



The Regional Paradox

**Undersupply of skilled workers and over representation
of unemployed and disengaged youth**

Section 2: Case Studies

May 2016

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1 Introduction

1 The survey of regional TAFE Institute Directors sought advice on high profile examples which provide practical solutions around the issue of addressing skills shortages in regional areas where there are high levels of youth unemployment. A number of Institutes responded indicating:

- they have been involved in a coordinated effort in their region (or within geographical centres within their area of operation) where their TAFE Institute has worked closely with employers and other organisations to develop the skills of young people with a view to placing them in jobs available in skilled shortage occupations;
- documentation of the initiative/s taken was available, and in a form easily able to be developed into a Case Study;
- there is 'hard evidence' available to support claims of success;
- the documentation available includes the views and support from other key regional stakeholders.

2 The Case Studies highlighted in this Section of the report show five regional TAFE Institutes in action, developing and delivering different programs to engage or re-engage young people (mostly), and where the focus is either on work readiness or more clearly directed to vocational skill development associated with selection for entry to a skilled trade. In all examples, the TAFE Institutes work in strong partnerships with a range of other local organisations with the ultimate aim of addressing regional skill shortages and youth unemployment in tandem.

3 The five regional TAFE Institutes highlighted include:

- **TAFE Western** delivering a Certificate I in Construction program for Indigenous students in Bourke, New South Wales, in conjunction with a major construction firm;
- **Central Regional TAFE (at the former CY O'Connor Institute)**, delivering a Certificate I and II in Leadership Development for Indigenous students at Moora in the Wheatbelt of Western Australia;
- **Wodonga Institute of TAFE** delivering a Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning, which incorporates Units from the Certificate II in Warehousing Operations, for young 15-19 year old disengaged and vulnerable males in Wodonga, Victoria, with significant experience of criminal activity and substance abuse;
- **TAFE SA** delivering a Certificate II in Engineering Pathways and Certificate III in Business in Kadina, Port Pirie and Clare in the mid-north of South Australia;
- **Northern Regional TAFE (at the former Kimberley Training Institute)** delivering a Certificate I in Gaining Access to Training and Education plus Units from the Health Training Package to a group of adult Indigenous people in Broome, Western Australia.

4 In addition, two other Institutes also indicated that they were involved in coordinated efforts and could demonstrate TAFE's capacity and responsiveness in addressing clear local economic/community needs in regional areas:

- South-West Institute indicated that it had been undertaking a training initiative addressing Warrnambool's skills shortage in aged care and had been nominated as one of three finalists for the Australian Training Awards' Industry Collaboration Award in 2015. South-West worked in collaboration with Lyndoch Living aged care to provide on-site training at the facility, integrating students into the day-to-day operations with residents and their families.
- though not focused on the specific activity being sought, but on a related exercise, and too early to highlight any obvious successes or outcomes, TasTAFE indicated they are assisting in coordinated activity where the local economy has suffered as a result of industry downturn or closure (e.g. mining in Queenstown and the closure of the Caterpillar factory in Burnie).

TAFE Institutes in action

5 The examples show how the targeting and selection of cohorts, and the nature of the program to be undertaken are important if the plan is for unemployed youth to enter an occupation in a skill shortage area. A number of issues are apparent arising from an analysis of the programs highlighted in the five Case Studies.

6 In the first instance, taking the lead or being involved as a key partner and achieving success in addressing youth unemployment and skill shortages in a local area requires significant effort and carries risks, both in the planning and delivery and the coordination with other agencies to support students. One of the key challenges for TAFE Institutes in smaller regional communities is that with thin markets there is often limited opportunity to run viable training programs, with viability depending State funding arrangements, numbers enrolled in the program and the level of additional support required to ensure student retention. Associated is the capacity of local partners to also provide the complementary economic and social support necessary to achieve success.

7 Secondly, depending upon the targeting used, some cohorts of young unemployed people within a local area will present with their own difficulties and require sophisticated strategies and support mechanisms to be in place to assist in achieving success. In many of the examples cited participants included early school leavers having typically left school after Year 9 or 10, with negative attitudes towards education and training and exhibiting low level basic skills. A number of programs included Aboriginal students and one program was targeted to assist those who have had significant experience of criminal activity and substance abuse.

8 Thirdly, it is unreasonable to expect and extremely difficult to achieve a positive skilling and employment outcome for those young people who have little or no history of employment, multiple barriers to address in gaining and retaining employment and who do not have the underpinning skills which will enable them to achieve the Certificate III or IV qualification required to enter a skilled trade.

As a result, and depending upon the potential labour available in a local region, efforts to address local shortages may be long term, with initial training focused on work readiness and initial skill development to provide a basis for further skilling.

9 The Case Studies provide examples of targeting and selection processes which take these factors into account, showing a gradation in the nature of programs aimed at moving young people from unemployment towards employment, through:

- 'work readiness' type programs aimed at engaging or re-engaging young people with an initial outcome being achieved in moving from unemployment into:
 - a Vocational Education and Training program in a specific occupational area;

- the job market to fill a labour shortage rather than a skill shortage occupation;
- a specific Vocational Education and Training program in an occupational area, at Certificate I or II, with a view to them being offered employment in that area and ultimately to become a skilled worker with a Certificate III or IV qualification in a skill shortage occupation.

10 A separate research exercise may be necessary across all metropolitan and regional TAFE Institutes to identify Case Studies which exemplify the next step in this gradation of programs, where unemployed young people are selected for employment in a skill shortage trade and enrolled directly in a Certificate III or IV qualification, given they have the appropriate level of underpinning skills.

11 Finally, one of the Case Studies highlights that selection into a program aimed at meeting specific employer needs in a local area will depend heavily upon the employer indicating their preference for a person as a prospective employee and the clear interest of a young person in the area of employment. Attempts to target and direct young people into skill shortage occupations in a local region will cut across the fact that there is a broader age pool of potential workers and for employers, gaining reliable, skilled employees is the issue, not a specific age group.

12 Notwithstanding these issues, the outcomes in all of the programs cited in the Case Studies have been significant. Attendance rates are regularly reported as high, participants have changed attitudes towards education and training, they now have a strong orientation towards work and a pathway to follow, and in many instances have moved directly from the program into a job.

2 TAFE Western, New South Wales

Building and construction program

Background

TAFE NSW Western Institute (TAFE Western) is geographically the largest of the 10 TAFE NSW Institutes, servicing an area over 50% of the state, but less than five percent of its total population. There are 24 colleges and more than 60 associated centres. It covers the Central West, North Western and Far West Statistical Divisions in NSW and includes some of the most isolated and remote communities in Australia.

In 2013 TAFE Western had 36,823 student enrolments with a diverse student profile. TAFE Western is making a reputation for itself throughout Australia and internationally for our efforts to bridge the gap in the disadvantage that Aboriginal people experience in relation to education and employment. The Institute is the single largest provider of vocational education and training for Aboriginal people in Australia with more than 6,959 students enrolled in 2013 (18.9% of the Institute's student population) with 29.19% of these undertaking training at Certificate III or above.

In addition, 2,576 students indicated that they were from a non-English Speaking Background; and 3,836 students indicated that they had a disability. Within this diverse student profile TAFE Western's Unit Completion Rate in 2013 was 77.6%.

Winning awards for meeting the challenges highlighted by the research

Commonwealth and state governments recognize that providing relevant education and training that articulates into employment is essential for a good future, an aim clearly reflected in the targets set in COAG's Closing the Gap in indigenous Disadvantage. For example, school attendance rates for Aboriginal people, especially in remote locations such as western NSW, remain the lowest of any demographic in Australia.

TAFE Western's Annual Reports have regularly highlighted the challenges facing the Institute and the communities it serves, as well as the solutions put in place by the Institute:

Those who know the western region of NSW are aware TAFE Western enjoys a uniquely challenging operating environment. Only 50 percent of people hold a post-school qualification and only 39 percent of Aboriginal students who start Year 7 go on to complete Year 12. Increasing the uptake and completion of educational qualifications is an essential part of our mission.

These challenges inspired a new initiative in 2012, known as TAFE Western Connect, to bring more choices to more people in more places. (Annual Report, 2012)

TAFE Western Connect links, coordinates and promotes TAFE Western's online, mobile and flexible delivery services to provide an increased range of courses and delivery options for students in small and medium sized communities of western NSW.

In its first year of operation, TAFE Western Connect helped 3,235 students gain access to more training choices. Of these students, 33 percent were Aboriginal and 11 percent were people with a disability. (Annual Report, 2013)

In recognition of its innovation and outcomes TAFE Western Connect was named 'Project of the Year' at the 2012 TAFE NSW Innovation & Excellence Awards. This was followed in 2013 by the establishment of a new Business Capability Unit:

to provide customised training to meet the needs of businesses and employers in Western NSW. The new 'one stop shop' is in response to feedback that TAFE Western needs to improve specialised training and provide a more coordinated, customer focused organisation-wide approach.

In 2013 also, the Institute won the 2013 NSW Premier's Award for Public Service for *Revitalising Regional NSW* which highlighted the subject of this case study – the Certificate I in Building and Construction, which was created to provide opportunities and successful outcomes for some of Bourke's young vulnerable Aboriginal people.

TAFE Western was also honoured for its work in Aboriginal education and training with the prestigious Award for Institute Innovation at the 2013 TAFE NSW Gili Awards. This recognised TAFE Western's excellence as an organisation in the provision of delivery and innovative strategies to increase Aboriginal student participation, retention, completion and transition to employment. In addition, the Director of the Institute was given an award for Meritorious Service to Aboriginal Education and Training and a staff member awarded Aboriginal Staff Member of the Year.

Not content to stand still after a series of awards the Western Institute has continued to enhance its reputation with an even greater emphasis on Indigenous employment and training programs, developed through partnerships between the TAFE Institute, local indigenous communities and government departments and agencies across a range of sectors. Their Annual Reports highlights programs such as:

- IPROWD, a statewide training program established in 2010 to assist Aboriginal people to gain entry to the NSW Police College at Goulburn, which is the first step to becoming an officer in the NSW Police Force;
- iSmile a Certificate III in Dental Assisting providing Aboriginal students with a pathway to either a career in oral health therapy and dentistry or other health industry areas;
- the Maliyan Experience, a six stage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) Cultural Competence training program for businesses and individuals, helping integrate knowledge and understanding of ATSI peoples into behavioural and business standards, policies, practices and attitudes.

The Building and Construction program

Identifying a skill shortage

Building and construction had been identified as a skills shortage area within the North West and Far West regions of New South Wales during 2012-2013 through a number of avenues. Firstly, the skills deficit was highlighted to TAFE Western through Jobs Services Australia providers, Birrang and Murdi Paaki, and through general feedback by potential students. Secondly, the shortage was identified through consultation with industry and local councils, with a common view being forwarded that the cost of accessing skilled contractors and workers from centres such as Dubbo was making construction activity too expensive in more isolated communities. Additionally, the NSW Office of Fair Trading had also identified a limited number of licensed trades people in these regions and was keen to promote training and licensing of local tradespeople who lived in and could work across the remote communities.

The program

The Bourke construction program which was developed to address these issues, involved the delivery of Certificate I in Construction, a competency based course with trainers delivering assessments based on learning outcomes and on-site performance. The course took place over 10 weeks and involved a student group disengaged from schooling.

The program was developed through a strong partnership involving TAFE Western's Building and Construction Section, the Department of NSW Public Works, David Payne Constructions (Dubbo), the Bourke Public School and High School. As Bourke is classified as a remote location, TAFE Western also worked closely with Connected Communities with a focus on delivering positive educational outcomes for the young and vulnerable Aboriginal people in the Bourke community.

At the same time as learning skills that will help them in employment, the students completed two important community projects which transformed a number of classrooms at Bourke High School and Bourke Public school into improved learning facilities, a lasting legacy in the Bourke community.



Major structural alterations had to be made – participants painting

The refurbishing of classrooms in the two schools resulted from the students in the program replacing doors, demolishing and replacing old cupboards, re-lining walls, painting and undertaking general renovation work to provide more attractive and positive learning environments. In this process the participants not only learnt important lifelong skills that will increase their employment opportunities in construction, but also help them in their everyday lives, including communication, reliability, safety, teamwork and work preparedness.



Renovating and repairing cupboards and display shelving

Many of the students were attending, or had attended, the school where the work/training was occurring. Despite their previous disengagement from schooling, they were reported as showing tremendous tenacity and dedication to overcome many personal obstacles to successfully complete their qualification and pride in what they were doing.



The final touches

Thanks to the guidance of the TAFE Western trainers, students, contractors and builders were able to reuse and recycle building materials. For example, students would remove classroom doors, plane and sand them ready for painting then rehang them. This process was repeated many times. Students were also able to reuse old materials, repair and reinstall window guards, wall linings and many other building components. The money the schools saved on building materials was redirected to important learning materials for the primary and high school students.

In addition, all planned project outcomes were achieved ahead of schedule.

The work completed by the TAFE students addressed the desperate need for the Bourke High and Bourke Public Schools to upgrade their learning facilities. The Principals of both schools reported a huge boost in morale for the students who used the refurbished classrooms and were full of praise for those involved, stating that the Aboriginal students had set an excellent example for students attending their schools.

Engaging and retaining students - key differences in this program

The student group, totally disengaged from school, had a history of failing in traditional educational platforms. To counteract this, the program needed to be different from their previous experience and incorporate a number of key strategies for engaging and retaining students. For TAFE Western, success is attributed to the nature of the program delivered, the skills of staff and the support provided by key organisations associated firstly, with the planning and establishment of the program, and secondly, in delivery. The following issues were singled out:

In the planning and establishment phase

- in attracting local students to undertake the course the skills and resources of the Aboriginal student mentor at Bourke High School and TAFE Western's Aboriginal Community Consultant based in Bourke were critical;
- the course delivered was modified following an earlier trial, to ensure that training and assessment were in a format focused on practical delivery, supervised student practice, observation and oral questioning to determine competence; and
- the assessment process was designed to minimise anxiety.

In the delivery phase

- tasks were targeted at the students' level of competence and ability;
- students were removed from the traditional classroom experience with all assessments experienced as a part of on-site construction activity with the participants' work being evident to their peers;
- the program was delivered by TAFE Western's principle Aboriginal trainer plus another trainer and delivery mentor. The use of mentor support helped to keep the students engaged and meant any problems were identified early and could be addressed, rather than the students just leaving the course. In this task the student mentor from Bourke High School supplied support and a level of counselling for the students throughout the program;
- integration with the Public Works program was central to success, as was the invaluable contribution and flexibility of the Site Supervisor for the principle contractor on site, David Payne Constructions; and
- students' transport issues were addressed with transport from home to site, provided by the mentor each day.

Tangible improvements and outcomes

The evaluation of the program showed benefits across the board – for the students involved, for the community and for other locations

For the students involved

Because of their distinct dislike for in-class learning environments and strong support for the hands-on structure, the Certificate I Construction course was popular, relevant and engaging. Importantly, TAFE students have learnt crucial skills for entry into the workforce. Several students received so much direction from the course that they have enrolled in further study in different construction courses. This is a significant achievement for vulnerable learners who would not have previously had the confidence or life skills to consider improving their futures by successfully undertaking higher level study.

Quantitative and qualitative outcomes indicated in reporting about the program included:

- many participants recorded close to 100% attendance, a rare achievement for any course delivered in a remote community with Aboriginal learners and testament to the dedication of both the trainers and the students involved;
- official Bourke school reports provided on the participants working on their sites, revealed some impressive results:
 - students received the highest ratings in areas such as cooperation between parties, quality standards, design requirements, attendance, working together as a team, waste management, noise and health issues, and overall behaviour;
 - above expectation reports in areas such as time management, safety on and outside the site, expected completion times and aboriginal participation compared to established benchmarks;
 - in no category were the students marked below expectations or unsatisfactory.

For the government and the community

The project contributed directly to delivering the priorities of government. Providing further education and training pathways and improving school attendance rates have been key outcomes for these Aboriginal students.

Bourke community members, particularly those associated with the students, observed marked improvements in attitudes, as students attended regularly and enthusiastically embraced the TAFE course. This was a huge change to their previous performance within the High School environment, with consequent changes in social behaviour out of school.

For Bourke High School and Bourke Public School, the facilities are now vastly improved and more functional – there is a ‘works’ legacy that will benefit the community for years to come.

In other locations

The outstanding success of the Bourke project has encouraged TAFE Western to continue to work with other agencies to identify other remote locations where similar programs can be delivered. TAFE Western ran a very similar course for Aboriginal learners in Coonamble soon after, with practical work components being undertaken at Coonamble High School. Again, David Payne Constructions, the Department of Public Works and TAFE Western delivered the project. Again, the project was delivered ahead of time and with highly successful outcomes.

TAFE Western continues to have discussions with NSW Public works to identify future locations for the delivery of a similar program, given that all partners see the value and positive outcomes to stem from these projects, not only for the students but for the local communities.

3 Central Regional TAFE, Western Australia (formerly C Y O'Connor Institute)

Leadership Development Program

Background

The former CY O'Connor Institute, now incorporated within Central Regional TAFE under the new organisational arrangements for TAFE in Western Australia, operated as a regional institution delivering training and education services, often through open learning, in the Wheatbelt of Western Australia. Campuses are located in Merredin, Narrogin, Moora and Northam.

The Institute is dedicated to providing a great student experience and is proud to have one of the highest student satisfaction ratings of all public training providers in Western Australia. (CY O'Connor website)

In 2009 the Institute, in collaboration with the Moora Shire, developed a program for the disengaged youth of the Moora Community. Participants were identified as a community priority to engage in education, training and employment. Through consultation with industry and key stakeholders in the community the Certificate I and II in Leadership Development were identified as appropriate qualifications. (Note: the qualification has been reaccredited and is now known as the Certificate I and II in Leadership). The program was viewed as having the potential to engage, or re-engage, young people in the education and training process, as a precursor to more formalized skill development qualifications.

The Leadership Development program at the Moora campus of the former CY O'Connor Institute was a finalist in the 2013 WA Premier's Awards.

Whilst this case study models youth engagement and skills development with the ultimate intention of increasing employment opportunities, it was not specifically established to address identified industry skill shortages. However, the nature and success of the program reveals how a set of progressive arrangements need to be established within communities dealing with significant disadvantages so that pathways are available for people to be retained within or return to education or training, and then have the opportunity and skills to undertake more structured skill development programs leading to employment.

The success of this program has helped break negative perceptions about work in the minds of those enrolled and where young people have moved into workplaces successfully, can help remove the negative reputations which some families experience in some communities. Additionally, a range of other program offerings have now been developed which accommodate those wishing to take their next step in becoming a skilled worker, and in doing so have been targeted to a wider demographic, enrolling both younger people aged 15+ and mature age people.

The Program

A holistic program requiring coordinated and complementary activity across organisations

To facilitate a holistic program which builds participants capacity to become an active member of the community and particularly, to engage in ongoing education and training, an innovative program model

was developed which relied on a range of complementary strategies being in place across a variety of organisations. The model utilizes:

- contemporary learning and assessment strategies;
- a risk management strategy targeted to address the risks of not achieving the outcomes being sought;
- strong reliance on partnerships between organisations which can help to make a difference, and consultation mechanisms which ensure a coordinated approach;
- mentoring of participants; and
- feedback and evaluation mechanisms.

The target group

The target group for the CY O'Connor program included participants who:

- have been disengaged from education, training and employment for a period of time, and are between the ages of 18-25 years of age;
- have poor past experiences with learning and face many educational barriers which prevent them from achieving successful learning outcomes, e.g. low literacy, language and numeracy, inappropriate learning activities for the participants, and undiagnosed disabilities;
- are from low socio-economic family backgrounds which have been reliant on welfare for a long period of time. Socio-economic barriers to engaging in learning for these participants include, financial stress, cultural issues, family responsibilities, transient nature of the family, and antisocial behaviours;
- lack basic work readiness skills and do not have the skills and confidence to seek information on career opportunities;
- have been identified as a community priority to engage in education, training and employment as per the Moora Shire strategic plan. Participants have generally had poor past relationships and/or experiences with the community and their family reputation has hindered opportunities for employment with local businesses;
- generally have poor self-esteem, mental health, well-being, motivation, resilience and conflict resolution skills.

The program in action

On the ground, the program operated for two days per week for 16 weeks and was delivered in a manner utilising contemporary learning and assessment strategies involving:

- face to face workshop delivery;
- active participation in community based projects, which involve experiential learning and project based learning. Examples of projects and community service activities include:
 - Music Rocks;
 - Daz Art;
 - Breast Cancer Brunch;
 - Cooking with the Elders;

- Elders Community Christmas Lunch;
 - NAIDOC;
 - Clean Up Australia Day;
 - Stay on your feet week;
 - Cater 4 U.
- Try A Trade workshops, which provide an excellent opportunity to help students make an informed decision about a career by participating in a short practical hands-on program aimed at providing some insight into a range of related occupations.

Participants have the support of an In-class Assistant to help with Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN).

The mentoring of participants in the program is undertaken by community members, including Aboriginal mentors, the Aboriginal Program Assistant and Aboriginal In-Class Assistant, older women in the class and past students.

A risk management strategy

Recognising the risks inherent in achieving success and the range of educational, economic and social barriers already in place, a risk management strategy was developed by CY O'Connor and partners to ensure a holistic approach was able to be taken within the community, not simply a strategy related to addressing educational barriers. This strategy resulted in the program including provision for:

- bus transport, to ensure participants could get to and from the CY O'Connor campus and community project sites;
- lunch, so that participants were appropriately nourished during the day;
- the use of contemporary, rather than traditional, teaching practices which are vitally important for Aboriginal learners e.g the use of community based learning, experiential – hands on - learning and taking a project based approach;
- culturally appropriate learning & assessment tools and the deployment of an Aboriginal In-Class Assistant to assist in the education/training of Indigenous participants;
- an In-Class Assistant to assist with the development of Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) skills in participants, given the low levels of many participants
- industry and community consultation to ensure local 'buy-in' and commitment to the initiative.

Partnerships are critical to success

The former C Y O'Connor Institute partnered with local government agencies, community groups and relevant stakeholders to facilitate this holistic program aimed to build participants' capacity to become an active member of the community and engage in ongoing education and training. The broad division of responsibilities is outlined in the table below:

Partner organisation	Role/responsibility
C Y O'Connor Institute	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program development and implementation; • Delivery provided by lecturers within C Y O'Connor or from other RTOs; • Developing key employability and work readiness skills; • Organising Try a Trade activities; • Providing Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) support – essentially, for supporting the education and training elements of the program.
Max Employment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of job seeker students; • Follow up on individual participation issues
Moora Shire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of venue; • Provision of materials for the project
Avon Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support person; • Provision of materials for health and wellbeing workshops.
Local Government Agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juvenile Justice Team • Wheatbelt Mental Health • Aboriginal Mediation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitation of workshops; • Provision of support services.
Department of Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development and delivery of career development program; • Provision of students; • Identification of individual learning barriers; • Development of an individual pathway plan for the student.

In addition, a number of support agencies are involved in the program in the delivery of workshops.

Essentially, the Institute had the central responsibility for the development of skills and partner organisations responsible for providing the support required:

- to assist in reducing some of the socio-economic barriers outlined above;
- to develop the skills to build positive relationships with the community and local businesses;
- for personal development of these life skills.

Outcomes

In establishing the program seven desired outcomes were set for the organisations working with the participants in each program:

- develop opportunities to 'try a trade' and an industry skills experience;

- expand social interaction with a range of people within the community;
- identify possible pathways to education, training and employment;
- develop cultural and self-identity;
- develop work readiness skills and employability skills;
- establish relationships with local government agencies;
- improve self-esteem and self-confidence.

A sophisticated set of Key Performance indicators were established to gauge success in achieving these outcomes. Feedback and evaluation mechanisms in place utilized industry & community groups, workshop evaluation forms, the views of students, leadership team weekly meetings and the Team Course Review process. The performance indicators included:

- the local community being engaged through at least one community based project
Measured by: Attendance by local members at the project;
- a range of work readiness and employability skills being developed
Measured by: A self-evaluation checklist and third party verification;
- at least four relationships being formed with local agencies to assist with self-development and self-awareness
Measured by: Workshop evaluation sheets;
- each participant identifying a pathway to further education, training and/or employment, in consultation with C Y O'Connor lecturers, mentors and participation coordinators
Measured by: Completion of Individual pathway plans;
- participants gaining technical skills in at least two trade areas
Measured by: Workshop evaluation sheets and third party reports.

Addressing regional unemployment and developing capacity for employment in skill shortage occupations

Building on the experience of the Moora program, a number of other programs have been trialed in other locations, targeting a broader age cohort and different ability groups with different solutions. Some examples of recent targeting include:

- implementing a program in Narrogin (similar to that described above), where the education levels and generic and specific work skills of a cohort of students are recognised as limited, are placed in a Try-A-Trade program rather than in a job shadowing arrangement in a place of employment. The same was occurring at Moora and Bindoon. This program was an Aboriginal School Based Traineeship (ASBT) program;
- partnering with the Roads Foundation to jointly deliver 4-8 pre-employment workshops to a group of students, prior to them then choosing elements of a Certificate III in Civil Construction to undertake, given potential work in the area;
- coordinating a Year 10 Aboriginal School-based Traineeship last year involving 8 Indigenous students in programs and achieving 100% transition into Year 11 with all involved in a vocational qualification related to work. Occupations being focused on by the students include work in a

bank, in child care organisations and as a teacher aide in a school. Within these arrangements a period of time is undertaken in job shadowing with employees on the job.

- an Aboriginal womens program involving a group of 25-35 year old women initially in a Certificate I and II in Leadership and then on to a vocational qualification i.e. a Certificate II in Business, with some moving into a Certificate III and some into employment;
- a program for boys focused on a Certificate I and II in Leadership and then a Certificate II in Automotive, with some gaining employment in the mining sector;
- a community based program again focused on the Certificate II in Leadership, and targeted to *Mums and Bubs*, is about to commence in Moora and is intended for expansion throughout the Wheatbelt after evaluation. This program has been developed in association with Best Start, an Aboriginal playgroup organisation, and aimed at preparing the mother and baby for entry into the school system; and
- *Frocking Fashionistas*, a Certificate II in Leadership, delivered in two locations in the Wheat Belt catering for people with disabilities, CALD and mainstream students and is focused on the reconstruction of second hand clothing.

4 Wodonga Institute of TAFE, Victoria

The Re-Engagement and Pathways Program (RAP)

Background

Wodonga Institute of TAFE is an integral contributor to the economy of north-east regional Victoria, serving the local government areas of the City of Wodonga and the shires of Alpine, Indigo and Towong as well as the local government areas of Albury, Greater Hume and Corowa in New South Wales. Wodonga TAFE's reach extends much further than these regional boundaries, delivering training in every mainland state and territory of Australia. It operates across 11 locations.

Annually, around 13,500 people enrol in Wodonga TAFE's courses (2014 figures), delivered in a range of areas including community services and health, engineering and metal fabrication, interior and building design, fashion, business, digital media, hospitality, fitness and outdoor recreation, horticulture and general adult education.

In 2015, Wodonga TAFE was awarded the title of Large Training Provider of the Year at the Victorian State Training Awards.

National and local research

National research undertaken in education, youth unemployment and criminal activity drawn on for the development of the program in Wodonga indicates that:

- children and young people who fail to complete school tend to be significantly more disadvantaged in later life, with an increase in the likelihood of experiencing; unemployment, poorer health outcomes, greater risk of offending behaviours, homelessness and lower lifelong income levels (DEECD, 2013);
- barriers young people face in initially engaging in the workforce include; homelessness, mental health concerns, family concerns, and poor public transport (Youth Projects, 2010);
- in order to break down such barriers, as a community it is important to improve school to work transitions for young people along with developing skill formation (OECD, 2009);
- the successful completion of school and training significantly improves healthy, productive and fulfilling life opportunities for young people into adulthood.

Local data reveals the depth of this issue in the Wodonga region:

- Department of Education data shows school connectedness and engagement to be amongst the lowest and well below state data (VCAMS, 2012-2013);
- youth unemployment figures for Albury-Wodonga hit 17.2% in February 2015, significantly higher than the national average of 13.9% at the time according to ABS Labour Force Survey figures; and
- the youth crime rate in the Ovens Murray region is reportedly to be almost twice the Victorian average; 55.5 per 1000 (Youth Parole Board, 2013).

The 2015 Re-Engagement and Pathways Program

The Re-Engagement and Pathways Program (RAP) is an early intervention and prevention program that aims to re-engage young people into education through offering a supported, flexible and hands on learning experience. It is specifically designed for disengaged and vulnerable young males between 15-19 years old who have had significant experience of criminal activity and substance abuse, have extremely negative attitudes towards their previous educational experience and have low levels of educational achievement, typically leaving school after Year 9.

Seven students were enrolled in the program. The students completed the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) which incorporates units from the Certificate II in Warehousing Operations and practical work experience, ensuring all participants are ready to take on the workforce upon graduating.



Students and staff involved in the Certificate II in Warehousing Operations

The program is part of a longstanding community partnership between Wodonga Institute of TAFE and Junction Support Services, together with their community partner Bing Lee, a family business in Wodonga. For Wodonga TAFE the program comes in light of the State Government's Back to Work Fund which supports Wodonga TAFE, placing more emphasis on better work placements and helping people develop work ready skills.

The practical component is crucial for employment prospects. The lower levels of educational attainment in the region means that we need to place more emphasis on the school to work transition, and place more emphasis on developing skill formation through work experience. (Peter Bluck, Technical Instructor, Wodonga TAFE)



Forklift experience on the job

Junction Support Services is a not for profit organisation which provides a range of specialised and practical support services to assist people to access community, welfare, health and education services. It provides support to children, young people, single adults and families who are disadvantaged through poverty, homelessness, family breakdown, social isolation, family violence, mental ill health and drug and alcohol addiction.

..... the program is proving to be a valuable education pathway for young people, a pathway that ultimately addresses both youth unemployment along with youth criminal activity and assists in breaking down barriers, through increasing participant's confidence, self-worth, and work skills. (Junction Support Services, Progress Report 2015)

Bing Lee provides the work placement opportunities for participants and a scholarship, through an internship at the Bing Lee Wodonga store. The scholarship provided by Bing Lee is a 3 month paid employment sponsorship through the family company.

This is our second year working with JSS and Wodonga TAFE and its great helping train the boys in a practical business environment. As a close-knit family business Bing Lee is committed to fostering positive relationships and family values within the community. The Bing Lee work experience program sees seven boys across the course partake in work placement opportunities at the local Bing Lee Wodonga store to help prepare them for the workforce. The scholarship then helps foster the education of one boy beyond the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning onto Certificate III in Warehouse Operations. (Anthony Cowan, Manager of Bing Lee, Wodonga)

Through the partnership arrangements, providing work experience opportunities and mentoring to the participants, positive education and employment pathways are being opened to participants as a result of their training, providing opportunities to young people in the community, ultimately reducing youth unemployment rates.

Outcomes – addressing youth unemployment and developing capacity for employment in skill shortage occupations

The 2015 RAP program has also seen some great achievements, with significant outcomes for the client group. Analysis of the data and feedback collected from participants of the program suggests that the claims that the primary aims of the RAP program are not only being met but exceeded, are realistic.

From the original group of seven participants one gained a three month paid work experience scholarship with Bing Lee and was later invited to take up full time, ongoing employment at the local Bing Lee store. A further three participants have enrolled in TAFE courses to continue their education in 2016, and other participants continue to engage with youth workers and teachers to continue to explore their employment search.

The End of Program Report prepared by Junction Support Services on behalf of the partnership, is based on three surveys administered at the start, mid-point and end of the 2015 program.

At the mid-point of the program the following was evident:

We're halfway through the 2015 course and have already seen dramatic results.

Attendance and course satisfaction rates are at an all-time high in comparison to when the boys were at school, and we have also seen a reduction in criminal activity. 100 per cent of RAP participants have passed their forklift license, and more importantly 100 per cent of participants have reported future orientations of looking for work, finishing the course and getting work experience. Our partnership with Bing Lee has enabled us to provide practical work experience opportunities and mentoring to participants. This in itself is invaluable. (Jamie Brown, Youth Services Manager, Junction Support Services)

The surveys captured the attitudes of participants in terms of their engagement in criminal activity and substance abuse, attitudes towards education, school attendance and engagement, course satisfaction, and feedback on changes to the course to improve the quality of the program. The end of program report focused on outcomes across these areas.

Criminal Activity

From the data collected from participants in the pre-program survey, it was found that 57% of the participants were engaging in criminal activity *a lot of the time* with a further 42% engaging *some of the time*. A dramatic reduction in the rates of reported criminal activity was clear mid-way through the program, with 71% of participants self-reporting they are *not engaging at all* in criminal activity, with only 28% stating they had continued to engage *some or all the time*.

This self-reporting of criminal activity by participants matches closely with the reported criminal activity of the group by local police. The information they provided to Junction Support Services indicated that 43% of participants have not engaged in any criminal activity since commencing the program, with the other 57% of participants reportedly engaging in *some* criminal activity. It should be noted that limited information was able to be provided by local police regarding criminal activity due to privacy and confidentiality restrictions.

From the data collected at the end of the program, it was reported by participants that 75% of students were not engaging in any criminal activity post program, and only 15% were engaging in these behaviours *some of the time*.

Engagement in Substance Use

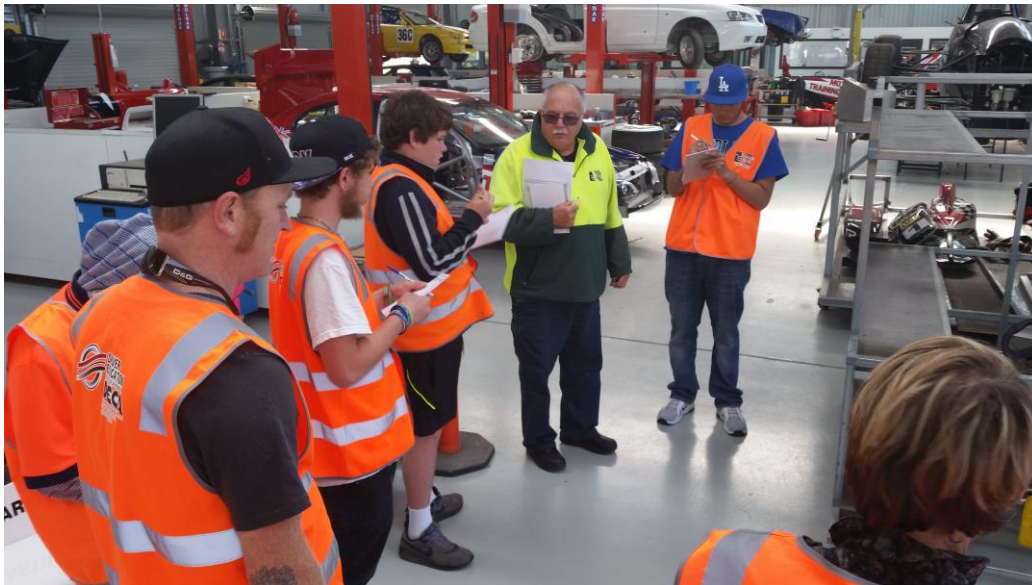
The findings from the RAP program have confirmed research which has previously shown that when young people are provided with positive peer relationships, modelled pro-social behaviours and been provided with positive community engagement outlets, they are less likely to engage in substance use activity. The data collected from participants pre-program, found that up to 80% of participants were engaging in some form of substance use behaviour. A dramatic reduction in these behaviours was reported by participants, with end program data showing that 75% of participants were not engaging in these behaviours at all, and only 15% engaging *some of the time*.

Attitudes Towards Education

From the pre-program data collected from participants, it was found that 66% reported unhappiness, stress or anger towards previous educational experiences. Also evident was a low average level of education (Year 9 level) along with a number of reasons for previous dis-engagement from education including substance use, mental health and different ways of learning not being addressed through mainstream education providers.

The flexibility and supported approach used within the RAP program saw significant improvement in their views. From the mid-program review a significant and positive change was seen in participant attitudes towards education, with a clear shift in their future focus e.g:

- 100% excited to complete the course;
- 100% stating they thought the course was either *good* or *great*;
- participants all reported future orientations of looking for work, finishing the course and getting work experience.



Taking notes

This shift in focusing on future aspirations was also coupled with an overall increase in self confidence levels. From the mid-year and end of program data collected, participants self-reported high improvement in their self-confidence as a result of the course, with 71% reporting a *high improvement* in their confidence and further 25% reporting *some improvement*. The end program data also shows that

all participants have a plan for the next year and this is to either continue to engage in education (75% of participants) or gain employment (75%).

School Attendance and Engagement

From pre-program information gained, it was found that attendance at previous education providers prior to starting the program was very poor with 71% of the participants reporting average or below average attendance at school. A dramatic shift in course engagement and attendance was evident from mid-year feedback, with participants self-reporting attendance at the course as *good* or *very good*.

The end of program data collected saw all participants engaging and attending the program at least 80% of the time.

Course Satisfaction

The focus on participants provided by support workers, the transport arrangements, the provision of meals, and the hands-on learning experiences are interventions are all features of the RAP program which current research indicates as critical in breaking down barriers to youth unemployment and criminal activity rates. The mid-year and end of program feedback provided by participants indicated that such interventions were also the parts of the course they found most enjoyable. Most of the participants reported that they have been enjoying learning new things and having hands-on learning experiences.

5 TAFE SA

Engineering Pathways and Business Studies

Background

TAFE SA is a statewide provider of VET programs with coverage and responsibilities across metropolitan and regional areas in South Australia. As an organization it is regularly targeting areas of skill shortage across the State via the funding provided by the South Australian government. In regional areas TAFE SA has targeted skill shortage occupations on the National/State list such as Child Care Workers and Metal Fabricators.

In some instances, activity has simply focused on the provision of a course to meet a locally identified skill shortage such as Youth Work and Aged Care. In other cases, however, TAFE SA has also been involved in coordinated efforts to tackle a skill shortage, in conjunction with, or driven by, industry organisations. This case study focuses on two such initiatives – in engineering and in business studies – which involved cooperative activity across two government funding sources to enable regions to resolve unemployment and skilling issues.

Within the VET sector funding was available from the State Government for subsidised training to be delivered based on a list of qualifications. However, these funds were limited and the number of the number of qualifications in industry sectors capped. Under this *Capped Quals* program certain qualifications had become oversubscribed – predominantly in metro areas - which resulted in some clear regional needs not able to be met.

At the same time, the Department of State Development *Skills for Jobs in Regions* project enabled an injection of funding into regional communities to support job seekers gain the skills, knowledge and experience required to gain employment in the business and business administration sector. To access a funded project, students must be unemployed, underemployed, facing retrenchment or being made redundant. Focused on skill shortages and with funding directed into the public training provider (TAFE SA), this initiative of the Department of State Development (DSD), in partnership with Regional Development Australia and TAFE SA, became critical to increasing the qualification level of people within the regions in Engineering, Youth Work, Children's Services and Business Studies and to the creation and saving of jobs in regional South Australia.

Key components of each program

TAFE SA worked closely with Regional Development Australia (RDA) and the Department of State Development on the initiative with all programs needing to demonstrate the following key features in implementation planning:

- local responses to local needs, driven by industry;
- industry engagement in training programs, in some cases including project design and selection of participants;
- embedding a pre-employment structure around the delivery of qualifications; and
- improved screening and testing processes to select participants (i.e. interviews, aptitude test, etc).

The following programs were run in the Mid North of the state. It should be noted though that similar programs were run around the state in multiple RDA regions

Certificate II in Engineering Pathways

RDA partnered with TAFE SA to support participants' undertaking a Certificate II in Engineering Pathways. It was understood the success of the program would be higher by selecting the most suitable candidates so the process began with an information session, then aptitude testing, and followed by an interview with a panel consisting of both RDA and TAFE SA interviewers.

Once selected, the participants enjoyed a course that had a good mix of both practical and theoretical components.



In the TAFE SA workshop

TAFE SA lecturers were dedicated to providing high levels of instruction as well as encouragement, patience and mentoring throughout. Two projects were worked on to enable newly acquired skills to be practiced - these included making an ornamental cannon and a portable barbecue.



The portable Bar B-Q

TAFE SA's aim was to ensure that participants had a solid understanding of industry needs, based on the belief that the best way to do this was to expose them to industry as often as possible. Activities delivered in the program included:

- industry visits;
- guest speakers from Industry;
- delivery of a career workshop involving writing resumes, cover letters, applications, and learning about interview techniques;
- mock interviews
- apprentice aptitude testing preparation workshop
- case management of individuals;
- work experience placements
- attendance at the TAFE SA Open Day; and
- a graduation ceremony.

The role of RDA was to offer industry driven wrap around services and assist with the process where TAFE SA contacted both local and regional businesses to ask them to support the program. Many companies responded by getting on board with invitations into their businesses, providing guest speakers on relevant topics during lectures, participating in mock interviews, and providing the ever important work experience placement. A highlight was having the Safety Manager from Nyrstar present a safety workshop prior to the participants going on work experience.



TAFE Open Day – listening to good advice from Nyrstar's Apprentice Coordinator

Businesses involved in the program included:

- Nyrstar;
- Alsanto;

- McMahon's Services;
- Total Electrical Construction;
- S.J. Cheesman;
- Kelly Engineering;
- Kent's Garages.

The Certificate III in Business (BSB3030112)

Based on local industry demand and feedback, DSD allocated 45 funded positions in Kadina, Port Pirie and Clare for participants to gain the business qualification in a simulated business environment. Graduates acquire first-hand experience that ensures they are prepared for the workforce.

A TAFE SA media release of 24 November 2015 outlined the views of a number of parties to the program.

Mark Sheasby, Manager Industry Skills, Regional Development Australia, indicated he was continuing to work with the graduates to secure placements in paid employment.

It's fantastic to see two students from the Clare campus successfully gain employment as a direct result of completing this course.

This is a great outcome, especially considering new job opportunities within the current climate are rare and often not advertised.

Kylie Doyle, Lecturer TAFE SA, said it was the first time that work placement was a component of training.

The experience shows students how their roles fit into business operations and the importance of customer service.

Students return to class highly motivated to complete their studies and keen to showcase their new skills to prospective employers.

Student Robyn McInnis said the course contributed to her gaining employment with a local law firm.

The inclusion of the work-placement component allowed my current employer to consider if I was a good fit for their company before I was offered the position.

Student Felicity Miller said she gained fulltime employment as a receptionist at a motor company as a result of her studies.

It was a great course and I highly recommend it to anyone who is after an administration qualification.

Outcomes

Both programs were successful on many levels, not just for the participants enrolled but also for the local TAFE SA provider, in the way they worked closely with industry.

In terms of the outcomes for students there were twelve participants in the engineering program and twelve graduated. In terms of their destinations post-graduation, nine gained employment and three went on to undertake further study. Those undertaking the Certificate III in Business were not as successful though, but given the nature of the cohort, the higher level qualification and the fact that the selection process was not as rigorous as in the engineering program, achieved a relatively high degree of success. Of the forty-five funded places provided, twenty eight students celebrated at graduation

ceremonies across South Australia's mid north – a 62% success rate. Seven graduated at the Port Pirie Campus, thirteen at Kadina Campus and eight at Clare Campus.

6 North Regional TAFE, Western Australia

Gaining Access to Training and Employment (GATE)

Background

Prior to the recent establishment of North Regional TAFE in 2016, the former Kimberley Training Institute (KTI) was the largest Registered Training Organisation (RTO) in the Kimberley and central to the region's economic and social development strategies. The Institute had six campuses located strategically in Broome, Derby, Kununurra, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek and Wyndham and offered over 120 nationally recognised, industry-endorsed qualifications. In 2012, 51% of total delivery was offered in skills shortage areas, up from 35% in 2011. This focus on skill shortages will remain under the new arrangements set in place for North Regional TAFE, which will also have coverage across the campuses which were overseen by the former Pilbara Institute. Key areas of demand in this region continue to be health and community services, metals and mining, agriculture, education and childcare, and building and construction.

Last year (2015), KTI had a total student population of just over 5,000 students—57% of whom were of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. The Institute employed dedicated Aboriginal mentors and development officers at each campus to maximise the engagement of Aboriginal people in a broad range of training programs leading to positive employment outcomes or improved life skills. The focus is on closing the gap.

The barriers to participation are well understood by TAFE in this area; staff deal with access and equity, community development, and literacy and numeracy issues on a daily basis. It also delicately balances the needs of community with the needs of industry by working closely with employers to ensure they are able to meet their future workforce requirements through skills training and work-readiness programs. Links with employers and industry are cemented by TAFE offering demand-driven workforce development training options such as apprenticeships and traineeships, industry based short courses with a particular focus on compliance training, customised skills sets, and skills recognition.

Two key planning documents provide directions for the region from both a short and long term perspective and set the context for the GATE program.

The *Kimberley Workforce Development Plan 2014-2017* provides an overview of the short term horizon, indicating Mining, Tourism, Agriculture (including pastoral), Aquaculture (pearling), Retail and Construction as the key drivers of economic growth in the region. The Plan also identifies the following workforce participation issues:

- undersupply of skilled labour;
- underemployment of Aboriginal people;
- unemployment at a level over twice the state average;
- young population;
- high level of youth disengagement;
- dependence on work readiness program; and
- difficulties in recruiting skilled staff due to the remote location.

The Kimberley Development Commission's draft *Kimberley Regional Investment Blueprint – 2036 and beyond*, released in 2014, identified similar industries as the drivers of growth and development (agriculture and food, rangeland industries, tourism, and minerals and energy). The Blueprint also identified education and training, housing and health services as enablers for this development. As an enabler for development, the Blueprint specifically sets out a range of future directions, indicating the need to:

- *Recognise the unique aspects of the Kimberley education and training task and encourage and promote innovation in education delivery models for the region;*
- *Skill the regional workforce to meet industry requirements and build capacity in the regional community;*
- *Place a substantial emphasis upon Aboriginal work-readiness through literacy, numeracy and vocational skills development with a focus on work outcomes; and*
- *Coordinate holistic support services, especially focused on further developing the nexus between housing, health, employment and education.*

The Gaining Access to Training and Employment program(GATE)

In responding to the survey of regional TAFE Institutes seeking examples where TAFE Institutes had played a key role in recent years in coordinated regional efforts to address skill shortages in areas of high youth unemployment, the former Kimberley Training Institute (KTI) provided information on the GATE program, as an example of addressing skill shortages in the Health sector.

Whilst not specifically focused on young unemployed people in the 15-24 age group, this Case Study has been included in the collection because it demonstrates the strength of cooperative efforts and the issues faced in one regional area when an employer sought to fill job vacancies in skilled shortage areas in an industry sector and where gaining reliable, skilled employees is the issue, not a specific age group.

Identifying a skills shortage and potential employees and setting up the partnership and

The Broome Hospital had identified, over a period of time, that there were not enough Aboriginal people working within the Hospital, both as health workers and in aged care jobs within the community, as well as in the range of ancillary jobs within the Hospital e.g. in offices, in cleaning and in hospitality etc. Following discussions in 2014 between the Hospital and WA Country Health Services (WACHS), and then between WACHS, ITEC Employment Services (a Job Services Australia provider) and the former KTI, the GATE program was established as a partnership involving all three partners, with all having complementary expertise across the VET, health and employment sectors, as outlined below:

- KTI played a lead role in establishing the partnership required and in developing and delivering the vocational training element of the program;
- WACHS worked on behalf of the Hospital. As an organization, it provides accessible health services and a quality health care workforce to the regional population of WA. It operates from large regional centres like Broome to those in small remote communities. It has a strong network of public hospitals, health services and nursing posts located across rural and remote Western Australia;
- ITEC Employment have been operating in the Employment Services field for 20 years and is part of the My Pathway Group which provides services in Apprenticeships/Traineeships, Labour Hire, Registered Training, Health, Disability, Youth, IT and Administrative services, primarily throughout remote regions of NT, Queensland and WA. In this initiative they had a key role in identifying a

range of long-term unemployed Aboriginal clients who might be interested in work within the health sector, and supporting them through the course and into employment.

Having identified a potential client group across age groups who had expressed an interest in working in the health sector, an Information Session was held at the Broome Hospital involving speakers who worked at the Hospital, outlining the various jobs they did. Additionally, the 3 partner organisations outlined the broad nature of the GATE program and their roles.

Following this Information session, eight Indigenous people from the local Broome area who had been long term unemployed (i.e. for 2 years or more), indicated a clear interest in enrolling and were selected by WACHS and ITEC. Young people who had been identified as potential participants had not expressed the level of interest required nor had attended the Information Session. As a result, the age group of the 8 enrolling ranged from 24 to 57, and whilst most were female there were some male participants.

This is no surprise. The Broome area seems to reflect a general workforce trend where there appears to be greater interest of mature age people, compared with young people, in work within the health sector or hospital jobs.

The program

A 17 week program was developed for delivery by KTI in the first half of 2015, with the aim of preparing the students for work and securing employment. Transport to and from TAFE or to workplaces is often raised as a barrier in programs which take on those with a record of long term unemployment. In this program, it was not an issue, as the students enrolled were local. Initially they were provided with transport to and from the TAFE campus, but this was reduced nearer the end of the course.

Prior to beginning the GATE Certificate work students participated in a two day workshop, known as the PX2. The focus of this workshop was for participants to recognise how their current beliefs and attitudes shape their future; learn they are in control of the way they think; and set goals for themselves to change the way they live their lives.

Participants were committed to three training days per week at KTI and enrolled into the Certificate I in Gaining Access to Training and Employment (GATE), as well as in additional health units. The Certificate I course comprised classroom studies and work experience and was designed to give the participants basic soft and technical skills to work in health. The program involved the use of two lecturers working together - a Language, Literacy and Numeracy Lecturer and a vocational Health Industry Lecturer.

The structure of the program was as follows:

- Weeks 1-3: 3 days per week at KTI;
- Weeks 4-10: 3 days per week at KTI; 1 day per week at WACHS;
- Weeks 11-16: 3 days per week at KTI; 2 days per week at WACHS;
- Week 17: Workplace Preparation Block.

The Certificate I course outline involved 340 nominal hours and included the following core and elective units:

Core Units Code Title (involving a total of 220 hours)

- 21749 Introduction to Career Development (50 hours);
- 21751 Program Support 2 (40 hours);
- 80995 Communication for Living (50 hours);

- 80996 Practical Numeracy (40 hours);
- 80997 Technology for Living (40 hours).

Elective Units Code Title

- 21756 Workplace Practice (70 hours);
- 21757 Personal Development 2 (20 hours);
- 80999 Health and Wellbeing (30 hours);
- PSPOHS201B (C8063) Follow Workplace Safety Procedures (20 hours).

The additional **Health Units** comprised:

- HLTAHW002 Support clients to obtain access to health services (40 hours)
- BSBMED305B Apply the principles of confidentiality, privacy and security within a medical environment (10 hours).

The work experience component of the training was coordinated and supervised by the team at WACHS. This component consisted of three rotations in different departments at Broome Hospital to give students the opportunity to learn about the health sector. This gave students the opportunity to experience both a department/job they had always wanted or dreamt of and also gain experience in departments that they had never considered possible within the health sector. Uniforms were provided by ITEC for each participant so that on work experience hospital staff were able to support them.

The work readiness scheduled commenced with one day per week from Weeks 4-10 and two days per week from Week 11-17.

Outcomes

In the first instance, attendance records indicated success with participants recording an average of 75% attendance across the 48 teaching days associated with the 17 week course. Secondly, one of the primary planned outcomes of this course was to secure employment for long term unemployed individuals. A unique component of this program was that actual employment was identified by WACHS for the GATE students, if deemed suitable, after participating in both the course and work experience.

The employment related outcomes of the GATE program have been significant. Of the 8 students commencing the program 7 students graduated. By the end of the 2015 calendar year:

- 4 had begun their employment (two had been employed for more than six months);
- 2 had been informed that there are employment opportunities available for them;
- 1 remained keen to secure employment.



Graduates celebrate their success with WACHS and ITEC representatives.

WACHS regional learning and development co-ordinator Alison Harvey said the GATE program was developed in a way to expose the students to health. Ms Harvey said the group was now *work ready and their skills were transferrable to any employment environment*. The program was successful not just in motivating participants towards employment in the health sector but also in providing a clear pathway.

Thirdly, the success of this program relied heavily on the strong partnership between the organisations involved with all being committed to integrated work. This involved lecturers at KTI and the Aboriginal Training Support team there, staff at WACHS involved in the supervision and training in the hospital and the support at ITEC.

ITEC site manager Belinda Hodgson said the program had been a great success.

What we're about is getting education and employment outcomes for our clients, so it's a win-win for us and for everybody involved.

KTI Director of Training Markus Beuke said it had fulfilled its objective of providing students with access to training and employment.

Students really enjoyed the work they did on interview skills. They grew significantly in confidence throughout the training.

Participant Denise Cox said she had learned a lot throughout the course, including how WACHS operated, and was looking forward to working in a department at the Broome Hospital.