

How Novice Vocational Education and Training Teachers Learn to Become Teachers

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for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
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Certificate of Authorship / Originality

I certify that the work in this thesis has not been previously submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

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Author publications and presentations

Publications

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Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
Cert IV TAA	Certificate IV in Training and Assessment
HoS	Head of School
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
VET	Vocational Education and Training

Abstract

Expectations of the vocational education and training (VET) sector continue to increase as governments, industry, and the community see vocational education and training as an answer to a range of issues. Meeting these expectations and providing quality VET requires VET teachers with a high level of skills and abilities. At the same time, in Australia, many VET teachers begin teaching with little or no prior experience or educational qualifications related to teaching. This thesis addresses the question of how novice vocational education and training teachers learn to undertake the teaching role. Specifically, it considers,

- How novice VET teachers learn to become teachers through undertaking the teaching role;
- How novice VET teachers learn to become teachers through practices additional to the teaching role;
- What novice VET teachers learn; and
- What enables and constrains novice VET teacher learning.

Nine novice teachers, in eight different teaching areas, and across four campuses, participated in the longitudinal multi-case study undertaken over two years. A practice theory framework was used to design the research and to analyse the data.

The research found that there was considerable variation in the practices that novice teachers undertook as part of their role as a teacher. For instance, 'teaching' involved different practices in each site. There was also variation in what each teacher needed to learn to undertake that role. The

research found that practices associated with undertaking the teaching role were more influential in supporting teacher learning than practices additional to the teaching role. In some sites, a trellis of interconnected practices that supported learning (PSLs) was developed. A trellis is made up of interconnected components that help support growth in a particular direction. In sites where a trellis of PSLs was developed, it provided greater support for novice teacher learning to undertake their role than in sites where PSLs were not interconnected. The thesis identifies the key arrangements in each site that enabled and constrained novice teacher learning.

Keywords: Workbased Learning; Practice Architectures; Trellis; Practices that Support Learning; Teacher Learning; Mentoring; VET Teachers

Glossary of Terms

The Australian VET system has an array of terms that can become confusing. The glossary below serves two purposes. It provides definitions for some of these terms. It also outlines some choices that I have made in using particular terms in this thesis.

Term Used	Definition
Certificate IV in Training and Assessment	Abbreviated throughout as Cert IV TAA. This includes the Training Package qualification Cert IV TAA and the more recent version of the qualification, the Cert IV TAE. The Cert IV TAA is the qualification that all VET teachers are meant to complete.
Competency	A competency identifies the skills and knowledge that a learner needs to be competent in to achieve the competency. It does not provide information about how to support students to become competent.
Industry	In the Australian VET system the term 'industry' is often used to refer to the occupation that teachers are teaching about. For instance, the automotive industry, the beauty therapy industry or the sport and fitness industry. The term is also used more broadly such as 'industry consultation'.

Teacher	Many terms are used to refer to the person who supports the learning of a group of people. These include teacher, facilitator, trainer and VET practitioner. Throughout this thesis I use the term 'teacher'.
Time release	Time release refers to a reduction in the time expected to be given to teaching duties to enable a teacher to undertake other roles such as mentoring or resource development.
Training Package	In Australia, most VET qualifications are encapsulated in nationally recognised Training Packages. Each Training Package is made up of a number of qualifications, which in turn are made up of a number of competencies. For each industry, a Training Package outlines the competencies that students need to meet for each VET qualification.