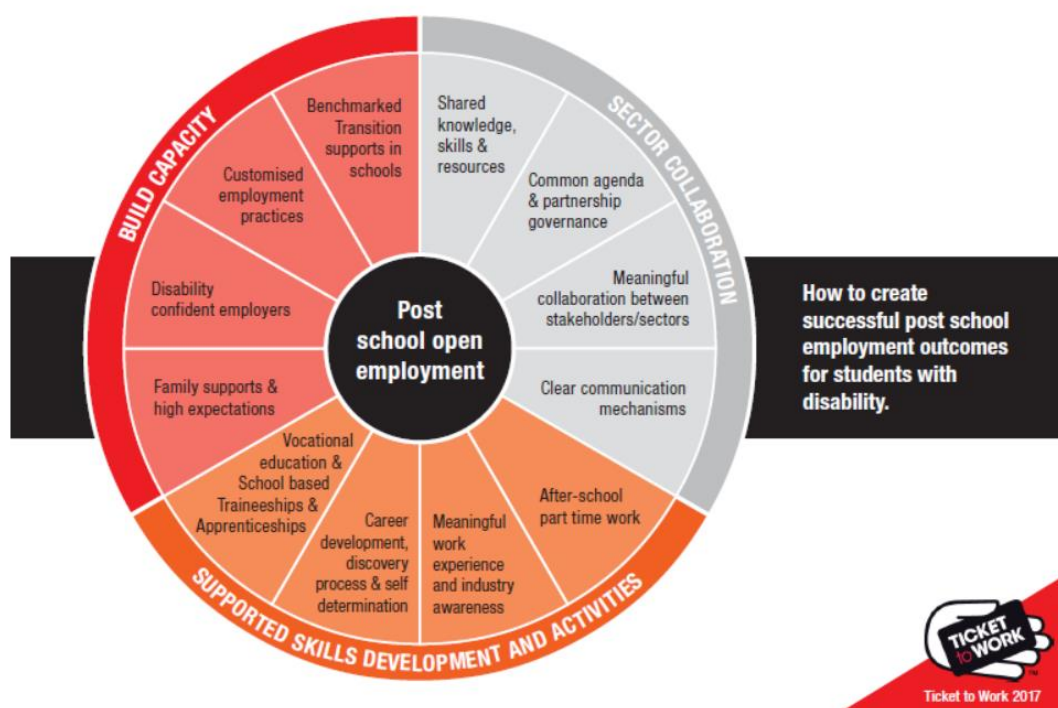
- increases opportunities for meaningful work experience and learning prior to exiting school.²⁵

5.24 Based on extensive research Ticket to Work focuses on three areas:

- Build Capacity;
- Supported Skills Development; and
- Activities and Sector Collaboration.

5.25 Details on these areas are outlined in the following figure.

Figure 5.1 Ticket to Work – three areas of focus



See <http://www.tickettowork.org.au/what-we-do/>

5.26 Ms Langford describes the program, which starts to work with students in year 9, as:

...a grassroots approach to working with young people. We bring in a broad range of people who are specialists in the school. We bring in RTOs, employers and the actual support networks around the individual young person. We work with them to gain work experience and work towards the

²⁵ See <<http://www.tickettowork.org.au/what-we-do/>> accessed January 15, 2018 and National Disability Services, *Submission 22*, p. 6.

work experience turning into what is known as an Australian School-Based Apprenticeship. Then we take that a step further, when they are in year 12, by negotiating for employment after they have left school. We have had great success with that. It is a really good way of connecting a young person with disability to work.²⁶

- 5.27 Ms Suzanne Colbert, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Network on Disability was very supportive of Ticket to Work and commented specifically on the fact that the program was scalable. She stated:

...when it comes to the employment of people with disability there is very little that is scalable; it's very much selling an individual ticket to a plane that is never going to take off. I think it's about taking programs like Ticket to Work, funding them, making them scalable and keeping good data over time.²⁷

- 5.28 Ms Colbert further stated that:

In Australia we don't have that culture of keeping data to make long-term review of the success of our programs. We set and forget. I really hope that if one thing can come out of this it's that the Ticket to Work program is sustainably funded. With an overarching dataset that can inform us into the future, that will be investing in the future of young people with disability. I think it's a great program.²⁸

Assisting students with a disability

- 5.29 Children and Young People with Disability Australia's (CYDA) report titled *Post School Transition: The experiences of students with disability* formed the basis of their submission to the Committee. The report is comprehensive, well researched and evidence based. The report found that many young people with disability:

...have extremely poor post school transition experiences. This is impacting negatively on life outcomes where there is low participation in employment and tertiary study and social exclusion remains high. While there are pockets of good post school transition practice, generally programs and preparation

²⁶ Ms Kerrie Langford, Manager, National Employment Manager, National Disability Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, Sydney, 19 September 2017, p. 32.

²⁷ Ms Suzanne Colbert, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Network on Disability, *Transcript of Evidence*, Sydney, 19 September 2017, p. 33.

²⁸ Ms Suzanne Colbert, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Network on Disability, *Transcript of Evidence*, Sydney, 19 September 2017, p. 33.

for this transition are fragmented with minimal coordination and guidance regarding what should occur during this time.²⁹

- 5.30 Mr Paul Cain of Inclusion Australia and Ms Stephanie Gotlib, Chief Executive Officer, Children and Young People with Disability Australia, were asked: 'is the Australian school education system adequately supporting the learning of students with disability to prepare them to transition out of school?' both answered, whilst acknowledging some pockets of excellence, 'No'.³⁰
- 5.31 Students with disabilities face barriers almost as soon as they enter their school life. Blind Citizens Australia's submission outlined the barriers that students who are blind or vision impaired face when they are required to sit the NAPLAN test along with their sighted peers:

NAPLAN can incorporate a range of visual elements and is not always able to be delivered in a way that meets the unique access needs of students who are blind or vision impaired. If a NAPLAN question asks a student about a 3D shape or includes a complex image, for example, a child who is blind can be disadvantaged because they do not have access to the same range of information as their sighted peers.³¹

- 5.32 Vision Australia supported the view that NAPLAN is difficult for students who are blind or have low vision. In recommending better accessibility for such students to NAPLAN, their submission stated:

Students who are blind or have low vision are often left behind when measuring gain within schools. This is because the measurement methods have not been designed to be accessible. Without accurate student measurements, policy cannot be developed that genuinely accounts for the needs of students who are blind or have low vision. The lack of accessible measurements of gain also sends a message to students with disability that they are not a priority. Students flourish when supported and encouraged but exclusion is likely to increase a sense of isolation among students with disability.³²

²⁹ Children and Young People with Disability Australia, *Submission 74*, Appendix 1, p. 8.

³⁰ Mr Paul Cain, Inclusion Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 46; Ms Stephanie Gotlib, Chief Executive Officer, Children and Young People with Disability Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 46.

³¹ Blind Citizens Australia, *Submission 66*, p. 4.

³² Vision Australia, *Submission 7*, p. 3.

5.33 Ms Kerrie Langford, Manager, National Employment Manager, National Disability Services spoke of a pervasive culture of ‘horizon-limiting expectations for young people with disability’.³³

5.34 Vision Australia explained that, historically, people who are blind or have low vision have been given career advice, based on a limited view of their ability, to enter occupations such as call centre jobs, social work or therapeutic massage. Vision Australia recommends an approach that deals with each individual on a case by case basis and they point out that:

People who are blind work in a variety of disciplines and can acquire a variety of qualifications. While the abilities of people who are blind can be vast and varied, they require great drive, ambition and support to achieve these things as the societal barriers that exist in terms of access to information, access to mainstream technologies and access to public spaces can sometimes make students and job seekers give up.³⁴

5.35 For Vision Australia:

The challenge when providing information and career counselling to students who are blind or have low vision, is balancing aspirational goals with realistic goals. Counsellors must provide accurate and realistic information to students while maintaining the student’s sense of ambition and their right to pursue career goals that are not typical for people with vision impairments and which may harbour challenges.³⁵

5.36 This accessibility issue is not limited to NAPLAN and Vision Australia explained that all information offered to students who are blind or have low vision must be in accessible formats such as large print, audio, electronic or braille. Post school education information should include detail on whether a course and any expected employment outcome is accessible to someone who is blind or has low vision.³⁶

5.37 Ms Langford explained to the Committee that there is very little assistance provided to students with a disability at a young age and emphasised the importance of connecting:

³³ Ms Kerrie Langford, Manager, National Employment Manager, National Disability Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, Sydney, 19 September 2017, p. 31.

³⁴ Vision Australia, *Submission 7*, p. 3.

³⁵ Vision Australia, *Submission 7*, p. 3.

³⁶ Vision Australia, *Submission 7*, p. 3.

...a young person with disability to the world of work before they leave school, they are most likely to be employed the day after they leave school and also most likely to be employed by the time they get to 25. All the research demonstrates that. So early intervention is absolutely key to young people with disability.³⁷

- 5.38 This point was also made by Ms Taye Morris, Manager, Careers and Employment, University of New South Wales Sydney. Ms Morris explained that gaps in career advice for high school students transitioning into university and employment is exacerbated for students with special needs or disabilities. She said there is:

...a desperate need for these students to have a much higher level of career advice, support and education at the point of high school when choosing a degree.³⁸

- 5.39 Ms Morris went on to state that, whilst it is important that students with disabilities complete degrees, they should be doing so with the idea of participating in the workforce, and that these students:

... need a lot more support at the transition into university, then throughout their time at university and then transitioning into the workforce.³⁹

- 5.40 Ms Langford explained the importance of after school work for a student with a disability:

Quite frankly, after-school work is a rite of passage for young people. I think all young people aspire to have an after-school job at McDonalds or Dominoes, all of which are really good training ground for our young people. So what we are actually experiencing is young people with disability leaving school and competing for exactly the same jobs as young people who have had the after-school job and don't have a disability. And guess who an employer picks first, every single time.⁴⁰

³⁷ Ms Kerrie Langford, Manager, National Employment Manager, National Disability Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, Sydney, 19 September 2017, p. 31.

³⁸ Ms Taye Morris, Manager, Careers and Employment, University of New South Wales Sydney, *Transcript of Evidence*, Sydney, 19 September 2017, p. 20.

³⁹ Ms Taye Morris, Manager, Careers and Employment, University of New South Wales Sydney, *Transcript of Evidence*, Sydney, 19 September 2017, p. 20.

⁴⁰ Ms Kerrie Langford, Manager, National Employment Manager, National Disability Services, *Transcript of Evidence*, Sydney, 19 September 2017, p. 32.

5.41 Once a student with disability has decided on a career that they want to enter or, at least, pursue work experience, they are faced with the challenge, pointed out by AND's submission, that employers can have concerns that 'hiring people with disability can be associated with increased risk and cost'.⁴¹

5.42 Mr Cain informed the Committee of some of the nuances in the process of finding a job for young people with an intellectual disability:

...it's a different way of finding jobs for people with intellectual disabilities. It's not seeking advertised vacancies; it's negotiating a customised job where you're trying to find a position that's going to help the employer but also fit the young person. It's a very different skill set. And then you have to teach the job on-the-job, and that's a different skill set again. That's having to know how to do explicit instruction and break down jobs into pieces and teach different components, and then you have to know how to provide long-term ongoing support to deal with change and those kinds of things. So when we talk about capacity, we talk about the support being provided because that's the glue that makes it work. That's the glue that creates the successful long-term job sustainability from school to work.⁴²

5.43 The evidence above highlights that in order for students with disability to successfully transition to work a respect for the *abilities* of students with disability and provision of documentation and services in a way that is accessible coupled with early intervention and careful planning and assistance by someone with knowledge of disability is needed.

5.44 The CYDA *Post School Transition: The experiences of students with disability* report made seven national recommendations and the Committee draws particular attention to the first recommendation which requires that there be a quality post school transition process whose core requirements must include:

- transition planning to begin early, by Year 9;
- planning to be person-centred;
- high expectations to be embedded throughout the process;
- work experience opportunities and the facilitation of part time work - connections with local businesses and employers will be essential for this;
- foundational skills to be addressed;

⁴¹ Australian Network on Disability, *Submission 70*, p. 5.

⁴² Mr Paul Cain, Inclusion Australia, *Transcript of Evidence*, Melbourne, 18 September 2017, p. 37

- career development planning to take place; and
- follow up with young people post school.⁴³

5.45 This recommendation by CYDA addresses many of these issues brought to the Committee's attention.

National disability insurance scheme

5.46 The Committee feels it is important to present the following statement, in relation to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) in Vision Australia's submission:

It is too early to tell whether the NDIS will lead to the economic participation benefits that were predicted.

There are a number of reasons why increased economic participation flowing on from the NDIS may take some time.

- NDIS-funded initiatives to engage community and businesses to improve employment outcomes for people with disability have not occurred yet.
- The NDIS will have a greater effect as time goes on.⁴⁴

5.47 And that:

...given the NDIS is continuing to evolve, it should not yet be relied upon as the solution to successful school to work transition for people who are blind or have low vision.⁴⁵

Young Carers

5.48 The Committee received one submission that specifically dealt with the issues that students with caring responsibilities face when at school and when transitioning from school to work. Carers ACT's stated:

Young carers risk ongoing socioeconomic disadvantage because of their lower education completion and workforce participation. Appropriate support to reduce this disadvantage is required to allow young carers to enjoy similar life opportunities to transition into adulthood as non-carers. It is well recognised that education, particularly higher education, is directly linked with

⁴³ Children and Young People with Disability Australia, *Submission 74*, Appendix 1, p. 45.

⁴⁴ Vision Australia, *Submission 7*, p. 6.

⁴⁵ Vision Australia, *Submission 7*, p. 6.

employment and an income that determines economic and social participation in the community.⁴⁶

- 5.49 Ms Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer, Carers ACT Ltd, told the Committee that:

Various reports indicate that, although a minority of young people, young carers are in need of additional support. Given the relatively small group of young people involved in intensive caring, estimated to be around 8,500, investment in targeted policies and programs to provide additional formal support for the young person in need of care, and also provide better support for these young carers to participate fully in school, could make a real difference to the lifetime educational prospects of this group of young people.⁴⁷

- 5.50 The Carers ACT submission sets out many Australian Government programs designed to support young carers. These provide money, support and help in transition to work.⁴⁸

- 5.51 Whilst young carers require money, time and flexible studying options, the most important thing they need is a champion. Ms Kelly stated:

We need to find people outside of the home and outside of the parent group that can champion those young people, who can show them that life can be something different. Now, I liked your question before about where we start to see young people, where you start talking to them about, 'You could get a certificate, run your own business, be your own boss and work the hours you want to work', where they are starting to go, 'Hang on. I can combine these things together and I can be successful in those sorts of things.' Certainly ecommerce has been a place where we have seen young carers start to go, 'Hang on. I can do more here.'⁴⁹

- 5.52 Carers ACT made three recommendations as follows:

Recommendation 1

Carers ACT recommends that in line with the Young Carer Bursary Program evaluation the Australian Government continues:

⁴⁶ Carers ACT, *Submission 12*, p. 4.

⁴⁷ Ms Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer, Carers ACT Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, Canberra, 4 September 2017, p. 22.

⁴⁸ Carers ACT, *Submission 12*, pp. 6-10.

⁴⁹ Ms Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer, Carers ACT Ltd, *Transcript of Evidence*, Canberra, 4 September 2017, p. 25.

- to invest in the Young Carer Bursary Program as a priority young carer initiative;
- increases the program funding to increase the number of young carer bursaries, particularly younger young carers with extensive caring responsibilities; and
- implement a strategy to increase the number of female young carer bursary recipients.

Recommendation 2

Carers ACT recommends that in line with the Inquiry's aim to support young people continue education and transition to employment that:

- all Australian Governments invest in the development and implementation of a national young carer education framework or strategy to better identify and respond to young carers' education support needs, including mandatory young carer identification at enrolment
- that the Australian Government monitors and identifies unmet needs in the Young Carers Respite and Information Services initiative and implements measures to provide early intervention access for at risk young carers to ensure they continue and complete their secondary education
- that the Australian Government invests in and commits funding to meet the service demands of the Young Carers Respite and Information Services initiative to young carers in need.

Recommendation 3

Carers ACT recommends that as a priority the Australian Government rethinks the way it determines its young carer policies so that young carers are identified and supported at the beginning of and along their caring path with timely, responsive and appropriate interventions to ensure that they complete their education and transition to further study or employment, while maintaining their caring role.⁵⁰

5.53 The Committee notes that the *Young Carer Bursary Program Evaluation* has been completed.⁵¹

5.54 The *Young Carers Respite and Information Services*:

⁵⁰ Carers ACT, *Submission 12*, pp. 11-12.

⁵¹ See <<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programs-services/for-carers/young-carer-bursary-programme/young-carer-bursary-program-evaluation>> accessed 8 December 2017.

... assists students with a significant caring role who need support to complete their secondary education or the vocational equivalent due to the demands of their caring role.

The Young Carers activity is a targeted measure and seeks to supplement existing programs and services, not replace them.

The activity has two components:

- Respite and education support services – assists students up to and including 18 years of age with a significant caring role to access respite and age appropriate educational support. These services are delivered by the national network of 54 Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centres (CRCCs).
- Information, referral and advice services – supports students with a significant caring role up to and including 25 years of age with information, advice and referral services, including referral to counselling. These services are delivered by Carers Australia and the network of state and territory Carers Associations.⁵²

5.55 The evidence received highlights the resilience that young carers in Australia show and notes the programs that the Australian Government has in place to assist young carers.

Committee comment

5.56 Whilst the Committee acknowledges the important programs the Australian Government has in place to support students with disability in their post school transition the evidence is clear that more needs to be done.

5.57 In this context the Committee was heartened by the Ticket to Work program. This program shows the importance of individual engagement, engagement with employers and work experience in assisting students with disability into post school employment. The Committee recommends that the Australian Government Department of Social Services continue to support Ticket to Work.

5.58 In the absence of the Committee conducting an inquiry of its own specifically targeted to the school to work transition of students with disabilities, it feels it is important for it to adopt the first recommendation

⁵² See <<https://www.dss.gov.au/disability-and-carers/programmes-services/young-carers-respite-and-information-services>> accessed 7 December 2017.

made in the CYDA report *Post School Transition: The experiences of students with disability*.⁵³

- 5.59 The Committee was concerned with evidence that information and testing such as NAPLAN offered to students who are blind or have low vision is provided and carried out in an accessible manner. It is important that this be corrected and the Committee makes recommendations in this area.
- 5.60 Noting the NDIS is continuing to evolve, the Committee echoes the words of Vision Australia that it 'should not yet be relied upon as the solution to successful school to work transition for people who are blind or have low vision'⁵⁴. The Committee would extend this caveat to all people with disabilities.
- 5.61 Given that an employee registered with DES can only claim *Restart* money (\$10,000) but not the *Youth* or *Youth Bonus* (\$6,500) the Committee would recommend that the wage subsidies *Youth Bonus* and *Youth* be open to employees who are registered with Disability Employment Services.
- 5.62 In chapter four, the Committee acknowledged and agreed with evidence regarding importance of career advisors. The Committee extends this view to career advisors, who are appropriately trained in assisting and advising students with disabilities.
- 5.63 Young carers are definitely remarkable people. They deal with the usual stresses of education and transition to employment, in a situation in which they must take the care needs of another person, often a parent or a sibling, into account. Given this, the Committee endorses many of the recommendations as set out by Carers ACT.

Committee recommendations

- 5.64 Having regard to the evidence above the Committee makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 28

- 5.65 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government, through the Department of Social Services continue to support Ticket to Work.**

⁵³ Children and Young People with Disability Australia, *Submission 74*, Appendix 1.

⁵⁴ Vision Australia, *Submission 7*, p. 6.

Recommendation 29

- 5.66** The Committee recommends that Australian governments, through COAG, draft model legislation to ensure students with disability can access a person-centered post-school transition process, beginning as early as Year 9 and including:
- work experience opportunities and the facilitation of part time work – connections with local businesses and employers will be essential for this;
 - foundational skills to be addressed;
 - career development planning to take place; and,
 - follow up with young people post school.

Recommendation 30

- 5.67** The Committee recommends that measurements of gain within schools, such as NAPLAN, are made accessible to students who are blind or have low vision.

Recommendation 31

- 5.68** The Committee recommends, in relation to students who are blind or have low vision, that all information offered to students about further education, training and employment outcomes is provided in accessible formats.

Recommendation 32

- 5.69** The Committee recommends that career advisors be appropriately trained in assisting and advising students with disabilities and students who are carers.

Recommendation 33

- 5.70** The Committee recommends that the wage subsidies *Youth Bonus* and *Youth* be open to employees who are registered with Disability Employment Services.

Recommendation 34

5.71 The Committee recommends that:

- all Australian Governments invest in the development and implementation of a national young carer education framework or strategy to better identify and respond to young carers' education support needs, including mandatory young carer identification at enrolment;
- the Australian Government monitors and identifies unmet needs in the Young Carers Respite and Information Services initiative and implements measures to provide early intervention access for at risk young carers to ensure they continue and complete their secondary education; and
- the Australian Government invests in and commits funding to meet the service demands of the Young Carers Respite and Information Services initiative to young carers in need.

Recommendation 35

5.72 The Committee recommends that the Australian Government rethinks the way it determines its young carer policies so that young carers are identified and supported at the beginning of and along their caring path with timely, responsive and appropriate interventions to ensure that they complete their education and transition to further study or employment, while maintaining their caring role.

Mr Andrew Laming MP

Chair

A. Submissions

- 1 Mr Richard Curtain
- 2 Pearson
- 3 SDA National
- 4 National Association for the Visual Arts (NAVA)
- 5 Business Council of Australia (BCA)
- 6 Settlement Services Advisory Council
- 7 Vision Australia
- 8 Academy of Technology and Engineering (ATSE)
- 9 Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of New South Wales
- 10 Regional Universities Network
 - 10.1 Supplementary to submission 10
- 11 Integrated Information Service
- 12 Carers ACT
- 13 University of New England
- 14 The University of Queensland
- 15 Deakin University
- 16 Brimbank City Council
- 17 Charles Darwin University
- 18 Consult Australia
- 19 Mitchell Institute

- 20 Refraction Media
- 21 Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia
- 22 National Disability Services
- 23 National Employment Services Association
- 24 Australian Council of University Art and Design Schools (ACUADS)
- 25 Access Community Services
 - 25.1 Supplementary to submission 25
- 26 National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)
- 27 UNSW
- 28 Western Sydney University
- 29 Dr Don Carter, Keiko Yasukawa
- 30 Queensland Tourism Industry Council
- 31 University of Wollongong
- 32 The Mathematical Association of Victoria
- 33 TAFE Directors Australia
- 34 CQUniversity
- 35 Youth Off The Streets Limited
- 37 State LLEN Network
- 38 Chamber of Commerce and Industry Queensland
- 39 The Smith Family
- 40 SYC Ltd
- 41 NSW Adult Literacy and Numeracy Council
- 42 TAFE Queensland
- 43 Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH)
- 44 ISANA International Education Association
- 45 Australian Council of Engineering Deans (ACED)
- 46 National Apprentice Employment Network
- 47 Refugee Council of Australia

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- 48 Women in Adult and Vocational Education (WAVE)
- 49 National Catholic Education Commission
- 50 SSTUWA State School Teachers Union of WA
- 51 Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- 52 Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (Australia)
- 53 Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)
- 53.1 Supplementary to submission 53
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- 54 Grattan Institute
- 55 Brotherhood of St Laurence
- 56 Restaurant & Catering Industry Association
- 57 NRMA
- 58 La Trobe University
- 59 The University of Melbourne
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- 60 AI Group
- 61 Federation University Australia
- 62 Australian Services Union
- 63 Inclusion Australia
- 64 Charles Sturt University
- 65 The University of Newcastle
- 66 Blind Citizens Australia
- 67 Young Workers Centre
- 68 Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (AITSL)
- 69 Swinburne University of Technology
- 70 Australian Network on Disability
- 71 Victoria University
- 72 Year 13
- 73 Mr David Allen

- 74 Children and Young People with Disability Australia (CYDA)
- 75 Australian Association of Social Workers
- 76 Department of Education and Training & Department of Employment
 - 76.1 Supplementary to submission 76
 - 76.2 Supplementary to submission 76
- 77 Koorie Youth Council
- 78 Tasmanian Government
- 79 Queensland Government
- 80 Australian Industry Trade College

B. List of hearings and witnesses

Monday, 4 September 2017

Committee Room 1R2

Parliament House

Department of Education and Training & Department of Employment

- Mr David Pattie, A/g Group Manager Improving Student Outcomes Group
- Mr Iain Barr, Director
- Mr Damien Coburn, Branch Manager
- Mr Greg Manning, Group Manager
- Ms Carmel O'Regan, Acting Branch Manager, Labour Market Policy Branch
- Ms Benedikte Jensen, Group Manager, Labour Market Strategy Group

Pearson

- Mr David Barnett, Managing Director, Asia Pacific

Federation of Parents and Citizens Associations of New South Wales

- Susie Boyd, President
- Bryce Wilson, Executive Board Member

Association of Heads of Independent Schools of Australia

- Ms Beth Blackwood, Chief Executive Officer

Carers ACT

- Ms Lisa Kelly, Chief Executive Officer

TAFE Directors Australia

- Mr Craig Robertson, CEO

Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA)

- Mr Joseph Caputo, Chairperson
- Dr Emma Campbell, Director

Regional Universities Network

- Dr Caroline Perkins, Executive Director
- Professor Joanne Scott, Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts, Business and Law, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) University of the Sunshine Coast Member – DASSH Board

Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities

- Professor Joanne Scott, Executive Dean, Faculty of Arts, Business and Law, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) University of the Sunshine Coast Member – DASSH Board
- Ms Clare Sidoti, Executive Officer

The Smith Family

- Ms Wendy Field, Head of Policy and Programs

SYC Ltd

- Mr Michael Clark, Director of Corporate Strategy

Monday, 18 September 2017

Victoria Parliament, 55 St Andrew's Place, Room G2, Melbourne

Deakin University

- Alfred Deakin Professor Christine Ure, Head of School of Education

Mitchell Institute

- Ms Megan O'Connell, Director

Grattan Institute

- Ms Julie Sonneman, Fellow, School Education

The University of Melbourne

- Professor Richard James, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Provost (Academic and Undergraduate)

- Professor John Polesel, Director, Centre for Vocational and Educational Policy and Associate Dean (International), Melbourne Graduate School of Education
- Associate Professor Ruth Caroline Schubert, Associate Director, LH Martin Institute

National Employment Services Association

- Ms Sally Sinclair, Chief Executive Officer
- Dr Colin Harrison, Policy Officer

Restaurant and Catering Industry Association

- Mr James Coward, Policy & Public Affairs Manager

AI Group

- Ms Megan Lilly, Head - Workforce Development

Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

- Ms Jenny Lambert, Director – Employment, Education and Training

Vision Australia

- Mr Rowan Lee, Manager, Government Relations and Advocacy
- Ms Kate Begley, Policy Advisor

Multicultural Youth Advocacy Network (Australia)

- Ms Nadine Liddy, National Coordinator
- Miss Edmee Kenny, Policy Officer
- Mr Ali Nazari, Business Trainee

Inclusion Australia

- Mr Paul Cain

Blind Citizens Australia

- Lauren Henley, Policy and Advocacy Coordinator

Children and Young People with Disability Australia

- Ms Stephanie Gotlib, Chief Executive Officer

Koorie Youth Council

- Mr Indi Clarke, Manager

Tuesday, 19 September 2017

Sydney Masonic Centre, Corinthian Room, 66 Goulburn St, Sydney

Western Sydney University

- Ms Patricia Parish, Acting Manager, Careers

Charles Sturt University

- Mr Peter Fraser, Director of Government and Community Relations

The University of Newcastle

- Professor John Fischetti, Head of School, School of Education

University of NSW

- Ms Taye, Morris, Careers and Employment

Youth Off the Streets Limited

- Mr Steven Armstrong, Deputy Principal

Australian Services Union

- Mr Robert Potter, Assistant National Secretary, National Office
- Mr Luke Hutchinson, Organiser

Australian Network on Disability

- Ms Suzanne Colbert, Chief Executive Officer

Year 13

- Mr William Stubleby, Director
- Miss Ruby Bisson, Youth Engagement Manager and Researcher

National Disability Services

- Dr Ken Baker, Chief Executive
- Ms Kerrie Langford, National Employment Manager

Monday, 16 October 2017

Committee Room 1R2, Parliament House, Canberra

Department of Education and Training & Department of Employment

- Mr David Pattie, A/G Group Manager Improving Student Outcomes Group
- Ms Kelly Fisher, Branch Manager, , VET Market Information Branch, Skills Market Group
- Mr Rhyen Bloor, Branch Manager, Assessment and Early Learning Branch, Evidence and Assessment Group
- Mr Greg Mannning, Group Manager
- Ms Carmel O'Regan, Acting Branch Manager, Labour Market Policy Branch
- Ms Benedikte Jensen, Group Manager, Labour Market Strategy Group

Thursday, 9 November 2017

Commonwealth Parliament Offices, Waterfront Place, Level 36, 1 Eagle Street (Boardroom), Brisbane

CQUniversity

- Mr Chris Veraa, Director, Student Experience

CQUniversity

- Melinda Mann, Deputy Director, Student Life and Wellbeing Centre

The University of Queensland

- Professor Doune Macdonald, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning)

Queensland University of Technology - YuMi Deadly Unit

- Ms Robyn Andreson, Senior Research Associate

Griffith University

- Associate Professor Sarojni Choy (PhD), Coordinator: Higher Degree Research

University of Southern Queensland

- Ms Tessa McCredie, Manager, Career Development

University of the Sunshine Coast

- Dr Kenneth Young, Lecturer in Education

Access Community Services

- Ms Kenny Duke, Client Services Manager

Access Community Services

- Ms Chantal Gallant, Research & Evaluation Officer

TAFE Queensland

- Mr Brent Kinnane, General Manager

TAFE Queensland

- Mr Robert Petherbridge, Executive Director

Australian Council of Engineering Deans (ACED)

- Professor Doug Wilson, ACED President

River City Labs

- Ms Peta Ellis, Chief Executive Officer