**Citation**

**Annotation**
**Context:** Research shows ‘mosaic’ of students’ experiences (ed/employment) “with a multiplicity of nonlinear pathways” (p.57) which are more fragmented for ‘disadvantaged’ students. “Vertical stratification” of institutional hierarchies increases the difficulties of transition, especially with “horizontal stratification” of regional, rural, remote Australia. Bases focus on notion that SES impacts on whole-of-life opportunities and that school achievement is affected by SES. When students’ post-school transitions are considered in context of equity, these “begin to unravel in light of the constraints and complexity of students’ daily lives in a fast-changing world” (p.60). Young people in rural areas have most fragmentary careers. Drawing on longitudinal study of Year 10 leavers in Tasmania, Abbott-Chapman identifies 6 pathways (1-3 = stable; 4-6 = ‘fragmentary’; p.60):
1) Continuous full-time study (which may also include unpaid work, including for family, such as in family business, or farm, or as carer for family member).
2. Continuous full-time study and part-time work (which may be casual and not continuous).
3. Mainly full-time employment (which may include vocational education and training (VET), combining work with training or apprenticeship).
4. Mainly part-time employment (made up of either a mixture of part-time, casual or paid work; short term full-time job; or short term full-time or part-time work, which may involve periods of unemployment).
5. Late starters into study and/or employment (reasons for delay may include periods of travel, ill-health, pregnancy or home duties)
6. Mainly unemployed (continuous or almost continuous unemployment with no study or training).

**Theoretical frame:** None explicit

**Methodology:** Essay

**Findings:**
Strengthening student Resilience and study persistence: a discourse of welfare or a discourse of rights?

Need to recognise that disadvantaged students’ choices = limited by circumstances and economic/social capital – problematic when coupled with neoliberal ideology – the entrepreneurial
self and the ‘do-it-yourself’ biography (p.62) – and external challenges (such as geography and distance). “Teachers’ tendency to categorise students as ‘other’ overlooked their diverse life experiences, educational experiences and social class positions within ethnic groups” (p.63). Institutional responsiveness to student diversity

Discusses ‘second chance students’ (“late entrants”, p.64) = 40% of university students. “Research suggests that disadvantaged students do better in universities which liaise closely with schools and the VET sector in preparing students before they make the transition to university, provide induction and orientation programs at the beginning of the first year, and continuing study support throughout the degree or at least in the first year (McInnis and James 1995)”, p.64. Institutional responses vary. More TAFE students transfer to regional/technology universities than G08 and ‘sandstones’ (p.64). Responsive institutions break down vertical and horizontal stratification through creation of cross-sectoral local ‘learning hubs’.

Reflexivity in policy on higher education: rethinking the role of universities

Refers to call to synthesise tertiary sector in Bradley review (2008). Abbott-Chapman notes that “Rethinking the role of universities, especially by the elite, research-intensive universities, will not be easy for it may seem to threaten their market share of a competitive international education industry” (p.66). However, changes to education and training demands (e.g. WiL) has put pressure on HE (“increasingly vocational thrust”, p.66)

Core argument: “The paper suggests policies and strategies which improve higher education access, retention and course completion of disadvantaged students should target the 3 ‘Rs’—student resilience, institutional responsiveness and policy reflexivity, within the context of broad societal changes” (p.58). To break down vertical and horizontal stratification, universities need to reconfigure as ‘traversing places’: “The borderless world has no centre and no periphery, just a complex network of connections with hubs” (p.67).

“Transition to higher education of disadvantaged students can therefore be facilitated by schools and universities working together to ensure the best possible learning outcomes for each student” (p.67).


Context: Australia’s proportion of adults aged 24–35 with a tertiary level qualification has declined over the course of a decade, which has corresponding impacts on economic standing. The Bradley Review identified significant under-representation of certain groups in higher education, such as Indigenous peoples, people from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and those residing outside of metropolitan areas. The Bradley Review’s targets and governmental funding to increase participation of these groups into higher education has created an environment where pre-undergraduate
Aim: To provide strategies to educational providers that provide pre-university programs will ultimately increase the participation of under-represented groups in higher education in Australia. Understanding and addressing these barriers to education for such groups is necessary from a social equity perspective and to improve the workplace skills of Australia’s population.

Methodology: Literature review commissioned by the Adult Learner Social Inclusion Project – 2009-2011. Federally funded, and facilitated by QUT and Griffith.

Findings: It is important not to simply relegate some barriers to participation, like work commitments, to individual responsibility; rather such factors relate to larger scale economic issues. Much of the current evidence related to barriers to participation and factors related to attrition are from non-peer reviewed documentation, such as government reports. It is important that future research is conducted independently and undergoes the rigors of the academic process. While care needs to be taken to remove barriers to participation in higher education, correspondingly care needs to be taken to ensure that the life choices of individuals are respected and valued, including the choice not to undertake further education. The challenges students experience are not homogenous, and students face barriers to access and to completion (and these are not always the same). It is integral that collaboration exists between higher education providers and the VET sector; that information is provided to students and their families that meaningfully articulates pathways and their perceived risks of engagement; and that credentials build in a clear way so that students are encouraged to enrol in high level VET credentials that have a clear pathway into and through higher education.

Importance in a general sense of, “eight key domains where improvements could be made including: course relevance and design, staff attributes and behaviours, teaching and learning practices, access to courses, facilities and services, assessment practices, learning resources, equipment and materials; initial information provision, and administration and learning support services” (p. 19). The value of transition programs relates not simply to academic qualification or employability but to the whole person, their confidence and identity, the ripple effect into their families and communities and so on. These impacts are difficult to measure via typical success metrics but are no less significant. Other factors aside from completion should be used when measuring the success of these programs then, like other quality of life measures and intergenerational impacts.

Students discontinue study because of a range of multicausal reasons that are both structural and personal. They include: course content and organisation (for example, courses that are not
interesting, useful, stimulating or aligned to expectations, that are expensive, that are dissatisfactory); course delivery and learning environments (including the ways that students are engaged with, a lack of support or care from teaching staff, and the mode); finances or work commitments (students who work long hours are more likely to withdraw and hours worked correlates to other risk factors for withdrawal including age, location and first in family status); other individual factors (for example, family commitments, uncertainty, changing circumstances, health). Universities need to reconsider the first year curriculum including making the hidden curriculum visible and making support and resources readily available to help retain students. Universities also need to consider and validate the diverse pathways into undergraduate study. There are also barriers particular to distinct learning groups. Adult learners: are more likely to zig zag than take a linear pathway through study; are more likely to experience external constrains on their participation; want to study close to home. High withdrawal rates are likely to relate to these external factors, perceptions about the difficulties in catching up on missed work, and these factors were compounding for women rather than men. There are institutional factors related to poor information, guidance and course choices, and difficulty forming relationships with students and teachers, and lack of learning support. Research into the barriers experienced by Indigenous students has often failed to translate into improved outcomes for these students and has not necessarily been culturally sensitive and homogenised the diverse experiences and cultures of Indigenous peoples. A range of factors were barriers to ongoing educational engagement across a range of educational levels, including factors pertinent to the legacies of explicit and covert racism (for example, hostility of teaching staff to Indigenous students and Indigenous content, lack of representation of Indigeneity amongst teaching staff, or the curriculum, lack of care to represent Indigenous methods of teaching and learning and so on). Issues within communities and families may have a compounding impact on students’ participation and are likely to reduce aspirations for higher education, reduce available information and the perception of this pathway as relevant and available. Students from low-SES backgrounds tend to be more reliant on government income support, underperform in their first year and have difficulties adjusting to academic life and workload, and experience challenges to their identity regarding their family/friends and lack of engagement with university life. Likewise those students from rural areas are more likely to have difficulties adjusting to university and experience financial stress when compared to urban students, which can be compounded by
The evidence used in these studies is limited by unsophisticated data (for example, students who transfer rather than withdraw from programs is not accounted for, nor are measures of student success other than completion such as students achieving their own personal goals), lack of causality, and low response rates. There is a need for more peer reviewed and longitudinal research that uses larger samples when students are actually studying.

**Core argument:** “In the quest for equity in higher learning, what is most important is to ensure that those who wish to avail themselves of the opportunity to pursue HE should not be stopped in their endeavours by the circumstances of their birth such as geographic location, indigeneity and ethnicity, and SES” (p. 49). Financial imperatives alone do not account for the lack of participation in higher education by under-represented groups, and the nuances of these barriers need to be understood in order for effective strategies to be implemented to ensure that all students have the opportunity to participate and succeed in higher education if they choose to do so as one of many valid educational and employment choices.

---

**Context:** Based from assumption that TAFE students need more support for their transitions to undergraduate study, particularly for students who transition directly into Year 2 and miss orientation/transition activities. Paper reports on inquiry to see how ALL staff can facilitate TAFE-transitioning students more effectively. Identifies challenges facing TAFE students, such as: incongruities between cultures of learning and assessment practices, literacies

**Aim:** To bring the TAFE-uni student voice in (an identified gap in the literature)

**Theoretical frame:**

**Methodology:** Discusses problem of identifying students who came through TAFE pathway (p.A122). Identified 1350 (approx.) students; conducted Survey Monkey q’naire (n = 76/ range of disciplines): demographic, support encountered and helpfulness, comparison of expectations v. reality, list specific challenges re: transition from TAFE. Follow up 7 x focus groups (n = 26; low response rate from q’naire; issued personal invites)

**Findings:**

Most commonly cited form of transition support = orientation (32), print materials (32), ‘skills’ modules (18), student support (16). All of these had low rates of perceived helpfulness (11, 6, 2, 2 respectively). ALLU workshops cited by 6 and all 6 considered them helpful. 25 students reported having no support. With regards to expectations/realities, 13 expected greater independence, 10 harder work, 7 heavier workload (esp. reading and writing). Focus groups identified range of
tech/procedural challenges: time management, organisations skills, administrative arrangements, online components of learning, reading, group work, research and referencing (p.A124). Also report issues for mature students and students who articulated with credit (not visible as having transitioned from TAFE).

Suggestions for improvements (A127):

• Universities should contact students while still at TAFE and give information about university and transition
• Students should have mock uni days
• During orientation, TAFE students should be identified and offered specific induction activities/ disciplinary-specific introductions and sessions on digital learning
• For students entering in Year 2: revise ‘skills’ and unpack assumptions about what students can do already
• Liaise with local TAFEs
• Develop clear and reliable way of identifying students from TAFE (all backgrounds and with period of time between study)

La Trobe = written ‘survival guide’ for TAFE students


UK
Annotation written by Sally Baker

Keywords: higher education (HE); student choice; BTEC; widening participation (WP); outreach; financial support

FURTHER EDUCATION/ TAFE

Context: Widening participation agenda in England; Further Education (FE) to higher education pathways; educational decision making of FE students; inequitable rates of throughput to university between Business Technology Education Council (BTEC) and Advanced-Level (A-level) qualifications (3.5% compared to 20.1% respectively, according to 2016 UCAS statistics). Reviews literature on students’ decision making, particularly reasons for non-participation, and identifies gap: less interest in decision making of FE students; also cites Hoelscher’s research, which shows FE students are under-represented in Russell Group universities. Themes in literature = use of information/ belonging/ finances

Aim: To develop “understand[ings of] the reasons, influences, experiences and enabling and constraining factors that informed further education (FE) students’ HE decision making and choices” (abstract)

Theoretical frame:

Methodology: Longitudinal narrative inquiry (interviews, focus groups, audio diaries) over 18-months with FE students (n=13) studying on BTEC and A-level courses at two FE colleges in northern England. Demographic information on p.5. Three of the 13 participants (all A-level students) were involved in university outreach programs
Findings:
Financial restrictions: students cited open days as financial burden, especially for Performing Arts students because it impacted on their ability to go to auditions (so they felt they had to choose which to travel to, based on what they could afford). A-level students had “numerous opportunities to establish familiarity with and make judgments about the suitability of the HEIs they were considering” (p.7). A-level student Erin (who was involved in WP outreach) was able to visit universities because the WP outreach scheme supported travel costs before submitting her UCAS application; Bessy (BTEC performing arts) had to rely on ‘cold’ knowledge, thus limiting her options.
For BTEC/ performing arts students, there is also the financial cost of auditions (45–50GBP per audition) + additional application fees + travel to auditions, which informed the decisions some of the students made (e.g. participant ‘May’, who discarded two of options on her UCAS application on the basis of limiting costs – see p.8). Other challenges were presented for performing arts students who couldn’t pay for overnight accommodation and who instead travelled through the day, which impacted on their performance in the audition.
Feelings of belonging: students described not fitting in/ finding the course ‘too academic’ in RG universities (e.g. case of Sofia), leading to “feeling inadequate alongside applicants with A-Levels” (p.9 = academic/ vocational divide; “Sofia’s account conveys how the overwhelming presence of applicants studying A-Levels, and the academic alienation she felt as a result, led her to feel that this environment existed outside of the boundaries of her academic and social space” (p.9). In contrast, participating in the WP outreach schemes appeared to facilitate sense of familiarity and belonging with RG universities – e.g. case of Noel). Both Sofia and Noel shared a lot of characteristics, but significantly they took different pathways (A-levels/ BTEC)
Core argument: WP outreach schemes should be available for BTEC students as well as A-level students. Immediate costs of university (aka travelling to open days) = different from longer-term ‘debt aversion’ associated with doing a degree, and needs more exploration to help understand students’ decision-making


Context: Examines pathways taken by indigenous students in NT between VET (cert IV+) and HE, exploring students’ perspectives to understand pathways adopted, motivations for study and experiences while studying. VET and HE acknowledged as “crucial elements in Indigenous capacity-building” (p.7). Completion of cert IV makes university a ‘viable option’ but low numbers of students in ‘higher certificates’ makes this an ‘under-utilised’ pathway. In 2012 there were 1759 vocational education providers registered in the Northern Territory (Department of Education, Employment and
Report is situated within literature that outlines the disadvantage that indigenous peoples have traditionally and currently face in Australia, particularly for remote students. Proportional representation of indigenous students in VET is significant = more accessible, especially for students in rural/remote locations. According to DEEWR statistics, indigenous students tend to be younger, more likely to be living in remote locations, have much lower levels of schooling and are more concentrated in lower certificate levels (41.9% = in cert I/II courses; 30.5% = cert III – diploma; compared with 23.5% and 51.3% respectively of non-indigenous participation). More are male. Many indigenous students are precluded from articulating to HE because of their low level VET qualifications. For indigenous students in HE, they have high attrition rates, low retention/completion rates and a high failure rate. Patterns with indigenous participation in HE = high proportion enrolments in Humanities: health, education, society = 70% indigenous enrolments in 2008. Health = fastest growing discipline. More women than men in HE. Most significant gaps between indigenous/non-indigenous = postgraduate. Starting salaries = significantly lower for indigenous graduates

**Research Questions:**

- What are the retention, progression and attrition rates among Northern Territory Indigenous students in the VET sector?
- What are the pathways adopted by Indigenous students in the Northern Territory in the transition from post-compulsory education to work?
- What is the experience of Indigenous students who transition from the VET sector to the higher education sector in the Northern Territory?

**Theoretical frame:**

**Methodology:** Mixed methods: uses enrolment data from 2000–2009 to explore patterns in enrolment and completion rates, and focus group interviews with 29 indigenous tertiary students from CDU, Bachelor and 2 private institutions

**Findings:**

Quantitative data: between 2000–2009, indigenous enrolments = 27.3% of CDU enrolments (60% male, 40% female). Most students were under 20. Indigenous enrolments concentrated in lower levels (cert I and II). Multiple course enrolments also observed frequently. Field with highest indigenous enrolments = agriculture and environment studies. Best success rates = hospitality. Between 2000–2009, 280 indigenous students enrolled at CDU (4.8% of total population). The most frequent basis of admission was previous higher education study, followed by alternative pathways
Most popular courses = nursing and education, followed by law, business and behavioural studies.

Common motivations for enrolling in VET studies were employment-related.

- For students who take cert IV+ courses (higher certificates), 17% transitioned from TAFE into CDU. However, given low numbers of students who study higher certificates, this translates into “relatively few students” (p.3).
- For the students who transitioned from VET, they found their VET studies useful, but “some students were unprepared for the more academic environment of higher education and the emphasis on online learning” (p.3).
- Some students perceived a lack of indigenous teachers, but were generally satisfied with their programs.
- All students surveyed received financial assistance (e.g. assistance with books, computers, transport, food and accommodation; childcare facilities; time off work; cultural leave; and additional time to complete the course) but all were dissatisfied with the amount of support and the child care facilities, as well as a lack of ‘culturally appropriate’ places to study.
- Some rural students found the move to more urban locations difficult, reporting feelings of social isolation and difficulties communicating in English.

Core argument: A lack of social support, language issues and constraints on access to tertiary education remain barriers to participation and completion for indigenous students.

**Context:** Examines VET articulants’ experiences of transitioning from VET to UTS (VET students = 11% of enrolments in 2014). Authors claim that “Students transitioning along VET pathways are valued for the diversity they bring to the student population, in terms of their work and life experiences, socio-economic status backgrounds, and vocational knowledge and skills” (p.34). VET pathway = key element of UTS’ expansion plans (‘widening access’). UTS’ strategies for this = expanding credit recognition, more targeted information about UTS to VET students, outreach to TAFE students [crossover with recruitment?]. Draws on Griffen (2014) to outline challenges for VET-HE transitions (differences in learning and assessment, academic literacies, standards and expectations, repetition of content, student autonomy, cultural differences, status hierarchies, time management, relations between students and staff).

---

**Barber, T.; Netherton, C.; Bettles, A. & Moors–Mailei, A. (2015). Navigating VET to university: Students’ perceptions of their transition to university study, Student Success, 6(2), 33–41.**

AUS Annotation written by Sally Baker

**TAFE PATHWAY IN**
| **Aim:** To better understand of learning/ university experiences of VET-articulant students at UTS. To add the student voice (esp. equity groups) to discussions of VET-HE transitions/pathways: “to understand their perceptions of how their VET background influenced their university experience, their adjustment, the challenges and difficulties they experienced, and what they found helped or hindered their integration into the university” (p.34).
| **Methodology:** Survey (online via Survey Monkey) = Likert scale. All Year 1 & 2 TAFE articulants invited to participate (124/1351 = 9.2% response rate). Most (83.7% = started their degree programs within previous two years). 56.9% had completed diploma, 17.9% = advanced diploma; 25.2% = TPC. 45% = m/ 55% = f. Mean age = 27. 70% = currently employed. 50% = receiving Centrelink benefits.
| **Findings:**
Totally confusing section on ‘higher’ and ‘lower’ influence.
Majority of students report adjusting well to being a university student (87.1%), feel confident about fitting in (77.5%), feel confident to ask questions (67.7%) and are coping with academic demands (56.4% [not a strong result!!]). 85.5% agreed their choice of course was right for them; 76.5% thought their course had met their expectations.

---

**Context:** College-based higher education, in dual-sector institutions in England, as part of WP policy agenda. In UK, since Conservative government came to power, project of WP has continued, with new participation targets, but in the context of a newly diverse higher education market (see p.22), which includes short-cycle two-year courses and ‘degree apprenticeships’ (with the focus on quicker employment). These changes need to be understood in the context of nearly a decade of austerity measures, which saw significant cuts to higher education funding and increased student contributions.

Author makes the case that with increased participation, and the employment market not growing commensurately, competitiveness will be achieved by reputation of institution attended, meaning that higher education in further education (HEinFE) will become a subfield of higher education.

**Aim:** To highlight “the challenges under current conditions, for creating a distinctive and valued college-based higher education pathway that opens up opportunities for underserved and disadvantaged groups” (abstract).

**Methodology:** Essay; refers to data collected in FurtherHigher project (see Bathmaker et al., 2008)

**Findings:** Author cites Parry et al. (2012) who found that people studying HEinFE = more likely to be mature age, part-time, and from low participation areas; FE colleges = viewed as more responsive to...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>local community needs; learning cultures of FE colleges = distinctive from universities (more contact with educators, lower value placed on extra-curricular activities). Author points to contradictions in Parry et al. (2012): “just over half (55%) of college-taught undergraduate students were full-time, and those taking bachelor degrees, foundation degrees and HNDs were mostly full-time students” (p.24) limited evidence that college students = low SES not many students studying associate degrees in STEM Author also cites 2013 HEFCE report on graduates' destinations: 56% of foundation degree graduates from universities earned over 20,000GBP, compared with only 24% of graduates from FE colleges 49% of bachelor degree graduates from universities earned over 20,000GBP, compared with only 28% of graduates from FE colleges “The challenge then, in a highly stratified system, where 'mass' provision operates in the shadow of elite HE, is to determine the value or usefulness of the sort of HE provision offered in FE-HE institutions” (p.25). Data from FurtherHigher project showed that students were ‘warmed up’ for higher education, but “for forms of higher education deemed suitable for them, based on their perceived dispositions to learning, and their level of achievement” (p.26) — meaning that students gained access to part of the higher education system that is lesser valued, but at the same time, they get access to a system that they would ordinarily have been locked out of. Once in higher education, students reported different teaching and learning approaches, ‘harder’ work, more distance in relationships. Students tended to study in subject areas with clear employment destinations, but in career sub-specialisms (e.g. sports therapist rather than physiotherapist) <strong>Core argument:</strong> Changing policy environment in England has promoted further vertical stratification, which affects all HEIs, but particularly FEinHE as they struggle to competitively position themselves in the shifting market. FEinHE needs to be distinctive: “college-based provision would benefit from being identifiable in its own right, rather than something that is mistaken for university HE by some students, while positioned at the bottom of a stratified HE system, and eclipsed by university HE” (p.28)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
with larger debates about how governments structure their tertiary arrangements to achieve a shift from mass to near-universal levels of participation, and how to reconcile pressures for diversification and greater differentiation with demands for access and equity” (p.126). Who takes responsibility (“the bulk of expansion”) = directed by policy and funding decisions. Creates “more complex and changing forms of differentiation” (p.126). Scopes evolution of ‘policy contours’ that collapsed binary higher education (HE, polytechnics) into binary (HE and FE) system, although qualifications = remain stratified. FE = supposed to help bear some of the load of the New Labour WP targets (50% of population) but “no consistent or coherent policy for dual-sector further and higher education has emerged in the post-Dearing period” (p.128)

**Aim:** To unpack questions related to dual-sector institutions, probing why some institutions have chosen to bring further and higher education inside the organisations and to consciously develop different identities to rest of organisational field: why, how does this impact on WP, is the goal = WP or something else? (p.130)

**Theoretical frame:** Scopes a theorised definition of boundary: distinction made between physical, social and cognitive (see p.134). Discusses ‘boundary-marking’ and ‘boundary-crossing’ in context of transition

**Methodology:** Interviewed former senior government officials (n=20 from 8 different institutions/ case studies of 4 models of education = Model A = dual sector; Model B = specialist college transferring to FE into HE; Model C= FE college with small offering of HE; Model D = FE college offering lot of HE… definitions offered p.131-2). Interviews with students (n=82) from 4 models (A-D) at two points of transition (moving from FE to HE or completing foundation degree and moving to bachelor degree) + 45 x lecturers. Also interviewed people tasked with leading new sector bodies/ documentary analysis

**Findings:** Of the 4 case study institutions, only 1 = evidence of ‘seamlessness’ progression at institution which branded itself a dual-sector. One = specialisation translates into progression into vocational/ academic areas; one case study = strategic alliance with one HEI; other case study = had expanded UG provision and progression = students moving on to other HEIs. Disciplinary/ course differences: some foundation degrees and higher diplomas = “highly articulated” with programs above and below level = “ladder of progression”, although higher level courses = centred on teaching in workplace (employment focused)

**Core argument:** In English HE, FE colleges are on one end of spectrum and Russell Group universities (Oxbridge) are on other end; dual-sector institutions = in middle. As teaching-only
| **Bowden, M.; Abhayawansa, S. & Bahtsevanoglou, J. (2015). Overconfidence of vocational education students when entering higher education, Education + Training, 57(4), 429–447.** | **Context:** Under-performance of TAFE students who transition into higher education  
**Aim:** To “examine the role of self-efficacy in understanding the performance of students who completed TAFE in the previous year in a first year subject of microeconomics in a dual sector university in Melbourne, Australia” (p.429).  
**Theoretical frame:** Self-efficacy; cultural capital  
**Methodology:** Survey with students in first year microeconomics course—compulsory first year course for Business degree (n=147 full dataset)  
**Findings:** Students’ self-efficacy positively correlates with marks in first year of university studying microeconomics. Students who transitioned via TAFE = underperform (achieve lower marks) when compared to other students  
Underperformance = appears to be connected to overconfidence/ prior academic ability – this is explained as a result of differences in assessment regimes. Also, TAFE students are underprepared for higher education studies; TAFE students enter university with relatively high marks from TAFE which create overconfidence  
Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds underperform because of lower levels of self-efficacy  
**Core argument:** Implications from these findings:  
More early intervention needed at higher education level to support students who articulate via TAFE/VET; in particular, more research is needed to understand overconfidence  
Root cause of adjustment difficulties needs to be addressed in TAFE if TAFE = pathway into higher education |
| **AUS**  
Annotation written by Sally Baker  
**Keywords:** Self-efficacy, VET, Pathways, Low socio-economic, Overconfidence, TAFE  
**TAFE** | **Buddelmeyer, H. & Polidano, C. (2016). Can VET help create a more inclusive society? Adelaide: National Centre for Vocational Education Research.** | **Context:** Social inclusion in Australia and “greater risk of becoming socially excluded through lack of qualifications” (p.2), especially for disadvantaged learners (see p.2 for definition of ‘disadvantaged’). Cites work by authors (Scudella et al., 2009) that analysed HILDA data to cross-reference social exclusion with education levels. They found that the divide between early school leavers and people who hold some form of certification (above Cert II level). Cert III/ finishing high school is important for... |
TAFE/ VET

| Annotation written by Sally Baker | avoiding exclusion — attaining higher qualifications “only marginally reduces the risk of exclusion further” (p.3). Study estimated by 12% of social exclusion can be directly explained by education/skills, but material domain (earnings) also significantly impacted by education level, meaning that overall 30–40% of social exclusion can be explained by education/training. Methodology: Literature review Discussion: Authors are clear that VET cannot offer a ‘silver bullet’, but they offer the case of the Victorian Training Guarantee (VTG), which changed the way that VET was funded, to show how increased access to VET improved the social inclusion factors for students (Leung, McVicar, Polidano & Zhang 2014). The VTG increased VET enrolments by 35% in 2011, and particularly for Indigenous students. For students aged 15–19, there were clear benefits: with much higher likelihood of being employed full-time 6 months after completing a course. Employment outcomes were less significant for older students. Differences between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged students (McVicar & Tabasso 2016): non-disadvantaged students have higher post-training employment rate. People with low level English = 45% less likely to be employed. Biggest completion/employment gap found with Indigenous students; however, this doesn’t explain employment gap for other groups: “These results suggest that improving the completion rates among disadvantaged students is not likely to bridge the employment gaps that appear soon after completion and that efforts may be better directed at early career preparation” (p.6). For older students, Coelli, Tabasso and Zakirova (2012) found that VET improved chances for older students to move into full-time employment. Buddelmeyer, Leung, McVicar & Wooden (2013) found that VET increased likelihood of people moving from casual to ongoing employment over 12 months post-graduation, which is more so the case for men (6.4% compared with 1.6% for women). For pathways into higher education, Polidano, Tabasso & Zhang (2014) found that students taking VET in schools gain a TER of around 6 points lower than those who do not take VET subject, and they have a 12% lower chance of getting an offer from a university because of the ranking system: “current subject-scaling arrangements in Victoria that adjust for differences in the difficulty in attaining the middle ranking in a subject may be a key reason. In particular, scored VET subjects appear to be scaled down more than general subjects. This is because there is a relatively high proportion of lower-achieving students in these subjects who do not apply for university but who concentrate their effort in VET subjects, possibly to attain a vocational qualification” (p.9). |
Core argument: Policy recommendations:
1) Reforms to open access to VET need to target disadvantaged students
2) "When time, energy and resources are scarce, and if the goal is to increase social inclusion, efforts should be focused on school completion and articulation to certificate III level, rather than on increasing university enrolments" (p.10).


UK Annotation written by Sally Baker

Keywords: widening participation; marginalisation; adult education; power; socio-political contexts

FURTHER EDUCATION/TAFE ACCESS COURSES

Context: Adult learners in UK Access to HE courses in Further Ed (ucation (FE) colleges; learner identity/ies. Describes mature age students in this space in terms of lacking confidence with education, in a process of re/construction, lack belief in habitus to support studies. Gives background information about Access courses (p.801), noting the explicit link with widening participation agenda

Aim: To explore how Access students explored the 'project of the self' (Giddens, 1991) in order to enhance capital (Bourdieu, 1990), and how their project are impacted by discourses (Foucault, 1977) and interactions with powerful agents (teachers) and whether these generate communities of practice (Wenger, 1998); to investigate “the perspectives of marginalised adult learners, who were students on Access to HE courses, on their past and present learning experiences, on the transformation of their views of themselves as learners during the Access to HE courses, and on the impact on their learning of their socio-economic contexts and their relationships with their families, friends, Access to HE tutors and fellow students” (p.805).

Theoretical frame: Draws on community of practice (Wenger, 1998); Bourdieu (capital and habitus), postmodern identity theory (Bauman, 2000), discourse (Foucault, 1977); organisational culture; choice (Ball, 1987)

Methodology: Social constructivist (Lave & Wenger, 1991) and linked case-study: 7 FE colleges across East Midlands between 2012/13, using mixed methods: questionnaires (pre-/ post-course) and focus groups x 3 with students. Access teachers interviewed (individual or small group). Questionnaires (n=365) = 70% female; analysed for 'simple descriptive statistics'. Interviews = grounded theory analysis + visual data (concept maps) showing students' perceptions of transitions

Findings: Four main themes: significant others/ developing self; sense of community; student self-development; facilitating learning through community

Significant others/ developing self: variety of processes, policies and discourses had to be navigated/negotiated, partly as a result of having to adapt to full-time load of Access course (e.g. working part-time/ negotiating with employers). ‘Agencies of the state’ (e.g. Job Centre) = inflexible. Financial constraints = challenging. Students appeared to be parroting state-driven neoliberal
discourse (development of self; be better people/ get a better career). Consternation that Access courses = not free.

Student self-development: tutors perceived as different from teachers at school; perception that students = treated as adults/ tutors = facilitators. Tutors' supportive relationships perceived as helping students to see strengths and weaknesses and viewed as “car[ing] for the whole person and not just the academic aspects of student development” (p.809). However, the power dynamic was clear through practices such as taking the register.

Sense of community: Access courses = important sites for transition because of possibilities for social networks. Sense of being part of a group and peer-to-peer support = significant.

Facilitating learning through community: Sense of responsibility as individuals and as a community

Core argument: Students' struggles provided motivation to start Access course: “strengthened their resolutions to do something with their lives that contributed to the social wellbeing of their society” (p.815), but central government = impediment to success; Access course helped to develop identity as a learner; tutors play important periphery/ boundary role (but impact of power/ hierarchy).


Context: Set in context of increasing numbers of students entering HE via TAFE studies. Authors point to limited research on transitions from TAFE to university (notable exceptions = Wheelahan, 2008a, b; Hoelscher et al., 2010, Leese, 2010). Scopes literature on demographics of TAFE students, preparedness for study (Ertl et al, 2010), by SES background. Notes use of habitus in other literature and transition pedagogy and need for attention to academic support/guidance.

Aim: To report on experiences of students who entered University of Western Sydney in 2009 and 2010 in the fields of Business and Law, Early Childhood and Nursing from TAFE studies.

Theoretical frame: None explicated

Methodology: Mixed-methods. Data collected via survey (n=529), telephone interviews (n=74), and focus groups (n=33)

Findings: Demographic data from surveys showed:
- 39% = LBOTE (compared to 36% of general student population)
- 27% = low SES (compared to 23% of general student population)
- 71% = FinF (compared to 64% of general student population, except for Nursing and Business)
- 83% of participants had previously completed Year 12 and had gone to VET to update knowledge or skills, get work,
89% had studied at TAFE rather than private provider

**Expectations and reality**

- 43% found uni study a lot different from what they had expected. Most commonly, the gap related to perceived superior support at TAFE and more face-to-face contact. Also, “Students observed a number of differences at university, including the expectation of greater autonomy, less face-to-face teaching and teacher consultation time and a much greater workload” (p.247)
- Some students also noted that they had been ‘spoonfed’ at TAFE and were unhappy at how that ill-prepared them for university study
- Many Early Childhood students reported feeling swamped by the blended learning approach
- 39% enjoyed their new course more than, and 42% enjoyed as much as they were expecting

**Difficulty and help**

- Difficulty with academic conventions and academic reading (see p.252) = significant for particular groups (but weak)
- Nearly 40% had considered seeking help
- 12% had considered dropping out
- 26% had considered dropping units
- Two areas in particular = difficult for all students: unmet expectations and lack of preparedness for academic writing and conventions
- Authors note challenges (articulated by students) with relation to underpinning assessment approaches and ideologies/ preferred learning approaches

**Information gaps**

- Most students perceived a need for improved communication between sectors, especially prior to entry
- Some students spoke highly of UniStep bridging course

**Core argument**: Gaps between sectors/ experiences = unsurprising and HE = better placed to address gaps. Authors concur with other work that argues that transition strategies and support should not be ‘mere gap fillers’ (see p.253)

---


**Context**: Discusses the ‘Transition in, Transition out’ peer mentoring program at USQ for supporting students’ transitioning into Australian higher education – particularly development of sustainable and
Aim: To describe evaluation of 'Transition in, Transition out' (TiTo) in on-campus and offline modes

Methodology: Describes evaluation of TiTo – data collected using ASSIST inventory (Entwistle, 2000) = measures three levels of learning: surface, strategic and deep + academic performance results + survey of students (Psychology undergraduate course = one on-campus, one offline).

Students (n=)

Findings: ASSIST scores suggest students developed strategic and deep learning strategies over the course (one semester). Final marks (compared with previous cohort) appeared to show that more students achieved grades over 60%, although a similar percentage failed.

The majority (70%) enjoyed the program

Poses three questions at end for others considering implementing a transition program:

• To what extent can these outcomes, described within the discipline of psychology, be generalised to other programs?
• What would be required to embed TiTo in your program?
• Are there any specific aspects that might constrain the implementation of TiTo in your program/School/University?

Context: Works from historical context where Yr 12 completion more than doubled between 1983-1993 and schools added in vocational education as alternative pathways through school. Study located in ACT where 95% of students complete Year 12. Completion = associated with SES (low SES less likely to complete). Conflicting reports in literature about whether studying VET in school leads to low paid casual work (Polasel, 2008) or a better chance of f/t work (Marks, 2006). Overall, the literature suggests that the value of low-level VET certificates as stepping stones into further study outweighs their value in the labour market (p.233). Employers rely on educational qualifications as indicator of knowledge, skills, dispositions and competencies of candidates/future employees.

Aim: Examine pathways through school according to influence of parents’ education; to answer two research questions:

(1) Is there a link between parents’ education and pathway through school?
(2) Does school attended mediate the effect of parents’ education on pathway through school? (p.234)
**Theoretical frame:** Draws from human capital theory (investment in education = ‘high personal returns’ and productivity in labour market); thus, highly educated = highly paid and more productive

**Methodology:** Works with data provided by ACT Ed/Training Directorate = comprises data about 1770 students in ACT in Yrs 9 and 12 from random government schools. Data inc: parents’ educational level, NESB status, indigenous status, NAPLAN results, participation in VET modules, completion of Cert I/II/III and ATAR.

2% = indigenous; 10% = NESB; near-equal gender split; 25% had at least one university-educated parent; 25% had at least one VET-educated parent

**Findings:**

- 48% graduated with ATAR: females slightly more likely to gain ATAR (49% - 47%); indigenous less likely (21%–48%); NESB more likely (62%–45%)
- Students with one parent uni-educated more likely to get ATAR (71%); low educated parents less likely to get ATAR (27%)
- 80% of students in highest quartile of NAPLAN got ATAR
- 12% of students in lowest quartile of NAPLAN got ATAR
- 66% of high SES got ATAR
- 33% of low SES got ATAR

In total, 18% m and 15%f got VET qualification by Yr 12 (9% indigenous-16% non-indigenous; 10% NESB-17% NES). Students with low-educated parents most likely to complete VET certificate (22%); those with VET-educated parents = least likely to get VET certificate (15%)

**Core argument:** Variations in pathways = strongly connected to parents’ educational levels: “high-achieving students with low-educated parents are less likely than their peers with higher-educated parents to pursue an ATAR pathway” (p.241). Students from low-educated families = 4 x more likely to have no ATAR and take VET pathway; 5 x more likely = no ATAR with VET modules but not VET pathway; twice as likely to have no ATAR and no VET pathway – NAPLAN results not significant here.

---


**Context:** Describes equity as needing ‘coherent blend’ of admin, social and academic support. Describes MAPs to Success access scheme at UWA for ‘underprepared mature age students’. UWA – Go8 – highest proportion (90%) of school leavers. MAP to Success related to MAP scheme (Mature age Access Pathway) which began in 2008. MAPs to Success “was devised to make more explicit links to existing services as well as developing MAP-specific activities to ensure that the academic and support needs of these— and subsequent MAP students— were adequately met”
| **Context** | Works from notion that R&R students have less access to HE and are more likely to undertake VET programs (possibly as pathway to HE). Works from research that suggests using VET as substitute for HE = puts R&R students at disadvantage (see Lee and Coeli, 2010). Differentiates between apprenticeship programs and non-apprenticeship programs in VET. Tertiary system is taken to mean VET and HE. Works from post-Bradley context (unified tertiary education system). Sets out arguments about school completion rates in rural Australia and quality of secondary education: cites research that shows completion rates between metro and rural/regional students have increased, despite completion rates improving overall. One issue raised in senate hearing into R&R education = issue of recruiting teachers. NAPLAN results suggest that ‘quality’ in R&R areas is lower than in metro areas. Committee also heard R&R students have lower aspirations for HE [this is resolutely challenged in literature]. Author navigates R&R aspirations literature and concludes, “despite regional students’ strong aspirations for higher education, both real and perceived barriers and a lack of shared enthusiasm for their goals may lead many students to compromise those goals” (p.22). Author makes claims about gendered pathways: “The favourable labour market outcomes (employment status and earnings) from apprenticeships for
males are good news in an otherwise concerning pattern of tertiary participation by regional and rural youth. However, for females, completion of Year 12 followed by a degree is the only clearly effective pathway, and this pathway is less readily available to regional and rural youth” (p.23–4)

**Aim:** To analyse LSAY data to explore the extent to which VET is used as substitute for HE by rural youth and to examine models of cooperation between tertiary institutions. Poses 5 questions:
1. What proportions of metropolitan and rural youth plan to enter higher education, VET or undertake no post-school study?
2. What are the occupational aspirations of young people, taking into account location and SES?
3. What proportions of metropolitan and rural youth enter higher education, VET or undertake no post-school study?
4. To what extent do well-qualified rural youth enter VET rather than higher education?
5. For those who enter VET, what are the levels of the qualifications they undertake?

**Theoretical frame:** None

**Methodology:** Uses 2003 LSAY data (school going, aged 15)

**Findings:**
One-third of students in regional locations and two-fifths of those in rural or remote locations are from families in the lowest SES quartile.

R&R = less likely to have one parent or more born overseas (which includes English language speaking countries). Authors points to differences in aspirations: more metro students aspired to complete Year 12 (90% compared to 86%); 20% of metro students intend to stop education at Year 12 compared with 33.3% of R&R. 66.4% of metro aspire to HE compared with 50% of R&R. Taking the three levels of VET qualifications together, 12.5% of metropolitan, 18.1% of regional and 20.6% of rural or remote students aspire to undertake VET study but this does not compensate for lower university aspirations. Two thirds metro and half R&R aspire towards professional careers. In NAPLAN, R&R students are under-represented in top achievement quartile.

R&R students = more likely to undertake VET studies than metro students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Metro</th>
<th>Reg</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower certificate</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher certificate</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All VET</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>36.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Core argument:** R&R students have high aspirations for post-school study and work but are lower than for metro youth. R&R students have lower participation rates in HE but higher participation rates in VET; “Participation in VET programs may not be an effective alternative to university study, as the level of VET programs taken by non-metropolitan students is typically lower than that taken by metropolitan youth, and lower-level VET qualifications have rather modest returns” (p.32). Quality of school education in non-metro areas is a concern and is essential for post-school transitions.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>FURTHER EDUCATION/ TAFE</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context:</strong> Part time foundation degree in Sunderland College, UK: exploring student experience and employment while studying in broader ‘area of concern’ of attrition, especially for non-traditional students in context of WP. Employment commitments = one main reason for attrition. Non-traditional = defined as “non-traditional circumstances include a range of factors including economic status, age, gender, ethnicity, disability, marital and family status and geographical location, that prevent access to HE” (p.55) and many = hold ‘non-traditional vocational qualifications’ and are working class. Employability = large reason for choosing p/t foundation degrees in FE colleges. Author cites Tett (2004) = non-traditional students place themselves outside HE and construct HE as alien place. Foundation Degrees (FD) = ‘arguably most successful’ widening participation strategy between HE and FE = ‘integrated education code’ (Bernstein, 1971), democratic, reflexive curricula, practical content (vocationally focused): “FDs are the ‘curricula of employers’ gives currency to the traditional FD learner: they choose the FD, as they are known to have currency in the job market and to prepare them for work and career progression” (p.57).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim:</strong> “to develop an understanding of the personal and demographic characteristics of [FD students]” (p.57)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology:</strong> Case study (Sunderland College, School of Leadership and Management). Survey instrument used to collect demographic information, course title, social class (problematised and discussed on p.58) and how much they worked. Survey piloted on 14 students (quality of scales checked using Cronbach’s alpha test). In total, 92 students took part in main survey: 70% = female, aged 19-56 (average age 35), 70% = married, 65% = had children (37% more than one child). One third had not studied for a while; just over a quarter had recently studied. 83% = self-identified as working class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Findings:</strong> Half = prioritised work (more likely for working class students)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
46% = gave equal importance to work and study
5% = prioritised study
97% = stated that working = experience relevant to study
50% = working helps to organise time
Having money (less stress) = positive for studying
Working = travelling = more hours per week (average 31-40 per week)
Students who work long hours = more likely to be late for classes/ miss deadline/ not feel well prepared for assignments
43% students found it difficult to balance work and study commitments
33% had considered dropping out
2% had no help from family, friends or colleagues
Most positive = when employers are supportive
“FD students certainly do not readily signify the ‘time-rich’, traditional experience of student life with ample opportunities for reflecting on learning, reading widely around the subject or engaging in leisurely discussion with peers” (p.62)

**Core argument:** Foundation Degree students = significantly different reasons for studying: less prepared, less time than needed, less productive study time. Balancing work and study = positive and negative. Employer support = fundamental. Employers “should understand that learning involves socialisation or integration of the individual, social roles and rewards” (p.65). Institutions should develop better understandings and respond better to needs of part time working students (e.g., greater flexibility, consider timing of classes, availability of staff)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dawson, P.; Charman, K. &amp; Kilpatrick, S. (2013). The new higher education reality: what is an appropriate model to address the widening participation agenda?, <em>Higher Education Research &amp; Development, 32</em>(5), 706–721.</th>
<th><strong>Context:</strong> Set in context of Australian higher education/ massification/ diverse students, especially those who articulate into HE from VET (authors note issues, such as cultural differences). Based on Aus gov’t-funded ‘Deakin at Your Doorstop’ project (offers Associate Degrees to R&amp;R students) <strong>Aim:</strong> To introduce new Associate Degree at Deakin as alternative pathway to respond to diversity and in the context of regionality in Victoria <strong>Theoretical frame:</strong> <strong>Methodology:</strong> Mixed-methods exploratory study. Data = retention/ progression data, student evaluations of teaching, survey at 3 points (n=35, 35, 28), semi-structured interviews with students (n=26), teaching staff (n=4), project staff (n=3) <strong>Findings:</strong> Describes the model (partnership with TAFE/ structure etc.) = p.709–12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ASSOCIATE DEGREE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students said that they would not be at university if not for the Ass. Degree; brought in more traffic to TAFE sites (mostly mature age students; students on campus = more school leavers) Students progression and perceptions of challenges = comparable to UG (‘mainstream’) students. 64/75 students remained enrolled at the end of the course. Relationships emerged as important in the interviews Technology did not get in the way Multiple learning methods were effective</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Core argument:** Offers an account of a new model of alternative pathway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context:</strong> Examines the ‘critical intersection’ between TAFE/VET diplomas and HE through advanced standing/ credit arrangements. Argues against the idea that this is a ‘seamless’ pathway because although VET students transition into Year 2 studies, they are actually in first year of university. Students experience an “academic skills gap” (abstract), often due to skipping Year 1 and missing ‘threshold concepts’ or foundations of the degree [why are these not taught in TAFE course?]. Author appears to take ‘transition as induction’ view (see Gale &amp; Parker, 2011, 2014) in viewing FYE as key ‘time’ when key ‘academic skills’ are taught (which appears to include orientation to university and academic culture). Author points to assumptions made by lecturers and tutors that students have done first year UG. Draws on FYE literature. Makes case that Go8 universities only enrol 3% VET articulant students, despite enrolling 38% of national UG population (see Watson, Hegel &amp; Chesters, 2014), compared with 28% within RMIT/WSU/CSU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Theoretical frame:</strong> Bourdieu: field, capital and habitus. Field = education sector; capital = currency to enter Year 2; habitus = ‘mastery of particular academic skills’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology:</strong> Mixed methods approach within qualitative methodology: interviews with 12 students (“VET articulants”, p.A–20) about strategies for addressing ‘skills gap’. Questionnaire administered to n=23 students. Students from Business Management or Nursing degrees in Year 2 who transitioned in from TAFE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Findings:</strong> Questionnaire data suggests minority of students had ‘skills gap’ with writing essays (26% = no) but majority could not identify/read academic texts, locate an academic text or reference correctly (83%, 91% and 87% respectively) [but would be interesting to see what % of Yr1 articulants would say they could]. Qualitative data suggests that few students realised that there would be a shift in epistemology (from competence to ‘evidence-based knowledge focus’, p.A–27) – most realised this after submitting work and receiving feedback – author attributes this to lack of awareness of ‘rules of the game’. Drops in/</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
low grades = led to confidence crises in many students (seemingly mostly related to assessments and not understanding conventions). To resolve transition-related issues, students reported asking students who had taken Year 1 (to read their essays/ ask questions), leaned on friends/ family who had experience of UG studying, read examples of ‘good writing’

Core argument: Students’ habitus from VET/TAFE = no longer appropriate when they start Yr 2 UG

Limitation: No onus placed on institution to do more to help. Students appeared to be left to sort themselves out (and no critique of this offered by author)


Context: Works from starting point that vibrant knowledge economy and managing ‘national productivity’ is dependent on ‘building successful learning outcomes’ among university graduates (p.151). Authors argue that “entrenched patterns of disadvantage inhibit the full development of individual talent and, hence, of the system overall” (p.151).

Aim: To examine Graduate Pathways Survey data to seek patterns in outcomes of ‘disadvantaged learners’ five years after course completion. Particular focus = pathways taken after completion of degree

Theoretical frame:

Methodology: Examines data collected via GPS and focuses specifically on indigenous, low SES, rural/remote and disabilities. All 40 (38 public, 2 private) universities in Australia invited to participate, “making the study a census” (p.153). Invitations to participate sent to all undergraduates who graduated in 2002 (choice between paper/online versions). N=9238 responses (=12% response rate). Data weighted accordingly. Analysis also compares genders (thus NESB is only equity category not included). Data collected in 2008

Findings:

*Indigenous*: 60 = indigenous = less than 1%. Results show that these respondents = slightly more likely to be working by 5th year after graduation (96.9% compared with 90.9% of non-indigenous). Indigenous students more likely to be positive about higher education, about overall benefits of work and for long-term career goals. 65.4% of indigenous students said their degree had been ‘very beneficial’ (compared with 50.3% of non-indigenous). 63.8% = saw it as ‘very beneficial’ for long-term career (compared with 49.6% of non-indigenous)

*Low SES*: calculated according to parents’ occupation, parents’ education level and childhood postcode.

Low SES students more likely:
- attend institutions that were less than 50 years old or in regional locations;
● study in the fields of education, engineering, IT or business;
● attend part-time or externally or by distance;
● be slightly older;
● have a non-English speaking background;
● be of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin;
● identify themselves as having a disability; and
● come from a provincial or remote area (p.155)

These students = just as likely to be doing more education/ training in 1st, 3rd and 5th years after graduation as other students. After 5 years, low SES = slightly less likely to have done PG study (22% compared with 25%). This group = more likely to be looking for work in 1, 3 and 5 years after graduation.

R&R: 55% of R&R students were living in state/territory capital 5 years after graduation. 84% students who attended metro universities = still living in capital cities. Little difference in type of work for all students by 5 years (but differences noted between R&R/ metro students in year 1/3 after graduation). Metro students slightly lower unemployment rates one year after but unemployment rate patterns leveled after 3 and 5 years

Gender: large differences in disciplines – more females in health and education, more men in IT and engineering. Males more likely to be involved in further study in 1st/3rd year after UG graduation but slightly less so 5 years after. Men = more likely to hold PG research qualification p.159. Men more likely to be participating in labour force 5 years after graduation (96% to 91%), even more for full time employment (96% to 87%). Women’s wages are also lower (AUS$70k to $57k) – with a steady gap growing from year 1 out of university

All equity group students less likely to be in ‘professional or managerial’ jobs 5 years after graduation. Median salary = on par in 1st year post-graduation. Overall, students from disadvantaged backgrounds who were retained through to graduation “reported educational and occupational outcomes equal to their relatively less disadvantaged contemporaries” (p.156).

Core argument: After 5 years, most social and cultural barriers are removed; however, “there are still clear gender differences apparent among higher degree educated people five years after completing university studies, even after controlling for a range of other influences on salary” (p.160). Authors argue that “studying graduate outcomes provide a useful critical frame for investigating aspects of university education – including the examination of disadvantaged groups” (p.161)
**Context:** Experiences of mature age students in a foundation degree (FD) in health and social care. FDs are generally taught in Further Education (FE) colleges in the UK (part of larger intention to unify the system and widening participation) – see p.376-8 for further description of the blurring of the divide between FE and HE.

**Aim:** To explore students' learner identity/ sense of themselves as 'second chance learners'; to broadly evaluate a particular foundation degree

**Theoretical frame:** Weick's (1995) model of sensemaking, which is “retrospective, social and ongoing, and focused on and by extracted cues in our social environment” (p.385). Also Bourdieu: ‘General Theoretical Framework’ (from ‘Distinction’, 1984); specifically field, habitus; foundation degrees= sub-field of field of HE

**Methodology:** 'Exploratory study'; interpretive; interviews with students on FD program (n=6; convenience sample): 5f, 1m; 3 aged 31-40, 2 over 40, 1 under 30. Thematic coding.

**Findings:** Number of themes

1) 'Second chance learners': all participants had previous unsatisfactory experiences with education: “perceptions of under-achievement, limited opportunity and not realising their potential”, and they viewed their participation in the FD as “getting a second bite at the apple” (p.380). Students' desire to return to education = 'creative adaptation' (see Reay, Crozier & Clayton, 2010).

2) Motivation: flexibility to study part-time and balance work and study = 'the practical option', suggesting FD = “have a role to play in providing progression routes for those already within the workforce who wish to combine learning with their working lives” (p.382). Students also mentioned wanting to ‘prove to themselves that they could do it’

3) 'Not quite higher education': most students saw FE as a route to 'getting a taste of' HE; FD not seen as 'threatening' as a full degree program (possibly significant in terms of being 'non-traditional' students; see Bowl, 2001). Also, common perception that FE=better for their needs as mature students. Fear of failure seemed to fuel students' belief that they needed more help. However, the location of study (in FE) could contribute to confusion about what an FD is (a 'taste of HE' rather than an academic qualification; significance = NVQs are privileged in the fields of health and social care)

**Relevance:** Exploring HE in FE offers insights into mature age students and their reasons for returning to study. “Educational disadvantage can be seen to be perpetuated in two ways: individuals exclude
themselves from future possibilities by seeing themselves as not worthy of HE and institutions erect barriers to guard against students that are depicted as outside their realm of experience, or ‘other’” (p.387).

**Context:** NCSEHE-funded project that explores ‘indigenous access [aka enabling] courses’. Rationale = increasing participation rates and raising mobility between HE and VET. Focuses particularly on dual-sector universities and regional/remote students.

**Aim:** Project aim: to understand the practices and experiences of Indigenous access programs, with a view to designing a best practice framework and implementation statement” and “to explore how Indigenous learning journeys can respect and grow cultural identity while simultaneously developing study skills, particularly in the context of studying at a regional university” (p.3). Also set out to probe meanings of success from perspective of students. To develop a ‘best-practice conceptual framework’ for indigenous access programs, considering pedagogy, curriculum and modes of study.

**Theoretical frame:** Draws on work of Cajete (1994) indigenous and concepts of path+way = path is ‘well-thought-out structure’ and way = navigate learning journeys. Also draws on critical pedagogy. Also considers ‘both-ways’ learning: “‘Both-ways’ approaches to education are gaining ground as a way of developing learning environments that are inclusive, welcoming and flexible” (p.27)

**Methodology:** Project took interdisciplinary, qualitative approach and a case-study methodology to explore both the socio-cultural and educational aspects of access programs, involving a literature review, desktop audit, national roundtable and comparative case study based on individual interviews at CQU/FED/CDU. Interviews were with staff who teach into access programs (n=12), students (n=13), and community/stakeholder representatives. Desktop review looked at mission-based compacts for each university (but access students = rarely reported on) and reconciliation action plans

**Findings:**

**Literature Review (scoping access programs, indigenous-specific access = see Kinnane et al. 2014 OLT report; also Nakata, 2011 – and what constitutes success in non-assimilationist ways, support for indigenous students) found:**

1. Education has a key role in addressing Indigenous disadvantage, yet it remains poorly understood 
2. If educational targets for Indigenous peoples are to be met, there is a need for ‘fresh thinking’
3. Access education has a special role to play in the widening participation agenda
4. The evidence on best-practice teaching in access education is scant

---


AUS

Annotation written by Sally Baker
5. Indigenous approaches to teaching and learning must be recognised
6. There needs to be more discussion about what constitutes ‘success’ in Indigenous access education
7. Pursuing best practice will require a comprehensive, holistic perspective
8. Policy and positioning are both important in the widening participation agenda. (p.6)

Interviews:
Staff = all agreed that access programs effectively prepare indigenous students for further study
Not all courses include indigenous content
Challenges = cultural differences (yarners), digital barriers (access to internet, familiarity with online environments), need to support for students with family responsibilities, need to indigenize the curriculum. Face-to-face provision is considered best practice
Students = of 13 student participants, 3 had successfully completed, 1 had dropped out and 9 were ongoing. All 3 who had completed went on to further study. 2 said there had been indigenous content in the course [not sure where they were from]. Generally, these students thought the course had met their expectations, they had learned to navigate formal systems, had improved self-esteem/efficacy, had prepared them for further study. Advice to staff = increase cultural awareness, should include aboriginal history, access courses should be essential. Student who dropped out did so to ‘scrub up on maths and English’ but dropped out because of perceived lack of support. Students still studying = similar to completers; all claim that the program was helping to strengthen identity as indigenous person. Challenges noted include: missing family/being away from home, navigating online systems, time management

Discussion: Success = ‘multilayered construct’ = “For Indigenous students, success in access programs is variously seen as increased ‘cultural identity’ and the development of ‘voice’, self-realisation, self-acceptance and ‘pride’” (p.61).
Importance of indigenous-specific curriculum raised by all cohorts of participants
Indigenous students' cultural capital should be recognised as strengths
Access programs aligned with ‘both-ways’ approaches = “can support inner transformations of Self related to strength, knowledge acquisition, growth, identity and voice” (p.64), and are thus particularly salient for indigenous access/ best practice. Authors argue this could be example of ‘radical pedagogy’ which moves away from dominant and hegemonic curricula and pedagogies – “Both-ways understanding’ involves a system-wide process of cultural awareness by the developing
Core argument: Offer a conceptual model of best practice for indigenous access education:

**Context:** ALTC-funded project to examine 19 funded projects, 5 fellowships on transition (between 2006-2010) so as to contribute to understandings of transition into HE. Projects/ fellowships = either under or postgraduate focus. Only 2 = specific focus on transition (one = Sally Kift’s fellowship). As explicit focus = transition is usually focused at UG level

**Methodology:** Review of 24 projects and fellowships; literature review

---

**Gale, T. & S. Parker. (2011).** *Student transition into higher education. ALTC Good Practice Report. Surry*
**Findings:**
Two key observations: 1) HE is distinctive cultural context; 2) HE = governed by (particular forms of) cultural capital.

Offers three-part typology of transition (p.25):
1. as *induction*: sequentially defined periods of adjustment involving pathways of inculcation, from one institutional and/or disciplinary context to another (*T₁*);
2. as *development*: qualitatively distinct stages of maturation involving trajectories of transformation, from one student and/or career identity to another (*T₂*); or
3. as *becoming*: a perpetual series of fragmented movements involving whole-of-life fluctuations in lived reality or subjective experience, from birth to death (*T₃*).

**Recommendations:**
1) Declare how transition is defined (it is often undefined or taken to be commonsensical)
2) Draw on related fields and bodies of knowledge (e.g. youth and life transitions, social theory)
3) Foregrounds students’ lived experiences/realities

Broaden the scope of investigation (include vertical and horizontal transitions)


**Context:** Examines the notion of ‘transition’ in context of students and higher education. Works from ‘Good Practice Report’ for ALTC (Gale & Parker 2011) which examined 25 (19 completed + 5 ongoing) ALTC-funded projects as examples (selected by ALTC) of good institutional practice around/student transition. Set in post-Bradley/ OECD competitive context. Notes increased interest in first year experience. Draws on Eccleston, Biesta and Hughes (2010) to argue that many researchers are unaware of how they understand transition [undertheorised phenomenon and discourse]; different theorisations lead to different approaches to supporting and managing transition.

**Theoretical frame:** Scopes 3 sets of literature: accounts of transition programs; quant/qual analyses of HE students; theorisations of transition. Draws on

**Methodology:** Essay

**Findings:** Three conceptions of transition emerged from analysis of 25 ALTC projects: T1: transition as induction; T2: transition as development; T3: transition as becoming – but no ‘absolute distinction’ between the three; they are “relatively permeable and fluid, reflecting the diversity of thought” (p.735).

T1: “sequentially defined periods of adjustment involving pathways of inculcation” (p.737) = focus on FYE, idea of fixed period (school-to-university). Authors argue that 1si/2nd generation approaches to transition pedagogy (see Kift) are limited. 3rd generation = includes ‘southern theory’: aka including
different forms of knowledges and spaces of different ways of knowing (see p.741). T1 = generally fails to recognise ‘hidden curriculum’
T2: “stages of maturation involving trajectories or transformation” (p.737) = greater focus on identities and cumulative stages. Difference between T1 and T2 = organisational psychology v. social/developmental psychology. However, to allow for more (all?) student identities to be included, HE curriculum needs to better reflect the students in the class (e.g. working class knowledges)
T3: “a perpetual series of fragmented movements involving whole-of-life fluctuations in lived reality or subjective experience” (p.737) = connects with Bauman’s notion of liquid modernity (2000) – accept anxiety and risk as part of transition and that transition requires day-to-day negotiation (not moments of crisis).

Core argument: Authors have ‘most sympathy’ for T3 because it “has the most potential for new thinking about transitions in HE in socially inclusive ways” (p.735). They come to 4 conclusions: 1) there is a 3-part typology of conceptions of transition evident in work around transition and research rarely explicates the underpinning view of transition (but should); 2) policy and practice on transition = disconnected from literature on youth transitions and thus limits the work and theorisations; 3) dominant conceptions of transition (T1, then T2) = system-driven and system-serving (aka require students to change but not institutions' systems or structures) – be more aware of students’ lived realities rather than focusing on institutional/ systemic self-interest; make teaching and learning more flexible and responsive to students. Research should focus on both horizontal and vertical transitions.

| Gale, T., Parker, S., Molla, T. & Findlay, K. with T. Sealey (2015). Student Preferences for Bachelor Degrees at TAFE: The socio-spatial influence of schools. Report submitted to the National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE), Australia. Centre for Research in Education Futures and Innovation (CREFI), Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia. AUS Annotation written by Sally Baker |
| Context: Students’ preference for university-level courses at TAFE — focusing on Victoria and South Australia. NCSEHE-funded research. Focus on schools’ influence on students’ higher education preferences, examined according to students’ socioeconomic status, geographic location and sector. Report offers literature review of: student background (with Bourdieu/ habitus featuring strongly), school context, school practices (subject availability, career advice, engagement with higher education through outreach)
Aim: To examine “the influence of school context (their socio-spatial location) on students’ preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees” (p.2).
Theoretical frame:
Methodology: Analysis of VTAC and SATAC data (rationale for focusing on Vic/ SA on p.13)
Findings: TAFE degrees = not popular in preferences for higher education of secondary school students; the overwhelming preference is to study at undergraduate level at a university |
### SCHOOL INFLUENCE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TAFE DEGREES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013 data suggests a 30% increase in student preferences for TAFE degrees. Possible reason for low preferences = lack of widespread application process. Students with highest preference rate for TAFE = students in high SES areas (47% of preferences in Victoria; 39% in SA). Authors suggest this is due to 'hot' knowledge Students in metropolitan schools are more likely to indicate a preference for TAFE degrees (possibly because there are more TAFEs in metropolitan areas that offer bachelor degrees More students from public schools express a preference for TAFE degrees (compared with faith/independent schools) Core argument: “The report concludes that while the public perception of TAFE is that it is a sector primarily for students from low SES backgrounds, this is not reflected in students’ preferences for TAFE bachelor degrees. Instead, the preferences of students from high socioeconomic schools outnumber other SES groups in almost every TAFE-degree field of study” (p.2).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---


**AUS Annotation written by Sally Baker**

### SCHOOL

<p>| |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context:</strong> Impact of school on young people’s tertiary entrance rank (TER) and their further education decisions  <strong>Aim:</strong> To “investigate the impact of schools on tertiary entrance rank (TER) and the probability of going to university” (opening page)  <strong>Theoretical frame:</strong> Analysis of Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth (LSAY) 2006 data (n=3797 students still in school in 2010 and who reported valid TER) — specifically the information on school characteristics: “such as school sector and location; structural characteristics, such as whether the school is single-sex or coeducational; resource base, such as class size and student—teacher ratio; and average demographics, such as the average socioeconomic status of students at the school and the extent to which parents put pressure on the school to achieve high academic results” (opening page). Multilevel analyses conducted on two outcome measures: TER + university enrolment (meaning that gap year students = excluded)  <strong>Findings:</strong> Individual student characteristics are significant in determining TER and students’ transition to university, but so are school characteristics. The analysis suggests that the three most important school characteristics are: 1. Sector: Catholic/independent schools have higher predicted TER 2. Gender mix: single sex schools have higher predicted TER 3. Academic orientation of the school (“measured through parental pressure for the school to perform well academically”= from Exec Summary)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Socioeconomic profile of the school = less important, but does influence likelihood of choosing to go to university but does not influence TER outcomes, conditioning on academic achievement at age 15.
Cluster analysis of high-, average-, and low-performing schools
High-performing: from all 3 sectors
Low-performing: almost all from public sector
Academic orientation = important
Limitations on timetable = important
Schools with high % of NESB students perform well [but more nuanced analysis of NESB is clearly needed]
Schools with lower student-teacher ratios get better TER (with school fees contributing to greater resourcing of particular schools)

**Core argument:** Individual characteristics = most important factor in influencing likelihood of going to university. School characteristics that are significant are:
- sector
- gender composition
- academic orientation


**Context:** Examines transition from school to university in context of enabling program (Murdoch: TLC) in Australian higher education. TLC = for low SES school students (Year 12) who did not get ATAR needed – identifies students “ – achieved through ‘dynamic assessment’ based on progressive cognitive development (Vygotsky’s ZPD) = unique compared to other alternative entry pathways/enabling programs due to use of ZPD and early recognition of Year 12 students: “the program is focused on catching students before they fall out of the educational system” (p.699). Scopes literature on study and career aspirations/ expectations for low SES communities. TLC = provides a ‘seamless transition’ (see p.701)- students study TLC alongside HSC subjects on local campus. TLC = tracks cognitive development: “In keeping with the concept of ZPD, the unit focuses on the identification of the transitional readiness of students and the facilitation of their capacity to move from borderline patterns of critical and academic thought towards established cognitive formations” (p.702).

**Aim:** To describe TLC

**Theoretical frame:** Vygotsky’s theorization of the zone of proximal development (ZPD)

**Methodology:** Description of program and links to theory of ZPD
Findings:
Describes TLC/ ZPD in detail (p.702-6). Success of students’ transitions measured by:
(i) enrolment at MU following successful completion of TLC, (ii) first-year retention at university and (iii) GPA for all units studied during their first year at MU [SB: very linear notion of transition]
89% of students who finished TLC demonstrated ‘critical and academic skills’
75% of students enrol at Murdoch [no note about whether students enrol in HE elsewhere]
TLC students record similar GPA to other students
“The successful transition measured by high retention and GPA is likely to be associated with positive attrition within TLC” (p.707).
Core argument: TLC helps to ‘catch low SES students before they fall out of the system’

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UK (OU)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotation written by Sally Baker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key terms: social work, transition, vocational, advanced entry, distance learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FURTHER EDUCATION/ TAFE</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Context:** Set in context of Open University in the UK – explores entrance of non-traditional students into Social Work program in Scotland. Non-trad students = those entering with vocational qualifications and with ‘advanced standing’. Discusses macro and micro influences on WP: macro = national policy; micro = experiences of students and lecturers

**Aim:** To explore the interplay between day-to-day experiences of transition and broader influences on widening participation

**Theoretical frame:**

**Methodology:** Small-scale qualitative study (3 x Social Work courses in Scotland, data collected in 2007) – partnered with Glasgow Caledonian and Dundee University. Students were interviewed over the phone and grades collected: 3 groups of participants: 1) had combination of HNC and SVQ3; 2) credit for study from other degree; 3) no credit for prior study. 6 students discussed (all over 25; 4 x m, 2 x f)

**Findings:** Scopes macro contexts: the policy context in Scotland, the professional context of social work; the meso context: the OU and Social Work program; the micro context = empirical work with students.

Main finding = similarity in perceptions between the 3 groups of students + initial lack of self-belief but strong sense of motivation. Main challenge related to vocational nature of the course rather than academic.

Students suggested the following support transition:
- Importance of life and practice experience
- Generic study skills [urgh!]!
- Enabling social environment
### Context
Explores participation of ‘disadvantaged learners’ in VET and their transitions (from lower-level to higher-level qualifications/ VET to higher education).

### Theoretical frame:

**Methodology:** Literature review on access and participation of disadvantaged learners in higher-level VET courses and higher education – particular attention on learners’ perspectives

**Findings:**
VET students from indigenous, NESB, rural/remote backgrounds and students with a disability were over-represented in Cert I courses and Cert II (NESB not mentioned) in 2011. “Lower-level qualifications may provide an individual with some personal benefits, but the direct employment outcomes of these qualifications are limited” (p.7–8). The number of students who transition from VET to higher education is lower for equity groups, regardless of level of qualification completed (except for NESB and younger students). Discusses how differences in educational approaches (competency-based in VET; curricula-based approach in HE) make transition difficult, along with expectations/ life pressures. Cites Wheelahan (2009) – VET-HE ‘deepens’ the participation of social groups but not ‘widened’ participation for under-represented groups; articulation in current form = not an effective mechanism for increasing participation of equity groups (p.12). Discussion of p.12 of specific studies focused on indigenous students (also see bottom of p.13–4).

**Transition:** Generally, there is little research reported that has explored students’ experiences of transitioning from VET to university, or from lower-level to higher-level VET courses. Brown and North (2010) recommend support model underpinned by community investment/ individual-centring, flexible pathways with transition support, incentivised and with a culture of equity at its core (see p.15–6). Brown and North (2010): preparatory programs for transition (‘literacy, numeracy and...
Blacker et al. 2011: list of targeted transition programs for Australian universities. Also cites ALTC work by Caterall and Davis (2012) on VET-HE transition and Walls and Pardy (2010) with a focus on credit transfer

Support: two types of support: 1) support for VET studies; 2) support for transition from VET to HE. Aird et al. (2010) categorise support into ‘structural’ (related to institution/ course requirements/ teaching/ finance) and ‘individual’ (work/family/illness/self-confidence/ motivation)

Core argument: Disadvantaged learners (particularly those re-engaging in education) tend to be over-represented in lower-level VET qualifications and under-represented in higher-level qualifications (Cert IV+ = more likely to form pathways to higher education). Transition from VET to higher education is complicated for all students, despite transfer arrangements in place. Support services should be made priority when allocating resources, particularly support most likely to lead to positive outcomes [duh!]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context:</strong> Students readiness for transitioning from vocational education to Bachelor of Hospitality Management at Holmesglen Institute (dual sector; in partnership with Uni Canberra) and need for academic support. Students transitioning into BA with Diploma or Advanced Diploma of Hospitality. Large number of students = CALD or international; decision was made to develop 'just-in-time' support. LASS program designed as partnership between BHM course leader, academics, academic from academic skills unit and a librarian, and also consulted with counsellors to check the LASS met students' needs. LASS = 2-hour, weekly class, linked to other content in the BHM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim:</strong> To analyse the effectiveness of the Learning Academic Skills Support (LASS) program, designed to support students into undergraduate level study. <strong>Methodology:</strong> Evaluation (survey completed by 61% of LASS students) <strong>Findings:</strong> Majority of students (70%) = international students; most had completed lower level qualifications at Holmesglen Institute. LASS introduced students to plagiarism software but 37.5% still thought it was OK to cut and paste directly from sources into assignment. 37.5% of students thought they would have a chance to resubmit assignments until competent (not the case in BHM) LASS students underestimated the amount of time/ effort needed to complete BHM studies. In terms of differences/ difficulties: 59% reported challenges with level/quality of work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AUS

Keywords: articulation; pathways; transitioning students; embedded support; progression rates; retention rates

TAFE
| **Core argument:** “The underlying objective of the LASS program is to support and empower students as independent learners within the HE space, strongly scaffolding articulating students during their first semester, but its long-term success depends on those same students going on to succeed autonomously in successive semesters. So too, building research capabilities amongst practitioners helps to develop a culture of questioning and knowledge sharing that pushes tertiary education forward, enriching a body of knowledge that comes from its heart” (p.127) |

| **Keywords:** widening participation; higher education; vocational education and training; access to higher education; mixed methods approach; educational pathways |

| **Context:** Draws on 'Degrees of Success' TLRP-funded project. Examines whether VET = 'successful' pathway into HE in the UK and examines effectiveness of policy (New Labour, third way, widening participation). Offers critique of neoliberal framing of education (self-marketers for flexible labour market) and the imagined VET-HE pathway (but doesn't necessarily play out as policy expects). VET qualifications = increasingly marketed as progression qualifications for HE |

| **Aim:** To examine the impact of prior educational attainment on students’ transitions and pathways; to “analyse the distribution of students from different educational pathways across institutions and subjects” (p.142). |

| **Theoretical frame:** |

| **Methodology:** Quantitative: draws on large-scale datasets (HESA 2003/4; UCAS applications dataset) + case studies of 5 HEIs (interviews with students – n=40 - from 3 subject areas. “The macro-level perspective of influences of student distribution across HE is thus combined with a student-level perspective on questions regarding institutional and subject choice” (p.140) |

| **Findings:** Distribution of students over institutions and subjects – decisions influenced by many factors |

| Detailed analysis of prior pathways of students in different types of HEIs (pre-1992, post-1992, other). VET-background and foundation and access students most likely to be in post-92 universities (75.6%, 71.4% respectively); “A partial explanation for this is that learners from VET backgrounds are tracked institutionally into less prestigious HEIs” (p.142) |

| Most common reason for choosing institution = location (same for all educational pathways). Second most common = perceived quality of institution + multiple reason combinations. Location = highest factor for FE students; conversely, quality = least important for FE |
| Hughes, K. & Brown, C. (2014). Strengthening the Intersections Between Secondary and Tertiary Education in Australia: Building Cultural Capital, *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice*, 11(2): 1–14. | Context: Describes WP/equity agenda post-Bruce as ‘education revolution’. Examines an OECD framework (‘Equity and Quality in Education. Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools’ (2012)) designed to ‘strengthen schools in disadvantaged areas’ to help students complete Year 12 and consider tertiary education and focuses on one such program – AVID – as an example of secondary/tertiary collaboration. Critiques the implicitness of class and elitism in discussions of widening participation and ‘aspiration’ to HE: “It is our contention that the “raising aspiration” discourse is one that firmly fixes people from disadvantaged backgrounds as without ambition, understanding, realistic hope for change or even recognition that they "need" change. As with every dichotomy, this categorisation is set against a middle-class norm where people possess the cultural and social capital to understand the advantages that higher education brings, and the wherewithal to make sure they use the system successfully” (p.2)  

Theoretical frame: None  
Methodology: Essay/discussion  
Findings:  
Connects the OECD imperatives with the Advancement Via Individual Development (AVID) program: “AVID demystifies entry processes to tertiary education by explicitly teaching students institutional literacies” (p.6) – teaches 11 ‘essential attributes’. Authors make recommendations on basis of both OECD and AVID goals:  
Recommendation 1: strengthen and support school leadership  
Recommendation 2: stimulate a supportive school climate/ environment for learning  
Recommendation 3: attract, support and retain high-quality teachers  
Recommendation 4: ensure effective classroom learning strategies  
Recommendation 5: prioritise linking schools-parents-communities |

| | Biggest differences in Medicine/ Dentistry and Veterinary Science (VET backgrounds students = 25 times less lower); VET students over-represented in Engineering and Technology, Business and Administration, Education, Combined Studies (by 1.5) and Creative Arts (by 2.4) and Agriculture/ Computer Science (by 4).  
Decision making = highly individualised  
Core argument: Data raises questions about redistributive logic of government policy for VET learners/articulants. No attempts to even out access have been successful because the “policy instruments underpinning these types of initiatives are too weak to achieve the desired system outcome” (p.150). |

Keywords: social inclusion, higher education partnerships, low social economic status, AVID SCHOOL
| **Context:** | Access to HE (AHE) courses in the UK: 1-year diploma program designed to give adults (19+) preparation for studying at university. AHE = key part of British government WP policy/ to improve social inclusion. AHE is described by Franklin (2006) as the ‘Cinderella of the education system’ (cited on p.766), partly because they are taught in Further Education colleges. AHE = sites of transition, and many AHE students face challenges and need support with those transitions. Literature attests to students’ effectiveness when they feel supported by their tutors. However, external influences (QAA, increasing performativity in education/FE) reduce the opportunities for support |
| **Aim:** | To explore whether/ how AHE courses can be considered as Communities of Practice (CoP); to explore “mature students’ perspectives of their changing learning identities through their developing relationships with their tutors and with each other during their AHE courses” (abstract); to describe “the dynamic processes involved in the formation and reproduction of a community of practice in particular socio-economic and policy contexts” (p.768) |
| **Theoretical framework:** | Community of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) |
| **Methodology:** | Linked qualitative case study of AHE courses in three further education colleges; focus groups with 5–6 self-selecting students (Humanities/ Social Sciences) in each college over 3 occasions + individual interviews with their tutors. Questions included: “why AHE students, after leaving school, change their views on learning and themselves as learners; about the nature and importance of the learning relationships constructed on AHE courses; and how AHE students’ perceptions of their courses and higher education are affected by changing policy contexts” (p.769). |
| **Findings:** | How did the group develop: Establishing a common identity / identifying with particular features (e.g. as a mature student), underpinned by discourse of maturity and motivation shared by tutors. Tutors who had also been AHE students understood/ empathised with the struggles Working together: helping each other, offering advice and moral support. Social support developed over time; tutors noted that there were peaks of coming together. Developing repertoire of shared resources: tutors and students both saw mutual respect and support/ professional empathy and care (p.774), but acknowledged boundary between them. Increased surveillance/ performativity concerns created distance between the students and the tutors, which the authors argue highlights the tutors’ peripheral status in the CoP. |

**Core argument:** AVID is a good program
Kinnane, S.; Wilks, J.; Wilson, K.; Hughes, T.; & Thomas, S. (2013). 'Can't be what you can't see': The Transition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students in Higher Education. Office for Learning and Teaching: Sydney, NSW.

Annotated by Sally Baker

| Context: | Examines transition into HE for Indigenous students (processes, data, issues, pathways, enablers, constraints, opportunities |
| Aim: | To identify “what constitutes successful transition to higher education from a range of Indigenous community contexts and diverse university settings” (Exec Summary) |
| Theoretical frame: | |
| Methodology: | Mixed: quantitative = online survey/ qualitative = telephone interviews (n=65 personnel and students from 26 universities; 92% = Indigenous; all students = Indigenous). Literature review of transitions into HE for ATSI students. |
| Findings: | Identified 4 groups = particularly under-represented and relatively little focus given to these people: women as primary carers, young men, people in the prison system, and people with disabilities. ‘Successful transition’ = on spectrum from personal to community terms + measures used by universities and government agencies. Data shows growth of transition programs, which “increasingly involve a regionally and contextually responsive mix of partnerships between universities, Indigenous community leadership, philanthropic and not for profit organisations, and new policy developments at the university executive level” (Exec Summary) |
| Project offers 14 elements of ‘leading practice’ = framework of leading practice: | |
| 1) Enhancing Indigenous education contexts in teacher and pre-teacher training | |
| 2) Outreach/ aspirational programs | |
| 3) Targeted community outreach + intergenerational trauma and resistance to transitions to university | |
| 4) Preparedness pathways/ enabling programs (within universities) | |
| 5) Targeted student case management and skills development/ evaluation of student performance | |
| 6) Mentors and tutorial assistance | |
| 7) Blended delivery for remote students | |
| 8) Finances and employment pathways (scholarships and cadetships) | |
| 9) Life cycle approach and professional pathways | |
| 10) Policy contexts and strategies = responses to Bradley review and Behrendt review | |
| 11) Whole of university = governance | |
| 12) Building on foundations of Indigenous Engagement Centres (IECs) + engagement strategies | |
| 13) Value and role of Indigenous knowledges (via IECs) | |
**14) Cross cultural competency + changing normative cultures**

IECs are central

**Core argument:** “Targeted pathway programs that rely on family and community support, while mutually enhancing wider community relationships through breaking down myths and barriers and achieving outcomes, are increasingly effective” (Exec Summary). Ripple effect = measurement of ‘success’. Early intervention and targeted support = ‘crucial enablers’

---


**Context:** Transition from FE to HE = ‘vital importance’ for WP agenda. Describes ‘Next steps..’ on p.105-6.

**Aim:** To discuss evaluation of intervention/ preparation module ‘Next steps at university’ (voluntary/ credit bearing), which is delivered pre-semester (summer programme); to provide quantitative evidence of impact

**Theoretical frame:** None explicated

**Methodology:** Evaluation of programme (exploring student data; n=103)

**Findings:** On p.106-8.

**Core argument:** Evaluation data suggest that ‘Next steps’ = “greatly facilitates” transition from FE to HE.

---


**Context:** Nursing pathway at Murdoch University via credit transfer from TAFE that takes students directly into Year 2, meaning that they miss the transition programs in Year 1. Authors argue that missing the first year could contribute to higher drop out for these students. Description of changes to nursing education on p.2: students who have Diploma or Advanced Diploma become Enrolled Nurses (ENs); university-qualified nurses = Registered Nurses (RNs).

**Aim:** To describe a Year 2 transition program to help EN/ Diploma articulants (who missed the standard Year 1 transition activities)

**Methodology:** Students who attended EN transition/ orientation seminar; scoping questionnaire completed by students (n=15: 14f, 1m; 5pt/ 10ft; 13 = parents (most young adults) + follow-up interviews (n=6)

**Findings:**
Most common challenge = using university LMS (Moodle, Turnitin etc.). One student said they found enrolling in the program online difficult; 3 found enrolling in courses difficult. Students who described themselves as ‘moderately confident’ with IT said they would have liked more training on how to use LMS to access course materials.
Transition seminar included:
- academic skills workshops
- study groups
- access to a pastoral care advisor or mentor
- better awareness among the academic staff of the differences between approaches to learning and assessment in VET and university

**Core Argument:** TAFE and universities need to collaborate to ensure pathway does not become a ‘dead end’ (abstract)

Aim: To evaluate academic outcomes of 3 cohorts of students who undertook a 5-day ‘enabling program’ pre-orientation at USQ called ‘Building Pathways to Academic Success’.  
Theoretical frame: Descriptive reporting of evaluation data. No overview/explanation of evaluation methodology offered  
Methodology: Participants = 965 students (50% = low SES/ 50% = FinF/ 50% = mature age/ 50% = low entry scores). Data gathered 2007-2009. Outcome measure = students’ GPA at end of semester 1. Quant analysis of GPA scores.  
Findings: Students who took enabling program = less likely to fail and got higher GPAs than those who did not.  
Limitations: Descriptive and missing critical detail. Not robust. Boring as….

| McNaught, K. (2013). Implementing an intervention to assist Certificate IV students to transition successfully to undergraduate study with an AQF contextualisation: A case study, International Journal of Training Research, 11(3), 234–245. | Context: Students transitioning into undergraduate studies via TAFE (Cert IV) pathway and ‘poor performance’; development of bespoke ‘primer’ course for these students taught by staff with teaching experience in both VET and HE — largely targeting students' academic literacies — which “highlighted core intra-sector differences in terms of how each interprets learning skills, outcomes and competencies as defined under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF)” (abstract).  
Author argues, “The absence of specific guidelines in the AQF to merge pedagogical and andragogical educational practice suggests that an inter-sectoral dialogue is needed to reach agreement on how ‘competencies’ are assessed within VET to university transitions while still compliant with AQF qualification pathways policies” (p.235). Author makes case that students who study Cert IV (particularly through lower level English) are likely to have ‘skills deficits’ that will impede their ability to participate in undergraduate studies, although the author does also note that |
many students “come to university with a limited competency with regard to managing academic reading, writing and research” (p.236). Overall, the author identifies a key support need, but the article is based on a deficit reading of these students. Author argues that in particular the University of Notre Dame (UND), as a Catholic university, “has a moral and ethical obligation to support and assist the students it has accepted to do well and persevere with their studies” (p.236). Author identifies gender pattern, with men more likely to seek to transition through Cert IV pathway, which maps onto other gendered patterns with regard to under-performance at school, attrition patterns, and VET enrolments. Men are also less likely to seek support (see p.237).

**Aim:** To describe primer course developed to support students transitioning into UND via Cert IV pathway

**Methodology:** Essay

**Findings:** Description of primer (UniReady 101) on p.238–9. UniReady 101 is compulsory and enrolment in degree-level studies is contingent on completion of the course; staff were concerned this would impact on enrolments but had not at the time of writing. Teacher = experienced in both VET and HE, which was noted favourably in student post-primer feedback. Author offers statistics on academic performance/ subject areas of Cert IV articulants.

**Core argument:** The lack of “specific AQF guidelines to clarify how pedagogical and andragogical practices will coexist within VET-to-university models creates an immediate issue for providers of post-secondary programs” (p.238)

---

### Context:
Situated in expanding HE sector – explores the experiences of FiF, rural and international students as they transitioned into Year 1. Explains expansion as result of neoliberalism – increasing workforce/ ‘educated workforce’. Argues that neoliberal higher education system “contributes to processes of individualisation when young people detach from their family to become useful participants in society” (p.504) and encouraged to become self-entrepreneurs. Authors also draw on literature that explores affective dimension of transitioning/ starting higher education. Connects family/friends to habitus, capital and field. Draws on literature relating to loneliness. International students constructed as ‘non-traditional’

### Theoretical frame:
Bourdieu – field, habitus and capital/ Weiss’ dimensions of loneliness

### Methodology:
Interpretive, critical qualitative approach. RQs: (1) What are the experiences of non-traditional students as they transition into the first year of university? (2) How do they experience the academic as well as social transition to university?

---


**AUS**

Annotation written by Sally Baker

**Key word:** Transition
Online survey (n=285: 112 FiF/ 42 = rural/ 16 = international) + purposeful sampling for follow-up focus group interviews (3-5 students of same category in each focus group). A priori and post-hoc coding according to commonalities and differences (post-hoc = experiences of transition/ social experiences; a priori = habitus, field, capital; Weiss’ dimensions of loneliness)

**Findings:**

**Transition**
Non-traditional students do not have capital to understand ‘field expectations’ of higher education study. Grades/ performance are important signals of difference from prior educational experiences (and key triggers for loss of confidence)

**Forced independence**
For rural/ international students, forced independence = challenging – financial hardship/ responsibility for self/loss of emotional and social support

**Social experience**
1) disconnection, 2) lack of opportunity to meet other students: ‘after the lectures it’s like they’ve all gone’ (p.512) = emotional isolation

**Core argument:** Facilitating transition for non-traditional students may necessitate/require cultural change in institution and move away from the notion that students need to adapt. “[N]on-traditional students are not well positioned in relation to cultural and social capital to negotiate transition to university” (p.513) and as a result they are constructed as ‘other’. Problems occur when there is a ‘mismatch’ between family and university habitus. Students “who experienced a sense of community adjusted more easily and enjoyed the process of transition” (p.514). “The research calls for a broadened perspective in the moral purpose of universities and a shared belief in wanting to make the transition to university smoother and accessible for all student groups. In order to facilitate the transition to university for non-traditional students, focus needs to be directed to the interconnectedness of academic and social experience of university and the importance of strong social support” (p.514-5).

---

**Millman, T. (2013). Abridged too far? Credit Transfer: Examining the transition process from TAFE to University, Australian Journal of Adult Learning, 53(2), 325–335.**

**Context:** VET to university pathways, from Diploma of Communication and Media Studies at TAFE into BA Communication and Media at University of Wollongong

**Aim:** To discuss challenges, based in large part on personal communication with a colleague who teaches at TAFE

**Theoretical frame:** Transformational learning (Mezirow)

**Methodology:** Essay
**Findings:** Common challenges discussed by participants included: adapting to different workloads and the demands of self-directed, independent learning, literacy development/adjustment to academic literacies, unfamiliar IT systems at university, differences in pedagogical/andragogical approaches, underestimation of time needed to complete tasks. Other challenges result from university educators not knowing which students have transitioned from VET/TAFE courses.

**Core argument:** Author argues that pre-university induction courses are needed for TAFE articulants.


---

**Context:** Examines pathways with focus on EALD (English as Additional Language or Dialect) in Australian (school) curriculum, which resulted in "Indigenous issues [being] domesticated into the larger framework and the details then left as additional elements that have to be worked on" (p.1). Draws on his own notion of ‘cultural interface’ (contested space; taking understandings beyond black/white dimensions) – see Nakata, 2007

**Aim:** To examine proposed inclusions in Australian curriculum relating to Indigenous learners and EALD, framed by these 4 questions:
- What does the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives look like and how do teachers embed these meaningfully in a non-tokenistic way?
- How can non-Indigenous teachers do this when they have their biases and may already be challenged in this area?
- Does this area of work involve a two-way negotiation of teaching and learning roles between Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff?
- What place does EALD curriculum and pedagogy have in empowering Indigenous learners? (p.2)

**Methodology:** Discussion (not particularly academic)

**Discussion:** Drawing on notion of cultural interface requires conceptualisation of “learning space as an intercultural space, especially where the Indigenous and non-Indigenous intersection sits in relation to the general capability of intercultural understanding” (p.2). Indigenous learners = diverse (reject homogenous characterisation) – teachers need to get to know students as individuals

Australian curriculum needs to be “populated with Indigenous content” (p.3) – students need to be equipped with capacities to “think and navigate in these complex spaces” (p.3), aka: knowledge, language, semiotic, pragmatic systems – particularly language. English language = “fundamental to the education of Indigenous students” (p.3)

AUS
Annotation written by Sally Baker

Keywords: Credit Transfer, university, vocational education, mature age students, transition

TAFE

Context: VET to university pathways; experiences of transitioning with Advanced Standing via TAFE. In Australia, in 2008 9.6% of student enrolments = via VET pathways; only 3% of Go8 students transition via TAFE articulation. These students = ‘invisible’ population in the domestic cohort.

Aim: To “examine the stories of participants to determine their reasons for choosing to pursue a pathway to university and to understand their experiences in the first year of study” (p.263).

Methodology: Narrative inquiry with students in Faculty of Education who transitioned into studies with Advanced Standing (n=8)

Findings:
Advanced Standing/ prior learning: participants were mostly negative about their experiences of arriving with Advanced Standing because it was confusing and it limited the elective options that they could select. Their prior learning experiences were valued by them, but seemingly not valued by the university. Students felt they had learnt more ‘foundational’ knowledge of the subject from TAFE, and that it functioned as a ‘taster’. Students compared themselves and their motivations to those of peers. Students also noted several differences between TAFE and university: students felt they were ‘handled’ at TAFE, whereas university was larger and more self-directed. Participants also reported large gaps in expectations: more self-directed, more reading, more work, academic writing (more depth, complex terminology). Authors also discuss experiences of mature age students (perception as minority). Participants reported difference in relationship with educators (more familiar/ personal at TAFE). Students generally felt nervous about their academic performance, and felt that their vocational experience was not valued in their university studies. Some participants perceived that other students didn’t want to do group tasks with them

Core argument:
• TAFE and higher education need to develop shared academic culture to ease transitions
• Universities should recognise and celebrate students’ prior learning experiences/ knowledge brought from TAFE
• Authors propose conceptualisation of pathways as ‘swirling’ rather than linear


Context: In post-Bradley Review unified/aligned/ more inclusive system, examines the relationship between VET and HE in terms of pedagogy and knowledge traditions. Three moves in paper: 1) outlines general theorisation of education reform; 2) track features of HE/VET learning cultures in Australia and scopes social theories of knowing; 3) argues for view of ‘craft knowing’ as central connector between sectors. Authors argue that in order to align the two sectors – seeking ‘bridging
software’ between VET and HE – it is necessary to work on recognising “the distinctive strengths of the pedagogies institutionalised in each sector without seeking to cover over or iron out those differences” (p.55). Authors scope conceptions of education that apply to VET/HE; discuss the processes of enabling learning through socialisation/education offered by Hamilton (1989): “The mixture of socialisation and education that develops in a learning space is knitted into the social relations of learning and the way resources are mobilised in the co-production of learned bodies” (p.56) = regulatory effects. Argues that VET/HE sectors = delineated by two educational traditions = ordered through “hierarchical knowledge relations as distinctive sites of learning and credentialing” (p.57) = mental/manual or practical/theoretical dichotomies. Social relations ordered sectors as different learning spaces serving different labour markets (or parts of the labour market). “The mental–manual division in knowing that characterised the formation of universities and VET are anchored in knowledge arrangements that contain a legacy of distinctive but not mutually exclusive education missions” (p.58). Authors note the ambiguity of Cert IV/diplomas (HE articulation programs) – cite Wheelahan (2009) = noting the question marks over diplomas as universities offer sub-degree programs.

Aim: To “delineate the distinctive character of learning and the pedagogies that enable the exchange of knowledge through VET” (p.53)

Theoretical frame: Craft and craftsmanship to problematise the mental-manual division of knowing, where craft is “an integrated form of knowing” (abstract) – see Sennett (2008) = making is thinking (on p.60). Craft theories trouble the mental-manual binary view.

Methodology: Essay

Findings: VET = ‘knowing practice’ (Kemmis, 2005) that recognises open conceptions of [what counts as] knowledge, “made in spaces where the materiality of craft, the embodiments of practice and the physicality of work connect with mindful realisations about self and the world” (p.64) VET = ‘competency-based training’ (CBT) p.59 – part of emphasis in job training in reforms. CBT = knowledge not made explicit; instead it is tacitly embedded in ‘skills’ = performance/demonstration but not grading. The problematic binary normative assumptions that underpin the differences in knowledge and learning between sectors is problematic because it chooses to ignore the “entanglements involved in being and in making a life and a world” (p.62). Such dichotomy creates an imbalance in parity of esteem between two sectors.

Core argument: “Bridging VET and higher education to make an inclusive tertiary education system...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Pásztor, A. (2014). Divergent pathways: the road to higher education for second-generation Turks in Austria. Race Ethnicity and Education, DOI:10.1080/13613324.2014.911164</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Context:** Immigrant educational pathways in Austria. Ethnic minorities = 12.5% of population (‘historic immigrants’ = Hungarians/Slovaks/Czechs), other European migrants [my emphasis] and Turkish/Yugoslavians. Turks are biggest minority group (3% of total population) and 46% are reported as living in poverty/ at risk of poverty and have one of lowest educational achievement rates in OECD. Now 2nd-gen Turks are entering workforce in large numbers and low participation rate in high school/HE  
**Theory:** Ball, Reay & David (2002) – ethnic minority chooser = ‘contingent’ (generally 1st-gen/ no tradition of HE/ parents educated in home country = finance, location, ethnic mix are key concerns and often reliant on ‘cold’ knowledge) or ‘embedded’ (choice to go to HE = part of ‘personal narrative’/ parents are often HE-educated/ uni = part of ‘normal biography’ = choice based on extensive research and mix of hot & cold knowledge)  
**Methodology:** Focused on 2nd-generation Turks born and educated in Austria (solicited through informal networks/snowball recruiting) aged 25-29 years old/ equal mix m/f studying range of subjects. Questions aimed at exploring educational trajectories/ family background/ aspirations, attitudes and experiences.  
**Findings:** Students from Turkish families = overrepresented in ‘special schools’ (p.6). Key issue = lack of German language. Only 9% of pre-school children are Turkish. It appears this translates as a possible cause of low achievement later in school and because they have to focus on learning language (implicitly), they are unable to get the grades to access academic track at end of primary (split into general/academic school streams at age 10). 85% of Turkish children attend general stream (compared w/ 66% German-speaking children) and 1/3 do not proceed with any further education/ only 6.5% go on to university from this stream. Contrasts two students = one a contingent chooser/ one an embedded chooser. Interprets differences in experiences to institutional habitus (resources/support available at each school). Differences in imagined futures (embedded chooser = planned career choices lonepoplg in advance; contingent chooser = catching up)  
**Conclusions:** Stratified education system disadvantages NESB students: late school start and lack of language when they start school are key issues for Turkish children in Austrian education system. Offers additional category to Ball, Reay & David’s categories: the opportune chooser (generally comes from a disadvantaged family background where parents have little education and children
exposed mostly/only to working class stories). For opportune choosers, HE is rarely/never an imagined future.

Relevance for our project: Aspirations/ categories of choosers


Context: HEPP-funded project by NCSEHE, La Trobe, Deakin & Federation. Responds to brief to review current enabling programs and report on extent = they are effective in opening access and increasing participation and success in UG studies. Note: no enabling people on advisory group (p.8).

Literature review: scopes the significant number of equity students who take enabling courses; discusses how enabling programs address academic, social and personal domains (p.12). Analysis of funding from 2009-2020 on p.15. Discussion of VET as pathway (use and efficacy): p.16-17 = based on literature that suggests VET-HE students have issues with transition, particularly with literacy, expectations and differences in epistemology/ assessment theories and practices. Main conclusions from literature:

1) enabling programs have high proportion (“enrol disproportionately”) of equity students
2) enabling students who transition = generally have lower rates of retention and success (= ‘attainment’) than other students (all enabling students, not just equity students)
3) TAFE = not necessarily an effective preparatory pathway into higher education and there are issues with this premise on basis of treating all VET qualification as same
4) VET articulants = experience barriers “resulting in below-average performance, in terms of retention and academic performance (but same argument about not identifying difference between certificates) – all p.20

Aim: To report on 1) the effectiveness of enabling programs for increasing access, participation and success in UG programs of equity (“disadvantaged”) students; 2) appropriateness of enabling programs compared to other pathways; 3) the impact of varying quality of enabling programs; 4) what practices/ modes of delivery should be added into enabling programs (if missing) to enhance effectiveness

Theoretical frame:

Undertook national survey from undergraduate students to explore differences between enabling and VET pathways students. Survey examined: demographics (relating to disadvantage), motivations for choosing pathway, experience/ satisfaction. All students who commenced in 2013, 2014, 2015 invited to participate (if had enabling/ VET pathway. Pilot survey run at Curtin. National survey run over 11 universities = 1 June – 31 July 2015 (n=2593: 981 enabling, 1230 VET). Data = content analysis. 11 unis = Curtin, ECU, Federation, Flinders, La Trobe, UNSW, UON, UTAS, USC, WSU, UOW.

Main Findings:

- Diverse range of provision of enabling programs
- Lack of “transparency, transferability and information about enabling programs that is likely to hinder student take-up, mobility and progression” (p.4)
- Most programs (except Indigenous programs) = unrestricted on who can access (in terms of student groups and prior academic achievement)
- There are more equity students in enabling programs as compared to sub-bachelor programs, but there are more equity students articulating via TAFE pathways
- Equity students who enter via enabling generally have better retention rates than students entering via sub-bachelor courses
- Possible suggestion of academic barriers for students from sub-bachelor programs
- Equity students coming from Associate Degree, Diploma and Advanced Diploma programs = generally better success rates than enabling course students
- Students from enabling programs = more satisfied than TAFE articulants (particularly in context of preparation for further studies/ confidence/ belonging)
- 66.2% of TAFE articulants took VET qualification for own benefit, not specifically as pathway to higher education
- More equity students use enabling as a pathway rather than VET
- Articulation via enabling = limited because of institutional limitations about recognition [e.g. universities only recognise own enabling program], large concentrations of enabling places in 8/ 39 public universities and limitations about future studies (what courses can be accessed via enabling articulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 (p.27)</th>
<th>Enabling load by institution (top 5 = CDU, USQ, UNDA, CQU, UON)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48 enabling courses included (domestic + Indigenous)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32/48 = open to all students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Only 1 (UNSW Prep) = specific to equity students
24/48 = allow entry for 18+
14/48 = no mention of age
6/48 = over 19+
4/48 = aimed at school leavers
29/48 = no minimum literacy/numeracy requirements
9/48 = some form of minimum literacy/numeracy 'skill level'
6/48 = require Year 10 literacy/numeracy
1/48 = requires Year 11 literacy/numeracy

Enrolments by equity groups:
- Low SES increased from 28.4% in 2011 to 31.5% in 2014
- R&R increased from 37% to 35.8%
- SwD increased from 5.75% to 7.2%
- ATSI increased from 5.6% to 6.04%
- NESB increased from 3.05% to 437%

Equity group representation in enabling = much higher than UG (see p.33)
Retention rates = decreased for low SES/R&R/SwD students in all pathways between 2009-2014
Retention rates = increased for Indigenous and NESB students
Success rates = remained stable for all groups over same period

One suggested finding: “enabling programs engender equity group students with greater resilience or stickability” - from retention data (p.55) but they need more support at UG and academic preparation needs improvement – from success data

Recommendations:
Calls for greater consistency in course design to increase cross-institutional recognition of programs from other universities (“most universities only recognise their own enabling programs in terms of preparation” (p.31)
More research is needed to identify which types of programs are best (in context of diverse enabling field), “and to promote greater consistency among programs to improve transparency, quality, student mobility, and equity” (p.5)
Enabling programs could be improved:
- “by better aligning course content, structures and processes with those at the institutions’ undergraduate level, so as to help acculturate students with their post-enabling experience;
by ensuring that the enabling program provides the students with both generic and specific knowledge;
by enhancing the academic skills development aspects of the enabling courses; and
by providing clearer and more transparent information to prospective students who do not always understand what an enabling program is or does” (p.5).

Need to improve data collected on students – prior VET studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Aim</th>
<th>Theoretical frame</th>
<th>Methodology</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Priestly, A.; Lynch, M.; Wallace, C. & Harwood, V. (2015).                | The Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) – collaboration between UOW and UTS           | To offer a practitioner’s point of view/ perspective from the ‘coal face’ to share what works; to describe 3 ways that AIME engages Indigenous students (“yarning about research”, p.45) | None explicit     | Essay        | Description of AIME (p.45): The AIME Institute, Tutor Squads, One-to-one coaching, career support and post-school transition Describes growth of program (p.46-7) Summary of research/ evaluation (p.49) Three ways that AIME engages Indigenous students:  
  • Power of storytelling  
  • Aspiring positive associations with identity  
  Create a fun, safe, welcoming and challenging environment                                                                 |
Theoretical framework: Critical hermeneutics (cultural criticism to expose power dynamics; perception-text-within perceived context) to offer “an insight into how they are responding to their situation within HE in FE and creating meaning of their specific context and, in so doing, revealing structural and social dynamics” (p.457)

Methodology: Focus groups/interviews with Fd students (n=53), majority of whom were PT and over 25 years old (see p.458 for details)

Findings:
Students’ ambitions: younger/full-time students = preoccupied with potential job/career benefits of taking the course/insurance for the future in/on job market – reveal a concern with becoming self-entrepreneurs. Mature age students = more cynical about credentialism in the system; for others the Fd was the pathway to a long-held ambition (but author points to work that disputes whether investment in HE leads to desired results for students or employers. Mature age students were somewhat aware of this and acknowledged that Fd would skill them to be ‘associate professionals’.

Perceptions of HE students/landscape: Younger students were aware of the stratified HE system, expressing a perception that an Fd was ‘second best’ in both the HE landscape, and for employment. Author draws on arguments that working class students are more likely to find HE more risky than FE, and that by taking an Fd, they are further perpetuating their disadvantage to some degree (in relation to the ‘real degree’ of HE): “Drawing on the evidence from the data, it does appear that, given the already perceived disadvantaged position of vocational students, the undertaking of an Fd becomes a further confirmation of their position in the HE hierarchy and, potentially, their position in society, as opposed to the projected image of a transition into HE and the wider opportunities that can be offered which can support social mobility as well as career prospects” (p.461–2). Students also discussed perceived stigma of doing an Fd in a college (connecting with Billet’s 2010 notion of ‘self-subjugation’), but they also discussed choosing an institution that is “in their comfort zone” (p.464), offering more support than HE is perceived to offer.

Core Argument: There was a difference between younger and mature age students, supporting the contention of Nelson (2006) that speaks to a duality in Fd students. Foundation degrees are open to critique, as perpetuating existing social divisions/inequitable participation in higher forms of education and careers: “Whilst agency may offer some individuals opportunities to access possibilities of social mobility, the indication from this study is that structural social inequalities are a factor in limiting and defining individuals’ identity and mobility” (p.465).
| **Context:** ‘Second chance education’/ TAFE-sponsored programs (Skills for All) in South Australia + social justice/ equity agenda. UniSA did the evaluation of the programs  
**Aim:** To “investigate the experiences and the perceptions of program participants and service providers on the effectiveness of the programs in terms of their reported strengths and weaknesses, and their failure and/or success in long term educational and employment pathways” (p.43).  
**Methodology:** Evaluation: focus groups/ interviews with program participants (n=37)/ service providers (n=8) + participant observation.  
**Findings:**  
- Program 1: Blokes on the Block, later Blokes and Beauties on the Block  
- Program 2: Word@Work  
- Program 3: Building Better Communities Program  
- Program 4: Powerful Pathways for Women (all see p.45–6)  
  **Participant characteristics:** “targeted disadvantaged individuals disengaged from the workforce” (p.47), many of whom had complex social challenges (substance abuse, mental health issues), low levels of literacy and numeracy, and were from dysfunctional family backgrounds. Service providers recognized need to tailor programs to support needs of students, and that they needed long(er)-term support. Participants had varying motivations for attending the course (interest, wanting to improve employability, personal development).  
  **Participants’ experiences:** all participants offered positive feedback about the programs, and reported making friends = “often the most memorable aspects for participants” (p.48).  
  **Role of service providers:** Positive feedback about the service providers. Some programs offered mentoring beyond the life of the program = important ongoing connection  
**Core argument:** Success of programs = “a sustained holistic approach underpinned by customised, collaborative and contextualised learning” (p.51); tailored and flexible approaches; social supports and networks; innovative approaches to training (including purposeful activities, rather than inauthentic trials) |

| **Context:** Widening Participation in the UK; Foundation Year programs for students who are underqualified for undergraduate study: FY for WP and for retention. Authors seek to examine two psychometric tools (ABC and PEL) to identify students at risk of attrition. Authors note that WP without attrition is a challenge for universities across the sector. Authors argue that “WP initiatives are only successful if the students complete their programme of study as early withdrawal is a waste of resources for both the individual student…and the institution” (p.51). Authors note that transition is |
FURTHER EDUCATION/ TAFE FOUNDATION YEAR

complicated for many reasons, and so identifying people likely to withdraw early in the course is prudent.

**Aim:** To "ascertain whether it is possible to use psychometric measures with students on a Foundation Year (FY) programme at the start of the academic year, to identify those at risk of non-completion" (p.50)

**Methodology:** Quantitative: survey instrument based on combination of Academic Behaviour Confidence (ABC) and Performance Expectation Ladder (PEL) scales. Students from 4 FY programs/ across 2 post-92 universities participated at the start and end of the program (n=90). Details of study on p.58–60. Analytic approach detailed on p.61.

**Findings:** PEL not seemingly useful but ABC subscales of Grades and Attendance appear to flag issues:
- Grades negatively predicted success: aka, students with high grades = more likely to withdraw if expectations are not met
- Non-attendance from week 1 correlates with subsequent progression issues
- For later in the year, ABC data shows that confidence appears to diminish for withdrawers at Easter and significant differences between two groups (persisters, withdrawers) increasing from that point. Withdrawers appeared to experience lowered self-efficacy as they got closer to the end of the FY.
- The withdrawers also experienced a drop in marks. Authors question whether intervention at this late stage might help.
- Authors note that only 15% were receiving marks under the national average, suggesting "that participants were demonstrating a level of unrealistic optimism" – the authors question whether this might be in part related to shifts in the relationship between marks and descriptors between school and university

**Core Argument:** Doubt around future attendance and unrealistic expectations about marks can be identified early and are likely associated with later progression issues.

---

**UK/ WALES**
Annotation written by Sally Baker

Keywords: Retention; Academic Confidence; Foundation Year; Doubting


**Context:** Decision making for higher education for associate degree students (Higher National Certificate (HNC), Higher National Diploma (HND) and Foundation Degree (FD), which are often delivered in Further Education (FE) colleges. History of FDs: began in 2000 as part of Labour government widening participation (WP) agenda: typically delivered over 2 years at Level 4 and Level 5. Sustaining employer engagement in designing curriculum “has not always been easy” (p.828). Post Dearing report, enrolments in FDs grew, and HNC/D enrolments decreased; also, increased growth in FE colleges delivering/validating own top-up courses with partner universities. All
Keywords: College-based higher education; higher education in further education; foundation degree; progression; decision making; top-up degree

FURTHER EDUCATION/ TAFE
ASSOCIATE DEGREES
FOUNDATION DEGREES
TOP-UP TO BACHELOR (LEVEL 6)

= described as College-Based Higher Education (CBHE). Students in CBHE = more likely to be 'non-traditional'. Authors scope literature on students’ decision-making; reference to Greenbank’s (2009) concept of ‘satisficing’, “whereby students may have some basic criteria for their choice and undertake a search until they find the first match” (p.828) because of lack of ‘hot’ knowledge; mature age students’ decisions are more likely to be based on logistics and practicalities (geographic, financial, work). Familiarity with FE college is also cited as an explanation for why students elect to do a CBHE course (because they also offer a qualification in their own right)

Aim: To “examine previously unexplored territory regarding what factors are important to CBHE students when faced with the choice of continuing their education at college or moving to a university” (p.828)

Methodology: Case study of one FE college; questionnaires for Level 5 (n=43; final year of associate degree) and Level 6 students (n=22 in final year of bachelor degree) + follow-up focus group (n=13) – see p.831 for details of questions and participant cohort.

Findings: Primary reason for choosing associate degree = course subject, followed by proximity, largely related to family ties – especially school drop off/commute to college; second reason = recommendation. Gender differences = women rated course modules and local/personal commitments as more important than the men. Reasons for staying in college = familiarity with teaching staff; feeling settled. Students who were going to move to university said they would do so for a ‘fresh start’ (but generally these were younger students with no family commitments). Age significantly correlated with reputation of institution.

Level 6 students gave three main reasons for electing to top-up to Bachelor level: postgraduate potential, familiarity and educational interest. 86% of Level 5 students were considering topping-up; 7% were going to take a break; 7% moving into employment.

Core Argument: Course type and content = most important factor for students making decisions about how to progress their associate degree studies


UK

Context: Foundation degrees (FD) in England; work-based learning (WBL). Authors review literature on WBL; increasing pressure/ policy agenda to develop employer-engagement (with FDs developed as the ‘main work-focused qualification’ in the UK, p.602).

Aim: To explore employer perceptions of an ‘innovative’ work-based learning (WBL) programme in a Leadership and Management FD; “to explore and critically analyse the perceptions and experiences of academics, senior university managers and employer representatives in relation to the design and delivery of this programme” (p.600); to respond to two RQs:
### Keywords
*United Kingdom, Government policy, Universities, Curricula, Business studies*

### FURTHER EDUCATION/ TAFE
**FOUNDATION DEGREES**
**WORK-BASED LEARNING**

**Methodology:** Qualitative, case study; semi-structured interviews with: “the vice chancellor; the deputy dean of the business school; the WBL programme leader; the human resources manager and director of training from the Chamber of Commerce who were responsible for the programme and two WBL academics with teaching and management responsibilities related to the programme” (p.603). Data generation = narratives, with “storytelling [as] the exploration of stories as a mechanism for organisational learning and communication” (p.605). FD in the case study = winner of a national UK award for outstanding employer engagement in 2009 (see p.606 for detail of the FD)

### Findings:
**Policy-maker’s perspective:** policy/ funding cuts suggest that the government does not value FD (funding does not match the rhetoric), but authors note that 2012 review of university-industry collaboration advised the expansion of FDs. Policy-maker (ex-Associate Director of FD) suggests that government need to decide on funding, and whether FDs should be embedded in the workplace or for full-time students – and recognise difference. She argues that level descriptors should be different for WBL, and be assessed with competency framework (rather than pass/fail). Policy-maker also suggested that FD/ WBL should be offered only by post-1992 universities because older/ more elite institutions are too academic.

#### Themes

- **Intensity of learning experience:** discussion of delivery (block delivery + master classes) and expertise of staff. Shorter periods of time (to fit with students’ work schedules) = intensive bursts of delivery
- **Tensions among academics:** with regard to resourcing (not enough time to develop course ‘properly’ (see participant quotes on p.609) + change in delivery causing tensions for academics.
- **Academic support for students:** questions about how to support students after master class (possible suggestions: drop-in workshop with tutor for students before assignments due; support via VLE).

---


### Context:
Examines a first year transition program at UOW designed for students at a regional campus, whose students are mostly mature age, FinF, indigenous and/or low SES. Program set up because of observations (not primarily policy/funding imperative!). Programs are largely blended (range of technologies) but some students are not confident or familiar with digital literacies.
### PATHWAY IN SUPPORT TRANSITION

Teaching staff = primarily casual which also brings limitations. Discusses arguments to embed academic literacies in disciplines/ within a subject. UOW = undergoing university-wide curriculum renewal “to ensure the integration or embedding of academic and English language teaching and learning in core and capstone subjects” (p.11). The Yr 1 transition program = sits outside of discipline but parts are explicitly aligned with curriculum-specific ALL requirements and has 3 tiers:

1) pre-commencement “immersion” day [orientation]
2) first semester weekly curricula-aligned seminar streams (critical thinking, researching, writing in specific disciplines)
3) mid-year, day-long writing intensive

**Aim:** Program aim: “to facilitate academic participation and hence retention in a higher education environment that relies on various multimedia technologies and blended learning models” (abstract).

Paper aim: to offer insights from evaluation of program: record student attendance, rate each module using likert-scale and collect ‘student commentary’. Authors note that their program aligns with Gale & Parker’s ‘transition as induction’ conceptualisation, leading them to question what transition means to students/ and seek to achieve a ‘transition as becoming’ process

**Theoretical frame:** Praxis approach [?]; draw on notion of palimpsest to “think through the complex layering between subjective responses of students to the demands of academic writing and the (con)textual product” (drawing on Yancey, 2004; p.16)

**Methodology:** Discussion of evaluation strategy (p.12-13) based on measuring attrition/retention rates + qualitative student commentary. Offers series of narratives/ representative student accounts

**Findings:**
Discussion includes complexities of blended learning (opportunities gained and lost through use of virtual technologies. For example, first year, first semester mature age indigenous student doesn’t know how to use technology (doesn’t know about the mute button for example) and is too bewildered to ask questions but tutor feels under-recognised because s/he is going extra mile to create creative, high quality learning materials. Authors argue that, “What is at stake here are the competing realities between point-of-delivery normative assumptions made by an overworked and under-supported subject lecturer…. and an at-a-distant student” (p.15). Other students note how their transformations jostle with home/work/previous identities. Working from notion of palimpsest, authors argue that to judge students by academic literacies conventions “places important differences and the politics of identity inherent in diversity and social inclusion under erasure” (p.17). Evoking the palimpsest offers reminder (‘reclamation’) of previous writing; “historical inscription and current inscription are
coherently incommensurate” (p.17). Authors note that students’ “sense of location, dislocation, re-location, can have profound effects on a student's capacity to learn and to also take satisfaction in that learning” (p.17)

**Core argument:** There are core tensions between teachers, equity students and ALL: “We argue that too often subject lecturers, equity students and, indeed, ALL teachers, become entangled in the sometimes competing imperatives of teaching directives and equity policy implementation” (p.11). Authors call for radical change (‘recalibration’) of what transition means in context of widening participation and technological change.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context:</strong> Polytechnics in NZ, adult foundation programs, adult literacy education (aka ‘foundation skills’) neoliberal climate. Authors argue that NZ is a pertinent case study because it is a small country, meaning that policy can be rolled out across the country. Authors offer a review of ‘inclusive liberalism’ as ideological trend from 1980s (in this case, privileging economic outputs of education), which the authors describe in terms of “inclusive liberalism is more likely to be motivated to pre-empt unrest and opposition from the marginalised population, allowing governments to present themselves as ‘caring’ yet fisically responsible to the majority, and to deliver neoliberal consumer-oriented identities to the whole of society” (p.880). Discussion of policy and accountability architecture in NZ with regard to foundation skills on p.880–881. Authors make the case that tutors are often unlikely/unwilling to contest policy/underlying ideologies. Authors focused on tutors in the polytechnic (further education/ TAFE) sector because that’s where the responsibility for bridging/foundation education mainly lies/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Keywords:</strong> Foundation skills; postsecondary education; neoliberal policies; effects on teaching and learning; professionalism of teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim:</strong> To examine the “experiences of government and institutional implementation of major education policy changes” of foundation skills tutors in Aotearoa New Zealand; to respond to this RQ “What, according to lecturers involved in the teaching and management of foundation studies programmes, is the impact of current government policies on the sector?” (p.881)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology:</strong> Interviews with foundation skills tutors and managers (n=72) whose main focus is ‘upskilling’ domestic students (not TESOL, although there are NESB students in the classes). Most of the tutors were teaching ‘academic skills’ (“generally framed as academic reading and writing, referencing, critical analysis and searching for information” (p.882). Interview questions included: “What is your understanding of academic literacy and its role in foundation programmes? • What are the greatest challenges you face in teaching foundation studies cohorts? • What changes would you like to see?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• How do you feel staff teaching on foundation studies/bridging programmes are positioned at the institute?
• How do you feel your students enrolled on foundation studies/bridging programmes are positioned at the institute?” (p.883)

Findings: Mostly, the participants reported that they felt that they and their students were positioned negatively by policy and the government’s neoliberal approach, because of its focus on human, rather than social, capital. This played out in three ways: growing distrust of management by staff, the implementation of restructuring, impact on teachers’ professional responsibilities and their students.

Distrust: more by institution, rather than individual basis. Institutions with more positive relationships = have leadership that understands what ‘second-chance learners’ need. Tutors perceived issues when the managers are viewed as non-educators (or ‘bean counters’ according to one participant, see p.884). In these cases, tutors argued that they observed “little real understanding of the challenges involved in teaching these students and resent the fact that the students appear to be regarded as ‘cash cows or good bread and butter – consistent’ when their numbers are good, and retention and success rates are satisfactory” (p.885). Foundation skills can provide a ‘steady stream’ of students, thus constituting an important revenue stream for some institutions (but is not necessarily met by commensurate understandings of the challenges these students face/ have faced). Tutors expressed anger at what they perceived as ‘lip service’ of senior management, which the authors argue is driven by lack of dialogue. Middle managers describe themselves as ‘meat in the sandwich’, with directives from above clashing with tutors’ frustrations. Some staff expressed perception that government don’t care about foundation skills because of the removal of funding; others expressed concern about reductive metrics only telling part of a bigger (more complex) story.

Casualisation = problem, leaving staff in insecure work; tutors generally perceived consultation related to restructures as lacking validity. Resources perceived as marginal, when compared with other areas — particularly pastoral care: “Adequate support services would seem essential considering the student demographics in foundation studies programmes, including second-chance learners who had unsuccessful secondary school experiences and immigrants who faced significant readjustment to a new culture and language. Unfortunately, the narrow government and management view is that the teaching of skills will ensure student success in obtaining jobs and contributing to the economy” (p.887).
**Core Argument:** Authors point to all the ways that neoliberal policies have broken foundation education. They suggest two ways forward:
1) "recognise and draw on the rich knowledge and experience of the students. With their intimate knowledge of the environments of their own communities, foundation students could potentially participate in planning, leading and delivering service learning programmes that combine academic learning with service in community settings" (p.891)
2) better inform multiple stakeholders of the challenges described in the article (led by unions and professional organisations)

**Context:** Set in the context of radical policy change: report sets out future where non-Indigenous people will no longer be able to provide VET courses for Indigenous students due to increasing emphasis on ‘agency and self-determination’ of Indigenous people.

**Aim:** To identify pathways taken by Indigenous students into, through and out of VET

**Theoretical frame:**

**Methodology:** Mixed methods: documentary analysis, analysis of NCVER data on VET articulants, questionnaire data from Indigenous students and TAFE students

**Findings:** Surface-level analysis of VET data suggests that Indigenous students are well-represented in TAFE courses; however, finer analysis shows that the majority of these enrolments are in lower level/ preparatory courses and are under-represented in all vocational streams, especially higher level courses. Many Indigenous students were in courses that were non-vocational (such as literacy/ numeracy preparation) to facilitate their entry into a vocational program (a ‘catch up’ model of VET for Indigenous students under the TAFE-equity arrangements)

**Recommendations:**
- Transfer ownership and control of VET provisions for Indigenous students to Indigenous management and focus on local level
- VET should be reconsidered in collaboration with Indigenous communities to become more integrated and inclusive
- Indigenous staff should be appointed and teaching should incorporate Indigenous knowledges
- Need to develop processes for RPL for Indigenous students
- Schools and TAFEs should collaborate to “ensure a seamless transition” based on shared facilities and integrated programs.

Authors noted the possibility for TAFE to play a role in the reconciliation process.
| **Tett, L.; Cree, V. & Christie, H. (2017).** *From further to higher education: transition as an on-going process,*  
*Higher Education, 73:* 389-406. | **Context:** ‘Non-traditional’ students entering higher education from further education; context = stratified higher education system and only 34% of student body = ‘non-traditional’; also, retention rates are comparatively high. Scopes literature on transition and higher education(p.391)  
**Aim:** To argue that transition is not a one-off event, but instead is an ongoing process over time; To respond to two RQs:  
- “What do a cohort of non-traditional students’ perceive to be the key transitions that they experience on entry to, and during, their university studies?”  
- “What do the cohort perceive to be the impact of their studies on their identities?” (p.392)  
**Theoretical frame:** Sociocultural theory/ CoP (Lave & Wenger)  
**Methodology:** Authors returned to ‘the field’ 10 years after initial data collection; elite university which admitted group of FE/ HNQ articulants (unusual) = part of WP mission. Original project = semi-structured interview with students who entered university with HNQ via FE (n=35 + 10 following year; 82% = f; 49%= over 30 years) over four years of degree. Authors attempted to contact participants in 2015 (10 years later): n=15. Analysis = critical moments and themes identified from literature/ emergent themes from interviews.  
**Findings:** Four perceived ‘critical moments’ identified in data: 1) loss of a sense of belonging on coming to university, 2) learning to fit in by the end of the first year, 3) changing approaches to learning and belonging in the final years of study, and 4) changing selves in the years following graduation.  
**Critical moment 1:** initial expectations, uncertainties about what = to expect/ is expected; feedback and standards; where to start = ‘learning shock’  
**Critical moment 2:** role of peers, role of tutorials, academic work, accessing support, support from family and friends.  
**Critical moment 3:** understanding the system, adapting/ adjusting approaches to learning/ strategies, managing time.  
**Critical moment 4:** staying in the system (not dropping out), changing selves, other lives (family/ personal)  
**Core argument:** |
| **SCO**  
Annotation written by Sally Baker  
Keywords: Transition processes; Belonging; Relationships; Changing selves |  
**FURTHER EDUCATION/ TAFE**  
**PATHWAY IN** |
| **Townsend, R. (2008).** *Adult education, social inclusion and cultural diversity in regional communities,*  
*Australian Journal of Adult Learning, 48*(1): 71-92 | **Context:** Explores experiences of CALD students in Adult Continuing Education (ACE) in regional Victoria to “reveal how individuals can utilise adult education as a space to explore their own social and cultural isolation in a regional context” (abstract). Works from premise that adult learning spaces |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUS</th>
<th>Annotation written by Sally Baker</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>offer opportunities to explore ‘social, cultural and economic experiences’. Location of research = rural/ agricultural area of north Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aim:</strong></td>
<td>To present “research about adult education and training and its role in regional life for internal and international migrants” (p.74). CALD residents = internal mobility or international migration. Reasons for internal mobility suggested as searching for sense of ‘place’ and belonging (age-related transition). ACE in research site = specialized for particular groups (some for people with disabilities; one service for indigenous people; women interested in child care/ aged care/ home or community care). No providers purposefully targeting CALD population: “Such ‘cultural blindness’ by ACE programming in this regional community appears to result from a range of complex historical, population, social and economic factors” (p.79) – possibly a result of the area not being part of recent migration programs encouraging migrants to settle in the area. But support group started in 2006: “CALD groups carving out alternative social and economic networks highlights and reflects a community that is practised in protecting established networks rather than extending and nourishing them by embracing the real growth in diversity of the main communities in this Shire” (p.81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Methodology:</strong></td>
<td>Mixed methods: surveys and interviews of 15 CALD (past/current) ACE students = development of ‘habitual narratives’. Also: focus groups with cultural support network and ESL learners to evaluate impact of government policies/programs and interviews with ACE staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Findings:</strong></td>
<td>There are patterns in terms of migration, internal mobility, social isolation and cultural identity. Common theme = sense of exclusion in regional communities (‘social outsiders’, p.75) – related to cultural identity (aka not WASP) and lack of employment opportunities. Students = suggest that they entered ACE ‘searching’ for “a ‘place’ to help sort out ‘where to next’” (p.82). Older (more established in Australia) students appeared to find it easier to find what they wanted and “were more assertive about needs and more knowledgeable about how to go about locating resources to match their needs” (p.83) but they recognized that the standards were not high. Younger migrant women appear Adult learning environments (not all!) are designed/ run in such a way that excludes rather than includes CALD students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core argument:</strong></td>
<td>ACE can only help students to develop social capital if it recognises the diversity in its communities. Further research into social capital development is needed in metro and rural areas because low SES/ CALD students tend to use sporting and educational spaces for social networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL BARRIER TO PATHWAY IN</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Context:** Explicitly examines the impact of school curriculum on maintain patterns of inequality (educational outcomes, participation) of low SES students and argues that universities are complicit. Explores alternative modes of entry “that disrupt the established curriculum hierarchy by valuing a broad range of knowledges for entry to university” (abstract). Positions curriculum = what is taught and how delivered = vehicle for social reproduction of classed inequalities. The traditional core of the curriculum “favours students who can draw on the cultural and intellectual resources of the middle class, who come from families where reading is encouraged, intellectual activities are valued above manual and ‘high culture’ is valued above ‘mass culture’” (p.903). Bottom of hierarchy of school subjects = VET/vocational subjects. Discussion of scaling of subjects for TER on p.904.  
**Aim:**  
**Theoretical frame:** Bourdieu – cultural and social capital  
**Methodology:** Ethnographic: draws on data collected from 3 schools as part of ethnographic project exploring experience of schooling in disadvantaged schools. Conducted small group/individual interviews with students (n=102) and teachers/school leaders (n=34) + observations at each site over 2 terms. Schools located in city in South Australia.  
Inequity is reproduced through hierarchies in subjects, dichotomy between VET and academic courses and expectations of staff and students: “When university places are limited and access is based on relative (apparent) merit, the secondary curriculum orders young people into a social hierarchy of post-secondary options where the success of more privileged students comes at the cost of students from low socio-economic backgrounds” (p.901)  
**Findings:** Most disadvantaged school offered 6 HE selection subjects in Year 12: biology, English communications, PE, studies of society, food & hospitality, visual arts and more school assessed subjects and VET options: “The range of subjects offered suggests that the school had determined that the traditional competitive academic curriculum was not appropriate for its students” (p.905). By contrast, the largest school offered wide range of HESS subjects and marketed itself on that basis. Members of staff in this school = divided in terms of how they viewed students capacity to cope with ‘higher level’ subjects (e.g. Extension Maths/Physics), and for many students, the demands of the academic (traditional) curriculum = “overwhelming” (p.906) and attrition rate was high. The other school = high mix of diverse cultures and offered mid-range of HESS subjects. Also has agreement with local TAFE to allow school students to undertake Year 11 on TAFE campus to do Cert 2 VET qualification alongside school |


AUS Annotation written by Sally Baker

Keywords: poverty and education; education policy; higher education
subjects. Students complained about strong direction towards maths and science and that TAFE pathways encouraged rather than HE, suggesting “the ‘taken for granted’ beliefs of many of these students: that students like themselves are not capable of achieving university” (p.907).

**Discussion**

**VET in schools**

“Vocational subjects dominate in low SES, government schools, often at the expense of academic options, and are rarely chosen by young people from the highest socio-economic backgrounds” (p.908); others have argued that VET provision = low quality (Polesel, 2008) and offers little post-school currency. Wheelahan (2007) argues that CBT = serves to exclude low SES students from ‘powerful knowledges’ of academic disciplines. Rather, VET and academic pathways should be kept as connected via school could help to reduce stigmatization of VET (p.909; Teese & Polesel, 2003).

**Standards/ expectations**

All students said Years 7-9 = waste of time because they didn’t have to do much to pass and thus does not prepare students well for academic study in Year 12. Teachers conversely viewed students as underprepared when they arrive at secondary school. Thus, “the stratification of the school curriculum operates [to limit] subject choices and steering students away from a university pathway” (p.913)

**Alternatives?**

‘Capabilities-based approach’ to student selection for HE = portfolio admissions procedure with students asked to provide evidence they have the capacity to succeed [onus on student] and can include ECAs, voluntary work, other forms of learning. This approach disrupts traditional hierarchical curriculum by valuing a much broader ranges of knowledges and experiences beyond the school curriculum/ classroom. For example: UniSA = ‘Portfolio Entry Scheme’ [also see Harvey, 2012]

**Core argument:** Tranter argues that “the senior secondary curriculum and higher education selection processes are heavily skewed against students from low SES schools” (p.911)
that explores VET-HE pathways, but there are reports of arrangements (such as credit transfer), these tend to be with newer/ less research intensive universities, thus increasing the stratification within the HE system. Argues that improved pathways between VET and HE need to be greater focus of collaboration between 2 sectors. Literature review identifies 4 common factors that tend to exclude TAFE students from transitioning successfully into HE: lesser accessibility to low SES students, privileged forms of knowledge in HE; existing systemic and cultural barriers; inadequate relationships between sectors.

**Aim:** Asks: “What are the characteristics of the TAFE educational environment that promote successful transition into a higher education program for non-traditional students?” (p.193)

**Theoretical frame:**

**Methodology:** Qualitative exploratory approach. Recognises limitation of relying on one perspective (TAFE program coordinator). Constructivist focus: face-to-face, in-depth interviews conducted. Adopts grounded theory

**Findings:** Participants believed the blended learning (12 hours of online delivery of subject materials, 12 hours of online activities and 12 hours of face-to-face workshops per course at the TAFE institution they had previously studied) and location within TAFE was fundamental to students’ success and made it more accessible: “the blended delivery style favoured the students transitioning from competency-based learning into outcome-based learning” (p.197). However, participants noted that some teaching staff had issues adapting to different ways of teaching [aka different ways of knowing etc.]. This suite of blended programs helped students with identified barriers to accessing HE (FiF, poor educational experiences, low SES, low academic self-efficacy). Students struggled to move from a “competency-based environment to [one] requiring ‘self-directed knowledge acquisition’” (p.197) = described by one participant as a “big paradigm shift” (same page). Also note that students suffered ‘transitional shock’ (p.198) and discuss the ‘TAFE effect’ (smaller classes, familiarity between teachers and students: ‘learner partners’). Issues for staff = feel like they have to have their hands held and a philosophical challenges. Authors also report that participants perceive a hierarchy between TAFE and university, with TAFE being in a subordinate position: “Universities were generally perceived as displaying an attitude towards TAFE institutions that did not always acknowledge the teaching and program credentials of VET and, consequently, universities within the same region may not be a ‘fit for organisational
### Context:
UK pre-undergraduate space. Examines admissions to Early Childhood foundation degree — scopes context of foundation degrees as response to Leith report but notes “there is a lack of understanding about how institutions might need to change to accommodate [widening participation]” (p.91). Author = programme manager of Early Childhood foundation degree – set unwritten rule that all applicants need interview pre-enrolment (gatekeeper for drop out) – notes she may have “unconsciously adopted a deficit discourse, negatively positioning these students as likely to fail on the programme” (p.92), so interview = opportunity for non-traditional students to challenge that assumption.

### Aim:
- **Theoretical frame**: Bourdieu – capital, field, habitus
- **Methodology**: Narrative inquiry. Semi-structured interviews conducted with applicants (n=7); paper focuses on 3 participants in particular: Kat, Sarah and Chelsea. Data analysed with ‘thematic approach’

### Findings:
Kat = mature age student, had NVQ level 3 in childcare, FinF, mother, part-time work in preschool. Cried during admissions interview because of emotional strain of having to prove herself worthy
Chelsea = 21 years old, preschool assistant, had A-levels and NVQ level 3, FinF but had partner who went through foundation degree in business
Sarah = mature age, FinF, mother, had done NVQ level 3 as mature student.

Emergent themes: *emotions* (author found this ‘surprising’): “Students feel quite exposed and open to criticism, therefore seeing it as both labour intensive and emotionally challenging” (p.98).

**Positioning:** ‘high stocks of emotional capital’ = give students confidence and a sense of worth; also discusses how students were positioned by others (e.g., example of Sarah’s mother on p.100). 

**Changing positions:** author notes shifts in students’ approaches/ confidence. Interview could be seen as offering inspiration to students (a sense of ‘I can do this’). 

**Accumulating capital:** acquisition of study skills = reported by students; author argues that “through giving the students sufficient time and support, it could be argued that they were then in a more able position to accumulate capital and
overcome any disadvantages once the programme had commenced” (p.102). However, Sarah dropped out, despite this ‘accrual of capital’

**Core argument:** Recommendations: 1) institutions need to work out how to value individual experience and strengths that students bring with; 2) locate the problem with the institution, not the individual; 3) there is power in the interview (to bring forward tacit strengths and offer a space for myths and assumptions to be challenged).

|---|
| **Context:** Works from notion that moving from TAFE (“second tier” of tertiary education) to university (“first tier”) is an equity mechanism because low SES students are over-represented in VET sector. Australian government has pushed to increase VET-HE pathways to widen participation (in name of equity) in policy (e.g. see Bradley et al. 2008), rather than explore whether they do act effectively as equity mechanism
| **Aim:** To test assumptions that underpin the notion that VET-uni pathways support equity (as reported by OECD, 2008)
| **Theoretical frame:** Challenges deficit framing of ‘second chance’ education (“reinforces the notion that students need a second-chance because of their presumed deficits, rather than the institutional practices of universities and the extent to which they are prepared to accept such students” (p.262). Uses Bourdieu’s notion of field to analyse structure of tertiary education sector
| **Methodology:** Analysis of SES profile and institutional destinations of student transfers from VET-HE. Uses DEEWR published/commissioned unpublished statistics on commencing domestic UG students and limited use of NCVER statistics on VET students. Looks at prior highest qualification at point of entrance into UG studies. Data from 2007
| **Limitation:** no way of knowing if students also have VET qualification because there is no way of accounting for multiple enrolments.
| **Findings:** VET-HE pathways “are shaped by and enacted within a tertiary education sector that is differentiated by status and they do little to act as an equity mechanism as a consequence” (p.262); moreover, “they do little to widen participation of students from low socio-economic backgrounds in HE” (p.262) because they reinforce/replicate the SES patterns – high/middle SES students more likely to take higher level VET courses and articulate. Critique of postcode method for ascertaining SES
| 5/ 37 public universities are dual-sector: RMIT/ SWIN/FED/VIC/CDU = admit more VET articulators than all other universities. |
Concentration of privilege: Go8 admit 23 school leavers for every 1 VET leaver; other universities take 3 school leavers for every 1 VET student (Table 2 on p.266 useful for SES% spread across Australian universities). VET-HE pathways do not provide access to elite universities and “this contributes to the exclusivity of these universities” (p.269) Middle-class are using VET for second-chance progression to HE

**Core argument:** Equity in HE cannot be considered independently of equity in VET (p.263) – VET and HE are not two separate fields, rather they are a “differentiated tertiary education field” (p.263) – hierarchical structure has elite universities at the top – “characterised by student competition for the limited supply of high status goods at high status universities” (Marginson 1997, cited p.263). Social composition of VET needs more exploration (similar in UK – p.271).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context:</strong> Reports on first year of 3-year research project: ‘Vocations: the link between postcompulsory education and the labour market’, which is exploring educational/occupational pathways (relationships between study and work) – particularly in terms of changing vocation/ taking other qualifications. Based on idea that “Where there are strong occupational pathways, strong educational pathways will follow” (p.7). Australia generally has weak occupational pathways, which is made worse by decline in mid-level jobs (evident in diminishing value of diplomas). “Most policies that attempt to improve pathways focus only on education and not on the structure of the labour market or the relationship between the two” (p.7). Mentions that lifelong learning can take a long time and many students drop out. Transition is made complex by different curriculum models between VET and HE. Explores pathways from starting point of structure of labour market and its impact on how education is structured and what pathways are made available. Pathways may describe:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• an individual’s trajectory through education and employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• a career path or history of jobs (occupational pathways)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• the string of programs an individual undertakes (educational pathways)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• negotiated arrangements linking qualifications at different levels of the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF; for example, from the certificate IV or diploma to the bachelor’s degree in nursing). These arrangements may enable access, guaranteed access or credit in the destination course (p.11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most learners who continue to further study do so in original sector (VET or HE); there are high levels of student transfer between VET and HE when = strong occupational pathway or in connected/similar industry-related programs. Connections are weaker in programs that are more generalist or</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
theoretical (without strong occupational links). Strength of connections between work and education relate to economic organisation: “Anglophone liberal market economies use the labour market to match graduates and jobs, and graduates need similar, broad knowledge and skills to compete with each other. Where this is the case, education mainly screens in those regarded as high achievers, reflected by academic achievement, and screens out those regarded as low achievers” (p.13) – relates to two different logics: employment logic or education logic; education systems in coordinated market economies have an employment logic (not Australia) – programs are broader and prepare for citizenship; in Australia (education logic), VET =based on industrial models (workplace/ task-oriented)

**Aim:** Project aim = improve pathways within education, within work and between the two. Project has three strands: 1) entry-level VET qualifications (especially VET in school); 2) role of tertiary institutions in fostering vocations; 3) how to improve flows between education providers and workplaces/ how to improve occupational pathways

**Theoretical frame:** Models of capability approach: Sen (1999) and Nussbaum (2000)

**Methodology:** Mixed methods. Quantitative: uses 2009 ABS Survey of Education and Training to examine student flows using logistical regression. Qualitative: interviews with students (22 = VET/ 9 = HE) and graduates (4 = VET graduates; 3 = HE graduates), as well as managers, careers advisors, learning advisors (n=13), teachers and academics (17; also 4 from UK). Case studies offered of: finance, primary health, and electrical trades

**Findings:**
General findings (so far) = educational pathways are fragmented, as are labour market pathways. Policy attempts to improve these are weak and partial.

- Some fields have strong links to the workplace (e.g. nursing) but others have much weaker relationships with specific jobs, such as in finance and agriculture.
- Students tend to stay within their initial field of education depending on how “narrowly vocational” the discipline/area
- Work is the major reason for students to take another qualification (chances of employment)
- “Typically, students follow educational pathways for two main reasons: first, because the first credential allows entry into the higher program; and, second, to build confidence in their ability to study” (all p.3)

**Student flows:** previous work by team shows that limited numbers of students go on to get a second qualification in same field, suggesting “a lack of coherence between education, training and work in
Australia” (p.15). Analysis of ABS data shows an increasing trend towards post-school qualifications and in multiple qualifications – mostly additional qualifications taken after 24, and increase in HE qualifications. There are significant disciplinary differences between VET or HE first (see p.16-17)

57% of respondents (students) said they undertook their first qualification for a job. A common reason for VET students was as study prerequisite for other qualification (but only 13% said this). With second qualifications, most common reason was to get a job (32.6%).

Student interview data: Students reported they didn’t just want ‘a job’, they wanted a job connected with the field/program (with long-term view). Students used pathways for two main reasons: 1) to get credentials for higher level study; 2) to develop confidence/ to prepare/ to ‘warm up’. Authors note difficulties for students transitioning from VET to HE (p.25) – students referred to assessment, different types of learning, need to be more independent, develop good study skills. 3 students suggested an orientation program. Getting information = important (many students did not have a problem with this). Experiences of work experience differed by course: “Students value work placements but there are difficulties that need to be addressed by institutions and workplaces to strengthen the links between the two and improve students’ experiences of transition” (p.26).

Institutional perspectives: Teachers noted the time it takes to complete pathways (under-represented/ discussed in literature) – many teachers have taken similar pathways and are able to equate own experience/ be empathetic to students (e.g. balance need to earn with study/ family commitments etc.). Staff noted several benefits to pathways (e.g. achieving gov’t targets, providing flows of students, cut marketing costs, integration of sectors) but UK academics warned of believing that pathways = panacea to inequality/ inequities. Staff noted difficulties in hierarchical alignment of pathways: “Some interviewees thought the disparities in status between VET and higher education were reflected in the way pathways were developed: access to pathways is bestowed by the higher-level program, while those in the lower-level program are expected to organise them and ensure students are academically prepared to study at the next level” (p.30), with students viewed as ‘underprepared’ from all lower levels (e.g. VET in school students underprepared for VET). Mixed views= whether VET students are prepared for HE study. Also, pathways often driven by heads of dept. without necessarily getting input or investment from teachers/ lecturers and non-teaching staff. Funding and policies seen as obstacles. VET staff felt that HE staff dismissed or misunderstood what they do (except in dual sector institutions).
Two issues = consensus between staff from both sectors: CBT and mathematics. VET teachers = constrained by CBT and HE teachers agree – perhaps not enough engagement with theory and capacity of CBT ‘to develop the person’ (p.32) = too much focus on workplace outcomes. Also VET courses do not emphasise maths enough.

Core argument:
“While a focus on educational policies, governance and structures and institutional relationships between VET and higher education is essential to improving educational pathways and improving links between education and work, it is also necessary to focus on the way labour is deployed at work and the way work placements are structured, while recognising that learning needs to support and not supplant the employer’s main business” (p.8). Advocates for capabilities approach:
“Capabilities are differentiated from generic skills, employability skills or graduate attributes because they are not ‘general’ or ‘generic’. Rather, the focus is on the development of the individual and on work, and consequently students need access to the knowledge, skills and capabilities so they can exercise agency in their vocational stream” (p.37) = need vocational streams.


AUS
Annotation written by Sally Baker

TAFE ONLINE

Context: Online experiences of students studying in VET pathway course (part of ALTC-funded project exploring first year experiences of university students who articulated via TAFE). Students who transition into university from TAFE experience adaptation challenges because of shifts in epistemology (practice/ active knowledge in TAFE; scholarly knowledge at university; see Wheelahan, 2009). Implications for balancing family/ life/ study because many TAFE articulants tend to be mature age students. Academic literacies = also significant area for adaptation. Assumptions about students’ technological experience create further adaptation challenges/ anxiety: “We should not assume that the enhanced flexibility offered by e-learning is automatically more inclusive for diverse groups of students than traditional teaching methods. Unplanned or unsupported use of technology can just as easily result in learning difficulties or even alienation from the learning process” (p.641).

Aim: To offer ‘problem solution’ approach to designing technology preparation course for students who have transitioned into higher education from TAFE

Methodology: ALTC project explored student experience of first year of university in Nursing, Business and Law, and Early Childhood education. Methods: survey (n=529) + follow up interviews/ focus groups (n=63). Demographic details for survey participants on p.643 (slightly more females; nearly 50% FinF; 30% low SES; nearly 40% NESB; 30% mature age: 26–65 years of age).
**Findings:** ‘Significant number’ of students struggled with online component of their studies, which contributed to stress and anxiety experienced. Education Technology Preparation (ETP) course designed as a response (described on p.646). Challenges identified in survey:

- Balancing work-life-study (49.9%)
- Understanding academic conventions (48.77%)
- Academic writing (42.15%)
- Academic reading (29%)
- Assessment (29%)
- Using online environment (22%) — qualitative data reports difficulties with online tutorials, doing online assessments, not knowing how to navigate online systems. Some students believed blended/online learning = inadequate for supporting transition (see p.644)

Students overwhelmingly reported positive reaction to the ETP course designed to support online transitions

**Core argument:** “For universities planning on integrating elements of online learning more broadly into the curriculum, it is imperative that adequate opportunities are afforded students to develop the necessary skills and capabilities. Institutions will need to factor in the potential costs of these opportunities which must be timely and, for some students, will need to be delivered in face to face, practically orientated sessions” (p.648).