Keeping in Touch

Victorian TAFE Efforts to Track International Graduates and Develop Alumni

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Victorian TAFE International

Victorian TAFE International (VTI) is an association of staff who work in TAFE Institutes and dual sector universities in international education in the State of Victoria, Australia. Participation is open to any international education staff members including those in: management, recruitment, business development, admissions, and quality and compliance in member public vocational education institutions.

VTI exists to support and inform members, improve communication between members and other bodies, to increase awareness and understanding of international education generally and to provide quality advice to the Victorian TAFE Association (VTA), on international education issues which will then inform policy and strategic directions for the enhancement of the TAFE brand.

Acknowledgements

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1 Introduction

A brief history of international education in Australia

International education in Australia had its origins in the Colombo Plans of the 1950s, where developing nations were given aid in the form of scholarships to study at Australian Universities. While education by scholarship continues, in the 1980s, international education became open to any student who was able to pay full fees for a course and who met entrance requirements. As Cuthbert, Smith & Boey (2008:256) note Australian education moved from ‘aid to trade’.

For the past 25 years, Australian education institutions – including universities, public and private vocational education providers, schools and specialist English language training providers – have engaged with the world by both providing their educational expertise offshore and in accepting students from other countries into their courses in Australia.

While much has been written about this long history of international education in Australia, including a new book commemorating the 25-year history of international education (Davis & Mackintosh 2011) little has been written about its outcomes (Cuthbert et al 2008:259). International education is Victoria’s top export earner and Australia’s third highest export earner, yet despite this huge scale of enterprise and the history of Australia’s international student program, experts agree that little is known about the future career paths of its graduates (Banks & Olsen 2008:23).

“International education is Victoria’s top export earner and Australia’s third highest export earner.”
2 Contents of this Report

This report summarises the efforts being made by VTI member TAFE institutions in Victoria to survey, follow up and maintain contact with their international student graduates and to create and nurture alumni relationships.

The attempts to keep in contact are highlighted in this report as a means of sharing information – both existing survey work and the obstacles to surveying – for VTI members and other education institutions, which may be considering undertaking graduate destination surveys.

The Appendices of this report show the type of questions asked of graduating students (from various sources) and are included to assist education providers keen to develop their own surveys by adapting the examples provided.

The report shows that while some individual public TAFE providers in Victoria are undertaking graduate destination surveys of their international students and engaging in a variety of innovative efforts to follow up their graduates and maintain alumni relations, there is no systematic follow up of international TAFE students in the State of Victoria.

The report suggests in conclusion that for Australian education providers to claim that they provide a quality education, which is of use to international students, the evidence must be provided to support the claim. This requires a large-scale annual survey (and a longitudinal survey) of all international students who study at Australian education institutions. It is a task for the Australian government and beyond the resources of individual institutions.

“...there is no systematic follow up of international TAFE students in the State of Victoria.”
It may seem surprising that although engaged in international education for some 25 years on a fee-for-service basis, there is little systemic information on graduate destinations and the long term influence of their education on those who come to Australia from overseas to study. However, judgement needs to be reserved as to whether this is an unexpected situation. Cuthbert et al (2008:261) show that on the macro level, empirical research linking higher education outcomes with economic growth has been ‘less than clear-cut’ and on the micro level, existing studies have generally only followed students at the 6-month mark after finishing a degree.

Studies tend to look primarily at labour market destinations after completion of studies and generally these are university studies only (graduates with degree and higher degrees).

There have been few studies in Australia or elsewhere, which follow graduate experience over the span of a career or investigate the social or cultural impact of studying overseas. There are no publicly available, system-wide studies of the international graduates of vocational education and training (VET) courses across Australia.

Cuthbert et al postulate that this is principally due to the complexity and cost of following students over a long time frame. So while perhaps, not desirable, the situation here is not unique.

“There are no publicly available, system-wide studies of the international graduates of vocational education and training (VET) courses across Australia.”
4 What data is collected in Australia on international students?

The Australian government reports on international student enrolments (through the Australian International Education Branch of the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations). DIAC (Department of Immigration and Citizenship) reports on student visa uptake according to education sector alongside its migration statistics. In addition, the ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) reports Australian export earnings (which includes the international education sector).

Australian universities each report on the earnings they make from international education, but this does not routinely occur publicly for VET institutions in Victoria. They report on fee for service earnings, but they are not required to distinguish numbers of international students within this broad category in their public documentation.

For university students, the Graduate Destination Survey is undertaken annually four months after graduation by Graduate Careers Australia (see Appendix 2) and this survey includes students with an overseas address. In the VET sector, a national Student Outcomes Survey is conducted annually by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) but this survey only includes those with an Australian address as their usual address (see Appendix 3).

The NCVER indicates that sampling for the Student Outcomes Survey is based on where the student’s residential postcode is recorded as being in the VET Collection – if they are listed as living overseas (an ‘overseas’ postcode) while they are doing their training then they are excluded. However if the student is from overseas but living in North Melbourne while doing the training, and their postcode is listed as being ‘3051’, then provided all of their other training and demographic characteristics are in scope they are eligible to be sampled (email communication - Adele Eliseo Coates, NCVER). But they will have a local postcode, making separation of international students difficult.

Many Australian universities and some (although not many) VET providers subscribe annually to the International Student Barometer survey undertaken by the i-graduate company. This survey tracks international student satisfaction with courses and teaching standards and is used as a
benchmark for education quality globally. Its main function is comparing the quality of educational provision over time within one institution and in comparison with other like institutions around the world. Its primary focus is not graduate destination or career progression resulting from educational attainment.

In 2010, the Commonwealth government subsidised VET involvement in the i-graduate International Student Barometer survey in order to encourage and assist VET institutions with engaging in surveying their international students. The International Student Barometer survey will again be available for VET institutions in 2012.

The 2012 survey will have a section that asks international students if they are happy to be contacted annually for the next 5 years to answer questions regarding their ongoing career progression. It will be the first attempt to systematically maintain contact with international graduates of the VET system in Australia. However since there is a cost to institutions to participate, they participate voluntarily.

i-graduate also offers an ‘alumni barometer’ to individual institutions to track their alumni. According to the i-graduate website this survey provides institutions with:

1. Reflections of alumni – on their time at your institution
2. Satisfaction with the experience
3. Contribution - willingness to engage/contribute to the institution in the form of time/money
4. Participation in alumni activities/events
5. Needs – what your alumni want and expect now from your institution
6. Current status – what are your alumni doing now?
7. Employment status, seniority and career progression since graduation
8. Salary and perceptions of salary
9. Frequency of communications from institution
10. Recommendations/comparisons – would alumni recommend your institution to others?
11. Aspirations – what do your alumni plan for their future?

1 http://www.i-graduate.org/services/alumni-barometer/
The i-graduate company indicated in interview (Kevin Brett, personal communication) that no Australian TAFE Institute has used the i-graduate Alumni Barometer. There is no use of the Alumni Barometer in Australia to date in the university sector either, although a number of European universities use the instrument. Further samples of the i-graduate alumni barometer survey can be found in Appendix 4.

Interestingly, i-graduate has recently won a tender from the UK Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to manage the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey for all UK further education colleges, which are similar to VET institutions here in Australia. They are also engaged in a survey to track the geographic and occupational destinations of international alumni from Dutch higher education institutions.

The Dutch survey is sponsored by Nuffic, the Netherlands organisation for international cooperation in higher education. It appears that in other countries, which are engaged in international education, a government agency is responsible for funding the conduct of large-scale graduate destination surveys.

The only other significant survey of graduate destinations across institutions in Australia in recent times has been an online survey (reported in Banks & Olsen 2008) of nearly 2000 international student graduates of five technology universities in Australia in 2008.

This survey asked graduates where they currently reside and work, how long it took to get work in their field of study, whether they work for a small or multinational firm, if they are satisfied with their career progress and if they would recommend studying in Australia to others. See Appendix 5 for a summary of the questions asked in that survey.

“... in other countries, which are engaged in international education, a government agency is responsible for funding the conduct of large-scale graduate destination surveys.”
5 International graduate tracking methods undertaken by VTI members

VTI members have discussed the lack of systemic data on international VET graduates on many occasions and have raised the issue with the NCVER, which is funded by the Commonwealth government to collect data on domestic students only. As part of members’ broader discussions, it was agreed to investigate exactly what each member institute does in relation to international student surveying and the development of alumni relations.

In August and September of 2011, relevant staff in VTI member TAFE institutes and dual sector universities were interviewed by phone to ascertain what efforts are undertaken to track international student graduates of the institution. This interviewing was undertaken on behalf of VTI by research assistant Margaret Neith with financial support provided by the Victorian Department of Business and Innovation (DBI).

The VTI has 16 members, comprising 13 TAFE institutions and 3 dual sector universities. Eight of these institutions are Melbourne based and 8 are regional. The international staff members who participate in VTI activities are not the staff responsible for surveying students. The first step in this project therefore was to ascertain from VTI members, who was the most appropriate staff person to speak to about the survey work carried out at each institute.

That person was then contacted by email and/or telephoned, and questioned about what their Institute is doing in relation to surveys of TAFE students - both international and local, either during or after the completion of their course.

“... contacts commented with regret on the dearth of activity and information on the destinations of their international student graduates.”

Where relevant, copies of local survey instruments were requested and mostly provided. The research assistant conducted phone interviews (see her survey questions at Appendix 1) with the relevant survey staff in each member institute over the month of September 2011, finding a variety of attempts to remain in contact
with international students who had completed courses.

Attempts had been made using mailed surveys, but results were not high, surveys had been emailed to students (again results not high), telephoning international students was considered prohibitive in terms of cost.

The most common survey was an internet based survey using a simple tool such as SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com). However, the majority of institutes currently undertake no surveys or research in the area of international student destination after course completion. Many contacts commented with regret on the dearth of activity and information on the destinations of their international student graduates.

5.1 Regional TAFE member institutes

One larger regional TAFE has recently instituted a graduate exit survey (see Appendix 6). However amongst the other 7 regional TAFE institutes, the efforts varied from no effort expended on following up international graduates to informal follow up and contact kept by individual teachers and departments. A typical response regarding informal tracking from a regional institute is quoted next.

“We only have about 15 international students per year - the International Student Office knows them all and can keep in touch with them individually. One teacher keeps in touch with his Chinese students and the Chinese students actually did a sort of “where we are now” book for this teacher, including photos of these past students and their families. So a “survey” of such small numbers is probably not necessary when we can keep in touch with individuals.”

All regional institutes routinely undertake student engagement surveys, student satisfaction, unit evaluation and student perception of educational quality surveys with their international students. One regional member noted that staff previously undertook a survey after course completion, but found that the survey return rate was so low, it was simply not feasible to continue. They now undertake course evaluation/satisfaction surveys with students who are in the last week of studying to guarantee a good response rate to the survey.

Another regional provider noted that it is currently putting together a team from across the institute to look at ways to improve surveying.

This provider acknowledged that it has not been a high priority to date; following re-structure the new team hopes to report late in 2012 on new surveying plans. This
provider is interested in looking at the whole international student “lifecycle” — before studying, during study and after study. This provider is also interested in tracking articulation — and admitted it has not been successful with this aim in recent times.

The provider noted in interview that the new Victorian Student Number (a unique student identification number which stays with each student as s/he moves through their education), which commenced in 2011 at the secondary school and also in VET should help in tracking students after completion. The new Victorian government initiative to provide a unique student identifying number will apply to secondary school students and VET students up to the age of 24 years, but not to university students. So again, tracking across the educational sectors remains difficult.

Another regional provider commented that it too would be interested in finding out specifically where its local students and international students go to continue their education - this was described as the big “missing data” issue. This regional provider has articulation agreements with six universities and yet no information on which of its TAFE students go on to learn at any of the six universities.

The interviewee suggested that the universities would also like to have more information about articulation from TAFE. She noted that the universities seem to have as much difficulty as TAFEs with tracking this type of information. Another regional provider also raised the same issue regarding articulation to other education providers.

It seems in summary that for regional providers, the number of international students is generally small and contact is maintained on a one-to-one basis. Regional providers however are very keen to work with universities to determine the best means of tracking articulation of their students into higher education (both international and local students).

“All regional institutes routinely undertake student engagement surveys...”

Regional providers understand that development of alumni relations is something that TAFE needs to engage with and does not do successfully at present. Alumni contact provides access to valuable data about the success of programs offered to students. In addition, as one regional provider interviewee noted, alumni can provide testimonials and possibly act as mentors to new students coming to the institution.
5.2 Metropolitan TAFE and dual sector university members

In 2011, there were 8 metropolitan members of VTI that were either single sector TAFE institutes or dual sector universities. Of these 8 members, half do some form of survey of graduating international students and half do not.

The survey provided by RMIT is located at Appendix 7. The survey undertaken by another provider is located at Appendix 8. Two other providers undertake (or have undertaken in the past) surveys of graduating domestic students. Two examples are located in Appendix 9 and Appendix 10. All of these surveys have been generously provided for the purpose of assisting fellow VTI members and others in VET to improve the tracking and follow up of international VET graduates.

The members who do survey their international graduates do so some 4 months after graduation. RMIT is involved in the university wide Graduate Careers Australia survey, making their results comparable with other universities in Australia. The other providers undertaking surveys are at present trialling their survey instruments. Two successful surveys of international graduates have occurred recently at Kangan and Victoria University. Their efforts are described next.

5.3 Victoria University research on graduates

VTI member Victoria University has taken considerable effort to retain contact with its international alumni and recently conducted a significant piece of research on the question: ‘Do international student alumni contribute to global brain circulation?’ The research used Victoria University alumni as a case example to answer the question. The research was focussed on asking graduates if they stayed in touch with the university, who they stayed in touch with and for what purpose.

Victoria University has an active alumni office and it was through this office and its networks with international students that the research was able to take place. The researcher, Dr Joanne Pyke (2011) reports that her ‘survey went out to approximately 6,000 alumni (the actual database was about 7,000 but there were roughly 1,000 dead links) and we received a return of 906 with roughly 800 of those completing all of the questions. So the return rate was approximately 15%.’

It is interesting to consider this return rate: generally a return rate of 10% or higher is considered good on a survey. However, this is an already engaged audience – in other words, one could expect a higher response rate from alumni who already have a connection with the
university and who choose to maintain it by giving a current email address to the university. As Pyke suggests herself, the respondents may be those who already feel a strong affiliation with the university and so they respond.

It is also interesting to note that even the alumni office whose sole work it is to stay connected with graduates found 14% (1,000 out of 7,000) of graduate email addresses on file were not current. These points are made to illustrate the level of difficulty involved in maintaining contact with students once they have graduated from any institution.

5.4 Victoria University findings

Of the 800 graduates who responded to Pyke’s survey, there is still connection with their Australian education experience, but it is primarily via electronic means (Facebook and email) and it is mainly with fellow international students and to some extent individual academics, but not largely with professional or business networks or with local students that they may have met while studying here in Australia.

Only 5.5% stayed in touch with domestic students. Less than 50% have travelled back to Australia or intend to return and for those who did return or intend to, the purpose is primarily for a holiday or to visit with friends.

Pyke found that there is strong interest in maintaining connection however and that greater efforts need to be made to facilitate this.

“…do our graduates find work in their field?”

Since she surveyed alumni across both the VET and higher education sectors, it is interesting to note that her work shows that scholarship holders were significantly more likely to stay in touch than privately funded students and that no significant differences were noted between vocational and higher education graduates, although PhD graduates are most likely to stay in touch. This is likely because AusAid ensure that an active alumni network is in place in the home country of scholarship holders.

Pyke’s study suggests there are opportunities to engage with international graduates to the benefit of both the graduate and the institution and her research will continue to investigate how alumni offices may best connect with international graduates and tap into what they actually want and need from their educational institution. She notes in particular, that the opportunity to build business relationships in Australia may be an avenue for further connection. This is surely a key issue in VET courses: do our graduates find work in their field? Could their career prospects be improved with greater business connections both here in
Australia and in the home country? And in what way could the educational institution assist with building these links between international graduates and business?

A recent survey (Wiers-Jenssen 2008) showed that mobile students—those who study and graduate abroad—search for and gain work experience abroad more often than local students who do not study abroad. The same study also showed that the vast majority of international students return from abroad after graduation with many working in multinational firms or have overseas assignments more frequently in their work than local students. Thus international students do contribute to what Pyke calls, ‘brain circulation’ around the world.

5.5 Kangan Institute Survey of International Automotive Graduates

In 2011, VTI member institute, Kangan surveyed international graduates from its automotive courses (see Appendix 8). The online survey elicited 112 responses from students in 14 countries. Forty-eight percent (the largest proportion) of the respondents completed their course in 2009, with a further 31% finishing in 2010 and the remainder finishing in 2011. The significance of this result is that Kangan has been able to maintain contact with students who completed a VET course more than two years after completion, indicating it is possible to do so. It must be said also that 62% of respondents had either gained permanent residency status or were in the process of applying (indicating they were still in Australia).

Kangan’s survey showed the majority of graduates undertook studies in light vehicle automotive and that 81% were working with 70% working in their chosen field. In the main this cohort were not undertaking any further study (78%). The majority (63%) were able to find work within 3 months of completion of their course at Kangan. The survey asked about the relevance of the training, how Kangan could improve its training, the benefits students received and the best part of the training. The survey by Kangan, highlights that contact with VET graduates can be maintained despite the difficulties noted above and it shows the wealth of information a survey can provide in order to continually improve the relevance and usefulness of courses offered.
Amongst the metropolitan VTI member providers, the survey function is managed centrally. Generally, surveys are undertaken by the research and planning area or in some cases the marketing department. They are not routinely undertaken by the international managers or department. Because of this split in responsibility, it is possible for providers to survey only their domestic students, because they are the majority and the NCVER survey is well established for that cohort. Of those metropolitan providers that do not survey graduating international students, the responses as to why varied but all related to the difficulty and the cost of such a venture with the expectation of little return.

This is not to suggest that strenuous efforts have not been made to follow up international students. One provider in particular told VTI in interview that their survey staff attended every graduation ceremony one year and spoke to each student individually after the ceremony. She handed them a survey form with an addressed envelope, gave them details about how to access the survey on-line if they preferred, emphasising how important their response was. Unfortunately the return rate was zero, even after this extensive effort.

Another provider said “they [international students] are so hard to track down and they often don’t respond to surveys.” While another provider said, “we used to do it, but the response rate was so low, we don’t bother now.”

“Perhaps it is time for another combined effort?”

Another obstacle noted was the high cost of development, administration and processing of survey instruments. It was suggested that a centralised process needs to be developed (similar to the higher education Graduate Careers Survey or the NCVER domestic student survey). The difficulty in locating international students after graduation was also noted – with loss of email data, phone numbers and changes of address being commonplace. One provider noted her experience that students often see the course as “in the past” and have no stake in the Institute any more; they want to move on with their lives. But this view should not go unchallenged. Kangan showed that successful surveying of international students can be done, as did Victoria University. Perhaps it is time for another combined effort? All providers undertake the NCVER survey for domestic students and if they offer higher education courses, they participate in the Graduate Careers Survey. A system wide survey of international students is warranted.
Despite a lack of engagement overall with surveying international students and creating alumni, member institutions were aware of the value and purpose of such surveys. In interview, staff were able to highlight the uses of such data were it available to them.

• Improved marketing to attract more international students. Case histories or testimonials could be useful for demonstrating to prospective students how other students from their country had found good jobs through doing a course at a particular institute. The possibility for former students to act as mentors for other students was also mentioned.

• Making improvements to courses.

• Helping TAFE Institutes develop workplace opportunities and work placement while students are studying.

• Improving pathways to Higher Education. Major difficulties in tracking VET students who articulate to HE (both local and international) were noted – there is no consistent student ID system. Many VET students don’t ‘graduate’ as such - they may use credits to get into HE or go to other providers.

• Improving student services.

• Performance benchmarking against other TAFE Institutes (and Private Providers).

• Articulating differences between on-shore and off-shore international student success rates.
8 Summary of key findings of this research

8.1 Who manages surveying of international students at institute level?

Although managers of international education oversee recruitment of international students, they do not manage surveying of those international students. This in itself is an interesting finding of the research. Other areas of the institute do this. In some institutes, it is carried out by research staff or strategic planning staff and in some it is undertaken by the marketing staff.

On several occasions our phone interviews found that the relevant survey/research staff had not thought to include international students in the work they are undertaking with regard to student surveying. This was either because they were considered to be a small cohort when compared with local students; they had not responded in high numbers to earlier attempts or lack of funds precluded involving them in survey work. In some cases there seemed to be confusion over who had responsibility for tracking international students.

In two instances, the international education manager referred the VTI research assistant to another member of staff for information on survey work done. When contacted that staff member simply referred our researcher back to the international manager. The emphasis in most member institutes was on domestic students. In some cases fee-for-service students, including those from overseas were simply ‘forgotten’ by survey staff. This experience has ramifications for the future improvement of surveying graduate destinations of international students.

8.2 Student ID numbers

The VSN (Victorian Student Number) is a student identification number that has been assigned by the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development to all students in Victorian government and non-government schools, and to students up to the age of 24 undertaking Vocational Education and Training with a TAFE, Registered Training Organisation or Adult and Community Education (ACE) provider (referred to collectively as VET Providers). It also covers international students, but does not cover students in higher education. So there is still no easy way to track the progress of
a VET student into further study. This has been highlighted as “missing data” in this research. The Commonwealth government is considering the introduction of a similar ID system across the country.

8.3 Lack of systemic data

The LH Martin Institute (part of Melbourne University) regularly undertakes research on articulation issues. Research staff are particularly interested in the issue of students going on to further study from their VET course and if the further study or work is in the same broad field of education.

In interview with staff at LH Martin, a comment was made that the current LH Martin research must use the ABS survey of education and training as its main data source, as TAFE institutions cannot provide the needed data for this research.

The NCVER has indicated it is interested in providing survey data of graduate destinations of international students, (personal communication – Hugh Guthrie) but is not funded by government to provide survey data of graduate destinations of international students.

Following the example set by Nuffic and the UK Higher Education Funding Council for England (see section 4), it may be that the best means of undertaking graduate destinations research of international students in VET in Australia is by a large-scale survey supported by the Commonwealth Government. This is suggested because of the prohibitive cost and as the best means of providing benchmarking across the private and public sectors and in each state of Australia. For such research to be successful, some form of student identifier and accurate email addresses would be required.

8.4 Limited focus on alumni

While universities fund alumni relations departments, this is not commonplace in VET. None of the stand-alone TAFE VTI members have alumni offices, although some do undertake alumni activities, in particular within the faculties.

A good place to start with this work is to provide email addresses that students must use while studying and which they may still use after completion of study. In most cases in this research, students were not required to use a student email address in communication with the institute and were not given an email address to use for life.

The exception is Victoria University, which now provides an email address for its students, john.smith@live.vu.edu.au. This address must be used in communication with the university and may be used after course completion. It is the key means (in
addition to the university Facebook site) of keeping in contact with students who have completed study.

Students are expected to regularly check their account for updates on the management of their course, key student administration matters, university events and individual emails from lecturers. Victoria University makes the use of this email address appealing with:

- 10GB of email storage
- 25GB online storage (password protected) through Windows Live SkyDrive
- instant messaging
- improved calendars
- photo sharing
- Multiple browser support
- SMS alerts to student mobile phone.

In addition to making an institute email address more appealing and closely monitored, using Facebook and other social media may be a useful and successful means of maintaining contact with graduating students.
9 Conclusion

This research has shown limited surveying of international graduate destinations among VTI member institutes. It did indicate a willingness to undertake graduate destination surveying of international students and an understanding of its usefulness, whilst at the same time highlighting obstacles to implementation at the institute level.

This report recommends that if Victorian TAFEs wish to demonstrate their commitment to quality education, they must engage in both graduate destination surveys of all students and in building alumni relations. Smart and Ang (1993) have highlighted that a view of education simply as a trade – just another export commodity – is not how education is considered in many Asian cultures. It undermines the status and role of education to consider it an export commodity.

Therefore it is imperative that this intelligence is gathered routinely. However, it is likely to be beyond the scope of individual institutions to achieve and is much more useful for benchmarking purposes if such surveying is done on a national scale. VTI recommends that this option be discussed at state and national level.

References


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Smart D, & Ang G (1993) ‘Exporting education: From aid to trade to internationalization?’ IPA Review 46 (1) 31-33

Appendix 1
Questions asked of VTI Members in Phone Survey

My name is Margaret Neith. I am doing a research project for Kate Dempsey (Executive Officer of the VTI - Victorian TAFE International) to find out what Victorian TAFE Institutes are currently doing in relation to following up their VET graduates - eg. whether institutes do VET international student destination surveys?

- **Contact Person and Title**
- **Name of Institute**
- **Does your institute do Graduate Destination Surveys for VET international students?**
  - If Yes, do you do these surveys, or are these done by another area or person in your institute - eg research? (contact details?)
- **Does your institute do graduate destination surveys for local VET students?**
  - If yes, how easy or difficult would it be to send this out to international students too?
- **Would it need major changes?**
- **Would it need to be a different instrument altogether?**

- **Would it be feasible to add one or two extra questions to an existing destination survey for local students to make it work for internationals too?**
- **Would you be willing to share your current survey questions and methodology with other VTI members to come up with best practice in this field? (Sharing of information can be done with your logo and details intact or de-identified if you prefer?)**
- **What types of information might you be interested in getting from your international VET students once they graduate?**
  - How would this information be useful to you?
- **What do you think might be some of the issues or difficulties of following up international students up when they leave the institute?**
  - When should it be done - eg 4 months? 1 year?
- **Do you have an alumni office that might follow up VET international graduates? Contact person?**
Appendix 2

University Graduate Destination Survey

Description

The Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) is designed to collect information on the destination of higher education graduates. The survey focuses on recent graduates’ participation in the labour market and further education.

The survey is carried out by the Graduate Careers Council of Australia (GCCA) in association with Australian higher education institutions. Each institution is involved with the dispatch and collection of the GDS forms. The survey results are used to evaluate, within five months after the completion of graduates’ qualifications, the extent to which they are employed, seeking employment, engaged in further study or unavailable to work.

Scope

Graduates included in the scope must have completed their course in the previous calendar year and attended an Australian higher education institution (full-time, part-time or externally) and the graduate must have been eligible for any of the following awards:

- Pass bachelor
- Honours bachelor
- Graduate certificate
- Graduate or Postgraduate diploma
- Graduate bachelor
- Masters: research
- Masters: coursework
- PhD or doctorate
- 3 year Undergraduate diploma

The scope of the survey also includes:

- Graduates with overseas addresses
- Students continuing with honours courses which include an additional year of study who have met the requirements for the award of a pass bachelor
- Graduates from the Australian Defence Force Academy
- Graduates from the private higher education institution, Bond University, (Queensland), and from the 1996 GDS, Marcus Oldham Agricultural College (Victoria) and the Australian Film, Television and Radio School, and Notre Dame University
• In instances where a combined degree is undertaken, graduates who have completed the first half of that combined degree, and the institution allows the student to graduate. They are again in scope when they complete the second half of their combined degree. For institutions that allow graduation only after both parts of a combined degree qualification are completed, the graduate is in scope only once.

Publications

• Graduate Destination Survey, GCCA, Parkville.
• Course Experience Questionnaire, GCCA, Parkville.
• Postgraduate Destination Survey, GCCA, Parkville.
• Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire, GCCA, Parkville.
• New Issue - Grads, Jobs and Dollars.

Data Service

GradStats is available on the website and provides an initial release of summary data. Additional data are available on request, subject to reliability and confidentiality restraints for the data items.

Release Schedule

• The publication Graduate Destination Survey is released June/July of the year following the reference year. Postgraduate Destination Survey is released in October of the year following the reference year.

Data items

Personal Characteristics

• Age
• Sex
• Residency status
• Home state
• Disability status
• Non-English speaking background
• First educational qualification post school
• Highest educational qualification prior to course

Course Characteristics

• Level of qualification
• Field of study
• Attendance
• Length of time taken to complete course
• Whether the graduate received recognition for prior learning
• Work in final year
• Employer support during course

Employment Characteristics

• Labour force status at reference date
• Whether employed full-time or part-time
• Whether a short-term or permanent employee
• Occupation at reference date
• Industry of employer at reference date
• Annual salary
• Length of service

Further Study Plans

• Level of qualification
• Field of study
• Attendance
• Month course began
• Institution

Method of Collection

The GDS is a census of all higher education institution graduates who satisfy the specified scope criteria. A census methodology allows the dissemination of results at the institution level. The data are collected using a self-enumeration, mail-out/mail-back questionnaire. A questionnaire is distributed by each higher education institution to the graduates from their institution, on or about 30 April (or 31 October in the case of early completers).

Early completers are those graduates who have completed their qualification ending in the first semester. The institutions collect data twice a year, after each graduation, but collate the data in one annual statistical report.

Some institutions conduct a mail out of questionnaires aimed at reaching the graduates on or around the reference dates. However, most institutions distribute the questionnaires to the graduates to coincide with the mail out letters on the graduation ceremony procedures. This decision is generally made to reduce costs and increase efficiency. Most graduates within the scope of the survey receive a questionnaire, a reply paid envelope and a covering letter requesting the questionnaire be returned as soon as possible.

All graduates who have not returned their questionnaire to the higher education institution after four to six weeks, are sent a reminder package by mail. A number of other follow up techniques are pursued such as telephone reminder and offers of assistance in employment search to unemployed graduates.

Questionnaires are, in the first instance, returned to their institution of origin. The
data are usually entered onto a file by the higher education institution but in some cases the coding and punching is carried out by the GCCA. Responses are coded according to standard coding instructions issued by the GCCA and are then forwarded to the GCCA for computer processing and compilation. There are however a number of institutions who use a central coding service offered by the GCCA. Upon completion of processing, survey forms are returned to the originating institution.

Timing of Collection

Frequency of Collection

Annual. The GDS was conducted for the first time in 1971.

Contact

Research Manager,
Graduate Careers Council of Australia (GCCA)

PO Box 28 Parkville
VIC 3052

Telephone (03) 9344 9333
Facsimile (03) 9347 7298
Email gradlink@gcca.unimelb.edu.au
Website www.graduatecareers.com.au

What is the Student Outcomes Survey?

The Student Outcomes Survey (SOS) is an annual survey of students who successfully completed some vocational training in Australia. The survey has been conducted annually by the NCVER since 1997.

NCVER (National Centre for Vocational Education Research) is a not-for-profit company owned by the State, Territory and Federal ministers responsible for vocational education and training. The survey is funded by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). NCVER manages the research, analysis and reporting of the survey.

Why is the survey conducted?

The aim of the Student Outcomes Survey is to improve the economic and social outcomes of students who undertake vocational education and training (VET). This is achieved by providing the VET sector with information on the:

- Outcomes from training (eg. employment and further study outcomes)
- Relevance of the training
- Benefits of the training
- Satisfaction with the training
- Reasons for not continuing the training (where applicable).

The information is used by national and state/territory bodies, along with local training providers, to ensure vocational training is of high quality and relevant to Australian workplaces. The survey highlights both the positive and negative outcomes from training and monitors the effectiveness of VET system. The information collected assists in administering, planning, and evaluating the VET system.

Who is doing it?

NCVER, under contract to the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), collects information and provides research on vocational education and training in Australia to governments, the training sector, industry and the community.
The Government Department of Education, Employment & Workplace Relations funds the survey. They will use the results to develop government policy to help employers and industry. The Social Research Centre is a national market and social research company that conducts the survey on NCVER’s behalf.

Who is included in the survey?

The survey targets people who completed recognised vocational training in the previous calendar year. For example, the 2011 survey includes students who completed their training in 2010.

Questionnaires are mailed each year to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduates</th>
<th>Module completers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students who gained a qualification through their training.</td>
<td>Students who successfully completed part of a course (at least one module) without gaining a qualification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Both graduates and module completers must have:

- Had an Australian address as their usual address
- Undertaken vocational training, excluding recreational or hobby courses

Qualifications include:

- Bachelor's Degree or higher
- Advanced Diploma
- Certificate IV
- Certificate III
- Certificate II
- Certificate I

When is the survey conducted?

The survey cycle begins in March and has three main stages: project preparation, fieldwork, and data analysis and reporting.

Project preparation
(March - last Friday in May):

The NCVER randomly selects the sample of students (graduates and potential module completers) stratified by institute, age, field of education, and training provider. Contact details of selected students are then provided directly to the contractor by state training authorities and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR). At no time do NCVER staff have access to students’ contact details.

Fieldwork
(Last Friday in May - September):

A personalised covering letter, information page, questionnaire, and a reply paid
envelope are mailed at end of May each year. The letter asks respondents to return the questionnaire within two weeks. Participants are also given the option to complete the survey via the Internet. The introductory letter includes a link to the questionnaire along with a unique password and username for each participant.

Data analysis and reporting (October - December):

After completion of fieldwork, quality checks are conducted and data are analysed. The results of the survey are released in early December.

How do you get student contact details?

Student personal details are provided by the TAFE, private or community education provider where you did your training for the sole purpose of conducting the survey. NCVER does not hold, nor do our staff have access to the personal details of survey respondents. Contact details will not be used for any other purpose than for the Social Research Centre to administer the survey. All personal details will be deleted from the survey database at the end of this project. The survey complies with the requirements of the Privacy Act 1988, of which NCVER and the Social Research Centre are bound. Details on the privacy policies of NCVER and the Social Research Centre can be accessed from www.ncver.edu.au/sos/privacy.html

Are student answers confidential?

Yes, student privacy is assured. Your contact details and survey responses will remain confidential. The information you provide will not be used for any other purpose. Only group responses, not your individual responses, are reported. All names, addresses, and telephone numbers will be deleted from the survey database at the end of the project.

Do I have to participate?

No, participating in the survey is voluntary. However, student answers are important as they help improve future vocational training.

Can I complete the survey online?

Students can complete the survey online at www.ncver.edu.au/sos.

What information is available from the survey?

In early December, the publication
Student Outcomes is released presenting national (and some state) level findings. Excel data tables and data cubes provide key findings by state/territory as well as by student characteristics such as age, sex, and Indigenous status.

The following supporting/supplementary information is also provided:

- Technical notes
- Terms and definitions
- Survey covering letter
- Questionnaires
- Data dictionary

All products are available free of charge on NCVER’s website at: http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistic/21065.html Requests for more detailed statistical information or further information about the Student Outcomes Survey can be made to:

NCVER (08) 8230 8400 surveys_req@ncver.edu.au  A charge will be generally made by the NCVER for more complex requests for information. See the fees and charges policy at http://www.ncver.edu.au/statistic/21075.html#protocols

Additional information is made available to various stakeholders including the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and the States/Territories.

How has the survey changed over the years?

During 1995, 1997 and 1998 the survey was known as the Graduate Destination Survey. From 1999 onwards the survey was known as the Student Outcomes Survey.


- A census of TAFE graduates with a qualification involving at least 200 hours or one semester of training.

1999

- A census of graduates with a qualification involving at least 200 hours or one semester of training. A small sample survey of module completers was introduced. Separate questionnaires were used for graduates and module completers. The survey was expanded to include students from TAFE, Adult and Community Education, private and other government providers. Only information on TAFE students was published.

2000, 2001, and 2002

- A sample survey of graduates and module completers. For graduates, the minimum training length condition was removed. Separate questionnaires continued to be used for graduates and module completers.
• The option to complete survey via the internet was introduced. For the first time participants who identified themselves as graduates in the module completer component were included in the graduate segment for reporting. Previously responses of these people were collected but not used in reporting. At the aggregate level, this change makes no difference, but for sub-populations the effect may be greater; therefore caution is required in making comparisons with results published in previous years.

2004-2009

• For the first time the same questionnaire was used for graduates and module completers.

2009

• A new recognition of prior learning (RPL) question module was included in the survey replacing the one used previously.

2010

• No changes were made

2011

• For the first time those with email addresses were invited to complete the survey online via email and/or a primary approach letter rather than being sent a hard copy questionnaire.
Appendix 4
i-graduate international student alumni barometer (sample questions)

Demographics

• Student nationality, graduation year, location (where are you from and where are you living now?), age, level of study, field of study and gender

• Type of employment; sector; duties and responsibilities; size of organisation; salary; university reputation in sector; future employment intentions

• Satisfaction with current communication content, type and frequency; future information requirements (e.g. news about the university, department, research, career related information, further study at the university).

Questions on relevance of the degree

• My degree was worth the investment of time

• My degree was worth the financial investment

• My experience at X university has made me the person I am today

• My degree has been relevant to my work

• Being an alumnus of X university means I am part of a close community

• Being an alumnus of X university means nothing special to me

• Being an alumnus of X university means I can command a higher salary

• Debt from studying has had a significant impact on my standard of living
Questions on Alumni events attended

What events have you been involved in?

- Events organised by school/department
- Events organised by alumni form your graduating year
- Alumni networking events
- Career related events or conferences
  - Events organised by the student association
- Family oriented events
- Special interest events
- Would your recommend your institution to future students?

Alumni contributions

- My family would be interested in giving money to support the university’s research activities
- I give money to support the university’s research activities
- Support students
- Fundraising activities of the university
  - I take part in fundraising activities for the university
- Volunteer as a student/alumni career mentor
  - Provide my career/personal profile for marketing purposes
- Promote the university to prospective students
  - Organise alumni activities
- Write articles for alumni magazines/websites/social media
  - Join an online community
- How would you like to receive communication from the University?
  - How connected do you feel towards your university (very unconnected, unconnected, connected, very connected)?
- Learning resources and facilities
Appendix 5

Summary of the Questions asked by Banks and Lawrence in their graduate survey.


Outcomes for Graduates Chapter 2
Pages 23-48

In 2008, 8,000 graduates of technology universities in Australia were contacted by email (using alumni records) and asked to fill in an online survey. Some 1,940 responded to the survey. The results are reported in Chapter 2 of Banks & Olsen - Outcomes and Impacts of International Education and paraphrased here for other providers to consider the types of questions that can be asked of graduates.

Graduates were asked about:

- Year of graduation
- How long they studied in Australia for (to cross check if duration of stay influenced career prospects)
- Types of organisations graduates hoped to work in upon completion (multi-national, small to medium enterprises, self employed, family business)
- If they are studying now and if so what course and in which country
- How long it took to find their first full time position after graduation
- The country where their first full time position was located
- How long they stayed in the first position
- Key variables influencing career choice
- Types of organisations graduates would like to work in now (after experience)
- Were their studies related to their current career
- Does their employer recognise their Australian degree
- Did the graduates intend to study further to progress their careers
- Satisfaction with current job
- Would they recommend studying in Australia to friends and relatives
- Would they recommend working in Australia to friends and relatives

6 These are not the exact question asked of graduates. They are the general topic areas covered and reported on in Chapter 2.
Appendix 6
Regional Victorian TAFE Provider Exit Survey Questions

1. Name of the course you have completed

2. What will you do now that you have completed your course?
   a. Return to my home country permanently
   b. Return to my home country for a holiday and then come back to Australia
   c. Seek a temporary visa in Australia
   d. Seek a permanent visa in Australia
   e. Apply for another course (if yes, where)

3. Are you currently working?

4. If yes, are you working in the same industry as your VET qualification?

5. Now that you have completed your course will you continue to work or look for work in the same industry as your VET qualification?

6. If yes where will you apply for work?
   a. Australia
   b. Home country
   c. Another country
## Appendix 7

RMIT CEQ

### Australian Graduate Survey

April 2011

---

**Your feedback is confidential**
- Please mark responses like this: ☑
- Mark only one box, unless instructed
- Use block letters

**Your qualification(s)**

- **Note:** The first two questions may have pre-printed responses. If you do not agree with the response, please cross it out and clearly write the correct response in the box provided.

**What is the full title of the qualification(s) you completed in 2010 at your institution?**
(Include combined/double degrees)

- For example: Bachelor of Commerce, Diploma of Education, Bachelor of Arts / Bachelor of Laws

---

**What were the major fields of education in your qualification(s)?**

- For example: Accounting, Psychology, General Nursing, Information Systems

---

**Were you mainly enrolled full-time or part-time?**

- Full-time ☐
- Part-time ☑

---

**What was your main mode of study?**

- Internal (on-campus) ☐
- External (distance) ☑
- Mixed mode (Internal and external) ☐

---

**For the qualification(s) you have just completed, were you wholly or mainly:**

- A HECS student and deferred some or all of the HECS debt ☐
- A HECS student and paid all of the HECS upfront ☐
- An International fee-paying student ☐
- An Australian fee-paying student ☐

---

**Did you receive any credit or advanced standing towards your qualification(s)?**

- Yes ☑
- No ☐

---

**About you**

- **Were you in Australia on 30 April 2011?**

  - Yes ☐
  - No ☑

- **Would you describe yourself as having a disability?**

  - Yes ☐
  - No ☑

- **Are you a citizen or permanent resident of Australia?**

  - Yes ☑
  - No ☐

- **If yes, what is your home postcode?**

  - [ ]

- **If no, what is your country of permanent residence?**

  - [ ]

---

**Prior to the qualification you have just completed, what was your previous highest educational qualification? Please give full title.**

- For example: High School Certificate (e.g. HSC, VCE, SACE), Bachelor of Commerce, Diploma of Education

---

**What is the level of this highest previous qualification?**

- Completed secondary education ☐
- Undergraduate diploma ☐
- Bachelor (pass or honours) ☐
- Postgraduate degree or diploma ☐
- Other ☑
- No previous qualification ☐

---

**Work in your final year of study**

- **Did you do any kind of paid work during your final year of study in 2010? (This includes paid course related work)**

  - Yes ☑
  - No ☐

  - Go to the next section, 'Your program experience'.

- **What was your main type of work (including permanent, contract, casual and self-employment)?**

  - Full-time work (i.e. working 35 hours a week or more) ☐
  - Part-time work (i.e. working fewer than 35 hours a week) ☐

- **Did your primary employer give you time off work for your study?**

  - Never ☐
  - Sometimes ☐
  - Often ☑

- **Did your primary employer support your study financially?**

  - Not at all ☐
  - Somewhat ☐
  - A great deal ☑

- **Were you still with that employer on 30 April 2011?**

  - Yes ☑
  - No ☐
### Your Program Experience

Please tell us about your program experience. The term 'program' in the questions below refers to the major field(s) of education or program(s) of study that make up your qualification(s).

If you have completed a qualification with a single major field of education (for example, medicine, architecture, pharmacy, law or physiotherapy), write this major field of education in the box under the heading MAJOR FIELD ONE and only use the left series of response boxes. Check that this major field of education is listed on the front of this survey form.

If you completed a qualification with more than one major field of education (for example, accounting and mathematics, or psychology and sociology), or a combined/double qualification (for example, arts/science or commerce/arts), write one major field of education in the box under the heading MAJOR FIELD ONE, a second major field of education in the box under the heading MAJOR FIELD TWO, and use both series of response boxes. Check that these major fields of education are listed on the front of this survey form.

#### Major Field One

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The staff put a lot of time into commenting on my work</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The teaching staff normally gave me helpful feedback on how I was going</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program helped me develop my ability to work as a team member</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found the program motivating</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teaching staff of this program motivated me to do my best work</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program provided me with a broad overview of my field of knowledge</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, my university experience was worthwhile</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program sharpened my analytic skills</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My lecturers were extremely good at explaining things</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teaching staff worked hard to make their subjects interesting</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program developed my confidence to investigate new ideas</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt part of a group of students and staff committed to learning</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' ideas and suggestions were used during the program</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learned to explore ideas confidently with other people</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program developed my problem-solving skills</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff made a real effort to understand difficulties I might be having with my work</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University stimulated my enthusiasm for further learning</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt I belonged to the university community</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program improved my skills in written communication</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program has stimulated my interest in the field of study</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>I learned to apply principles from this program to new situations</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
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<td>strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>I consider what I learned valuable for my future</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>As a result of my program, I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
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<td>My program helped me to develop the ability to plan my own work</td>
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<td>disagree</td>
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<td>strongly agree</td>
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<tr>
<td>I was able to explore academic interests with staff and students</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My university experience encouraged me to value perspectives other than my own</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
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<td>strongly agree</td>
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<td>Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this program</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
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<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teaching staff worked hard to make their subjects interesting</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program developed my confidence to investigate new ideas</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt part of a group of students and staff committed to learning</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' ideas and suggestions were used during the program</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learned to explore ideas confidently with other people</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program developed my problem-solving skills</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The staff made a real effort to understand difficulties I might be having with my work</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University stimulated my enthusiasm for further learning</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt I belonged to the university community</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program improved my skills in written communication</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program has stimulated my interest in the field of study</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learned to apply principles from this program to new situations</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I consider what I learned valuable for my future</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As a result of my program, I feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My program helped me to develop the ability to plan my own work</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was able to explore academic interests with staff and students</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My university experience encouraged me to value perspectives other than my own</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall, I was satisfied with the quality of this program</td>
<td>strongly disagree</td>
<td>disagree</td>
<td>neither agree nor disagree</td>
<td>agree</td>
<td>strongly agree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
your paid work status on 30 April 2011

What was your position regarding paid work (including permanent, contract, casual and self-employment) on 30 April 2011?

☐ in full-time work, or had accepted an offer of full-time work (i.e. working 35 hours a week or more)
☐ in part-time work, or had accepted an offer of part-time work (i.e. working fewer than 35 hours a week)
☐ not working

Were you seeking work on 30 April 2011 (even if you were already working)?
☐ yes  ☐ no

If seeking work, what kind of work were you seeking?

☐ full-time work  ☐ part-time work

your main paid work on 30 April 2011

Please go to the next section ‘your further study’ (on the next page) if you were not working on 30 April 2011.

Your main paid work is the employment in which you were working the most hours on 30 April 2011.

What was your employer’s business name in full?

What was your employer’s main business?

For example: MEDICAL HOSPITAL, PRIMARY EDUCATION, ACCOUNTING

Both within Australia and overseas, approximately how many people are employed in this organisation?
☐ 1 to 19 (small business)  ☐ 100 or more (large business)
☐ 20 to 99 (medium business)  ☐ don’t know

Were you working in Australia?
☐ yes  ☐ no

If yes, in what postcode was your employment based?

If no, in what country was your employment based?

In what sector were you wholly or mainly employed?
☐ public/government  ☐ not for profit
☐ private

Were you self-employed?
☐ yes  ☐ no

What was the full title of your occupation?

For example: SECONDARY TEACHER, GENERAL NURSE, ACCOUNTANT, SOFTWARE ENGINEER, RESEARCH ANALYST

In what month and year did you start this job?

For example, write “March 2011” as ‘03/2011’.

What were the main tasks or duties in your job?

Describe as fully as possible. For example: ENGINEERING DESIGN FOR BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION, TEACHING PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN, INTERNAL AUDITING

How many hours per week on average were you working in your main job?

Which one of the following best describes the type of employment in your main paid work?

☐ permanent or open-ended contract  ☐ fixed-term contract more than 12 months
☐ fixed-term contract up to 12 months  ☐ temporary or casual

What was your gross (pre-tax) annual salary in Australian dollars on 30 April 2011?

IMPORTANT: ESTIMATE IF NECESSARY. WRITE A YEARLY FIGURE.

AUSTRALIAN DOLLARS  $

How important are the following to your employment in your main paid job?

Formal requirement  Somewhat important  Important  Somewhat important  Important  Not important  Don’t know

Qualification you have just completed

Major fields of education you studied

Other skills and knowledge acquired during your program

If your job was full-time, was this your first full-time job of any sort (other than vacation jobs)?
☐ yes  ☐ no

How did you first find out about this job?

IMPORTANT: MARK ONLY ONE RESPONSE.

☐ university or college careers service  ☐ careers fair or information session
☐ other university or college source (such as faculties or lecturers)  ☐ advertisement in a newspaper or other print media
☐ advertisement on the internet  ☐ via résumé posted on the internet
☐ family or friends  ☐ approached employer directly
☐ approached by an employer  ☐ employment agency
☐ work contacts or networks  ☐ other, please specify:
**your further study**

**What was your position regarding study on 30 April 2011?**
- not studying
- in further full-time study
- in further part-time study

**What is the full title of the qualification you were studying on 30 April 2011?**
*For example: MASTER OF SCIENCE, DIPLOMA OF MARKETING*

**What were your major fields of education in this qualification?**
*For example: ACCOUNTING, MANAGEMENT, HISTORY, MEDICINE*

**What was the level of this qualification?**
- bachelor degree (not honours or graduate entry)
- bachelor degree (honours)
- bachelor degree (graduate entry)
- graduate certificate
- graduate/postgraduate diploma
- graduate qualifying or preliminary
- master degree by coursework
- master degree by research
- doctorate by coursework
- doctorate by research
- associate degree
- advanced diploma or diploma
- other award course

**What was your main mode of study?**
- internal (on-campus)
- external (distance)
- mixed (internal and external)

**At which institution were you enrolled?**

**In what month and year did you commence this qualification?**
*For example, write ‘March 2011’ as ‘03/2011’.*

**your job search strategies**

**Have you actively sought employment within the last year?**
- yes
- no

**Which of the following methods did you use to actively seek employment within the last year?**
- university or college careers service
- careers fair or information session
- other university or college source (such as faculties or lecturers)
- advertisement in a newspaper or other print media
- advertisement on the internet
- résumé posted on the Internet
- family or friends
- approached employer directly
- employment agency
- work contacts or networks
- other, please specify:

---

**your contact details**

Please provide your contact details so that your name can be removed from follow-up lists, and so that your institution’s records can be updated.

**What is your name?**

**What was your student identification number?**

**What is your postal address?**

**What is your email address?**

**the next step**

We would like to stay in touch with you in order to see how your career develops in coming years and gain later feedback from you reflecting on your higher education experience. If you would like to participate in this future research, please provide a long-term email address.

**What is your long-term email address?**

*Some as above or*

Please return your completed questionnaire as soon as possible in the enclosed reply-paid envelope to:

Survey Services Centre
RMIT University
GPO Box 243E
Melbourne VIC 3001

Thank you for your feedback, which will remain confidential. It plays a significant role in enhancing Australian higher education.

Careers information and the results of previous surveys are available from www.graduatecareers.com.au and www.graduateonline.com.au
Appendix 8

VTI member Kangan TAFE Institute survey of international graduates training in one departmental area

1. Where are you from?

2. Are you male or female?

3. In which year were you born?

4. When you attended training at Kangan Institute what was your MAIN AREA OF STUDY?

5. What year did you complete your course?

6. Are you a permanent resident of Australia?

7. Have you enrolled in any other study since leaving Kangan TAFE (completed, withdrew, still studying)?

8. Which of the following categories best describes the type of qualification you have in enrolled in SINCE UNDERTAKING the training with Kangan Institute?
   - a. Not undertaking further study
   - b. Masters degree
   - c. Under-graduate degree
   - d. Advanced Diploma or associate degree
   - e. Diploma or associate diploma
   - f. Certificate IV
   - g. Other certificate

9. Which of the following PERSONAL benefits do you feel you have received as a result of undertaking the training at Kangan Institute?
   - a. Further studies
   - b. Gained confidence
   - c. Satisfaction of achievement
   - d. Improved communication skills
   - e. Made new friends

10. Are you currently working?

11. Did you find work in the field of your study at Kangan TAFE?
12 How long did it take you to find a job after your study at Kangan TAFE?

13 How relevant was the training you received at Kangan TAFE to your job?

14 What is the title of your main job?

15 Describe your duties

16 Which of the following JOB-RELATED benefits do you feel you have received as a result of undertaking the training at Kangan Institute?

   a. Got a job
   b. Change of job
   c. Promotion
   d. Increase in earnings
   e. Was able to set up/expand my business

17 How could Kangan Institute improve the training you received to improve your chances of getting a job?

18 Would you be interested in attending further training with Kangan Institute if it would improve your chances of getting a job? What areas of training?

19 What was the Best Part of the training?

20 What part of the training needed improvement?

21 Any other comments?
Appendix 9
Domestic Students Graduate Destination Survey (A)

The destination survey is designed to assist X Institute an understanding of the employment and further education outcomes for its graduates. Your assistance in completing this survey is greatly appreciated.

The information gathered from this survey is strictly confidential and no respondent names or identifying information will be reported. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Helen Smith at Strategic Planning on 9200 8766 or email to helen.smith@X.vic.edu.au.

Please complete this survey and return it to X TAFE in the reply paid envelope within the next two weeks.
- Please tick ONE box only like this [Yes] (unless otherwise requested)
- Where a written answer is required, please write clearly in the boxes provided.

1. Our records indicate that you have completed the course listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your employment before your course</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Did you have a paid job at any time during the six months before undertaking your course? (Tick one box only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Yes, worked for payment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Yes, unpaid work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No, did not have a job - Go to Q5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What was your occupation during the six months before undertaking the course?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Give full title e.g. apprentice chef, childcare aide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. What were the main tasks or duties you usually performed in this occupation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Give details e.g. preparing food/cooking food, typing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. What sources of income did you have while doing the course? (More than one box can be ticked)
- Allowance
- Allowance
- Youth Allowance
- Government pensions or benefits [e.g. Newstart, Disability pension]
- Paid work [including apprenticeship or traineeship]
- Own business
- Parents or spouse/partner
- Other

7. Would you recommend this course to others?
- Yes
- No
## Overall satisfaction with the course

Overall satisfaction: Use the scale to indicate your opinion.
(Please tick one box that best suits the answer to each item listed below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8. Overall, I was satisfied with the course.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Overall, I was satisfied with X Institute.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Your opinions on the course

Course satisfaction: Use the scale to indicate your opinion.
(Please tick one box that best suits the answer to each item listed below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10. Career counselling and information was helpful in choosing the course.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Lessons were interesting and enjoyable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The subject matter was relevant to my career.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Assessment requirements were provided at the beginning of each subject/module.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The teaching equipment was relevant to my learning.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The learning materials were relevant to my study.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. There was adequate and timely feedback on my progress.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. X staff has relevant industry experience.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. X staff was friendly and helpful.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. X staff enriched my learning experience.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. My fellow students supported me in my studies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Your ambitions

Ambitions: Use the scale to indicate your opinion.
(Please tick one box that best suits the answer to each item listed below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>STRONGLY DISAGREE</th>
<th>DISAGREE</th>
<th>NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE</th>
<th>AGREE</th>
<th>STRONGLY AGREE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21. My course helped me achieve my job ambitions.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. My career goals / ambitions changed during my studies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Your current employment

23. Are you currently employed? (Tick one box only)
- Yes, working for payment
- Yes, unpaid work
- No, do not have a job – Go to Q28
24. What is your occupation?  
(Give the full title e.g. apprentice chef, childcare aide)

25. What are the main tasks or duties you usually perform in this occupation?  
(e.g. preparing food/cooking food, typing)

26. When did you commence your current employment?  
(Tick one box only)
- Before I began the course
- While undertaking the course
- After I finished the course

27. Which of the following job-related benefits do you feel you have received as a result of undertaking your course?  
(More than one box can be ticked)
- Got a job
- More skilled at doing my job
- Established/expanded my own business
- Changed job
- A promotion (or increased status at work)
- An increase in earnings
- None
- Other (please specify)

About You

28. Which of the following best describes the highest qualification you had undertaken before enrolling in your course?  
(Tick one box only)
- Bachelor degree or higher
- Advanced diploma or associate degree
- Diploma or associate diploma
- Certificate IV (or advanced certificate/technician)
- Certificate III (or trade certificate e.g. apprenticeship)
- Certificate I or II
- Secondary school qualification
- Statement of attainment
- Other course

29. What was the highest level of schooling you completed before undertaking your course?  
(Tick one box only)
- Year 12 or equivalent
- Year 11 or equivalent
- Year 10 or equivalent
- Year 9 or equivalent
- Year 8 or below
- Did not go to school
30. What is your age group? (Tick one box only)
   - [ ] under 15 years
   - [ ] 15 to 19 years
   - [ ] 20 to 24 years
   - [ ] 25 to 34 years
   - [ ] 35 to 44 years
   - [ ] 45 to 54 years
   - [ ] 55 to 64 years
   - [ ] 65 years or over

31. What is your gender? (Tick one box only)
   - [ ] Female
   - [ ] Male

32. Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin?
   - [ ] Yes
   - [ ] No

**Additional Study**

33. Have you enrolled in any other study since undertaking the course shown on the front of the form? (Tick one box only)
   - [ ] No - Go to Q36
   - [ ] Yes, still ongoing
   - [ ] Yes, finished

34. Which of the following best describes the level of the qualification? (Tick one box only)
   - [ ] Bachelor degree or higher
   - [ ] Advanced diploma or associate degree
   - [ ] Diploma or associate diploma
   - [ ] Certificate IV (or advanced certificate/technician)
   - [ ] Certificate III (or trade certificate e.g. apprenticeship)
   - [ ] Certificate I or II
   - [ ] Secondary school qualification
   - [ ] Statement of attainment
   - [ ] Other course

35. Where did you study? (Tick one box only)
   - [ ] University
   - [ ] TAFE
   - [ ] Private Provider
   - [ ] Adult & Community Education
   - [ ] Workplace
   - [ ] Secondary School
   - [ ] Other (please specify)
Appendix 10
Domestic Students Graduate Destination Survey (B)
Approximately how many people were employed by your employer?

- 1 to 19 (small)
- 20-99 (medium)
- 100 or more (large)
- Don't know

Were you working in Australia?

- Yes
- No

If yes, what is your home postcode?

If no, in what country was your employment based?

In what sector were you wholly or mainly employed?

- Public/govt.
- Not-for-profit
- Private
- Self employed

In what month and year did you start this job?

For example: write 'September 2010' as '09/2010'

How did you first find out about this job?

- TAFE careers service
- Careers fair or information session
- Other TAFE source (such as lecturers or faculties)
- Advertisement in a newspaper or other print media
- Advertisement on the internet
- Family or friends or other social networks
-approached employer directly
- Approached by an employer
- Employer agency
- Work contacts or professional networks
- Other, please specify

What were the main tasks or duties in your job?

Describe as fully as possible. For example: Supervising front line staff, serving food, budgeting as part of a finance team

How many hours per week on average were you working in your main job?

What was your gross (pre-tax) annual salary at 1 April 2011?

IMPORTANT: ESTIMATE IF NECESSARY, WRITE A YEARLY FIGURE

Australian dollars $ ________________________

Preparing for your career

How well prepared do you feel you were for your current position?

- Very
- Adequate
- Poor

Do you consider your job to be related to your career goal?

- Very
- Somewhat
- Unrelated

Looking back, is there anything you would have done differently to plan for life after graduation?

- Yes
- No

If yes, tick all that apply

- Acquired more experience related to my studies
- Learned more (or earlier) about my career options
- Started looking for work earlier
- Studied harder
- Been more involved in campus life
- Asked for advice from teaching or student support staff
- Learned more about further study options
- Other, please specify

Securing this job

If your job was full-time, was this your first full-time job of any sort (other than vacation jobs)?

- Yes
- No
How important are the following to your employment in your main paid job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualification you have just completed</th>
<th>Formal requirement</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Somewhat important</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Major field of education you studied</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other skills &amp; knowledge acquired during your course</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

About you

What was your age (in years) on 1 April 2011?
What is your gender?
☐ Female ☐ Male
Would you describe yourself as having a disability?
☐ Yes ☐ No
What is the main language spoken in your home?
☐ English ☐ Other
Were you born in Australia?
☐ Yes ☐ No
If you were born overseas, in what year did you first arrive in Australia?

Are you a citizen or permanent resident of Australia?
☐ Yes ☐ No
If yes, what is your home postcode?

If no, what is your country of permanent residence?

Your contact details

Please provide your contact details so that X records can be updated and can note your participation in this survey.

What is your name?

What was your student identification number?

What is your postal address?

What is your email address?

Staying in touch

We would like to keep in contact with you in order to see how your career develops in coming years and gain later feedback from you reflecting on your experience at X TAFE.
If you would like to participate in future research, please provide a long-term email address below at which we can contact you.
Same as Contact Details or

If you are interested in becoming a member of the X TAFE Alumni, please indicate below and we will be in touch via the email address provided in your Contact Details above.
☐ Yes ☐ No