

Workplace Reform, Skill Development and a High Competence, Educated Workforce Policy

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Introduction

1.1 Aspirations for a better life in terms of working and living standards and achieving higher levels of work satisfaction and competence through education and skill training have always been at the forefront of Trade Union activity since their inception following the industrial revolution of the early 19th Century.

1.2 With the turn into the 20th Century a crucial advance was made with the introduction of universal compulsory education for all children and over the intervening period to 1980 other vitally important advances were made including a significant expansion of opportunities in higher education in the post second war period.

1.3 As we now turn toward the 21st Century the opportunity emerges for a massive transformation in the education, training and skill competence opportunities for all working people. Education has a fundamental role to play in providing the necessary skill base for economic development.

1.4 These opportunities emerge as a result of a new technological revolution, the demands of a burgeoning and global competitive market for quality and service, social pressures for greater accountability and responsibility and perhaps most significantly in the need for changing forms of work organisation and management.

1.5 The alienation and deprivation inherent in work organisation along with limited delivery systems and access to them to the present time acted as a deterrent for the mass of working people to become participants in a life long pursuit of learning.

1.6 Australia must produce a workforce characterised by both high level technical and intellectual skills such as problem setting and solving, analytic ability, initiative, effective communication, creativity and decision making. The workforce must have the ability to adapt to frequent change in workplace organisation and technology.

1.7 The role of Australia's education institutions will be central to the development of these higher level skills, and in developing a commitment to life-long learning, and as a result will enrich and give a 'value added' quality to the work of Australia's teachers and to learning.

1.8 Not only do the current circumstances provide greatly expanded opportunities but they also create a demand and exert inexorable pressures for such a change. It is in the recognition of these pressures and opportunities that the Trade Union Movement should act with confidence to lay claim to the challenge; to welcome it and to lead it for the benefit of all working people.

1.9 The greatest difficulty lies with the understanding and commitment of management in industry to make changes in work organisation. This only represents a greater challenge and the need for greater determination to solve such a difficulty.

1.10 The Australian Council of Trade Unions sees Education and Skill Formation in all of its levels and forms as a centre piece for:

- A new and higher competence social fabric that encapsulates the broad objectives of award restructuring in all areas of working and social life; and
- A major contribution to the solution of Australia's economic future and therefore the living standards of all employees and the Australian people generally.

1.11 Whilst increased levels of education and skill formation cannot by themselves solve Australia's problems equally they cannot be solved without them.

1.12 Development of Education and Skill Formation is a vital public and industrial investment and given that imperative reforms are embraced it must be seen as an area of investment that is fully maintained and increased substantially by the year 2,000 to support increased retention rates, enhance quality and improve work organisation.

1.13 Numerical student increase, to the completion of school year 12 is an important beginning. Qualitative and relevant outcomes must also be addressed.

1.14 Award restructuring envisages significantly higher, more broadly based education and skill formation with career paths opening up for all employees than hitherto.

1.15 Much closer networking, articulation and credit transfer between education and training systems and institutions are reform requirements to complement career pathing and changes in work organisation.

1.16 Closer relationships involving the participation of education and industry in developing new outcomes criteria needs to be established as a result of learning throughout a working life time, overcoming the gap between working and learning and providing recognition for learning and skills acquired by other means.

1.17 Developing approaches such as "modularisation" and "articulation", "core skills" and "national standards" will provide a framework for the flexibilities associated with the new forms of work organisation.

1.18 Broadening skills, replacing rigid and inflexible skill utilisation, breaking down narrow and unproductive stratification of labour and involving decision making within the work unit are preconditions to a world competitive high competence society.

1.19 Greater flexibility, adaptability, responsibility and initiative is required at the level of society as a whole, the industry and the workplace.

1.20 Genuine and effective flexibility must be built on transferable common core skills combined with the skills associated with the uniqueness of the particular enterprise. Limited enterprise specificities alone cannot and will not be an answer.

1.21 A new relationship will also occur between teaching and learning in at least all post primary areas of education and training whereby new forms of work organisation within the education system itself will provide competency outcomes of greater self motivation; access to and effective utilisation of information; decision making and discretion; and the capability of innovation and communication.

1.22 These will be needed by students/employees to apply at all levels within their own emerging new patterns of work organisation and job design.

1.23 The two processes of learning and working will therefore increasingly merge as will broad education and vocational education over time and inevitably there will be greater "mature age" student involvement in higher education institutions.

1.24 Poaching of highly competent teachers at all levels within our education and training systems; an inadequate response to learning science and maths; the low level of English language competence amongst masses of neglected employees and the need for affirmative action for people locked into old style process worker type employment especially for female employees are major specific problems that must be addressed as matters of urgency.

1.25 These are a legacy of a now redundant form of work organisation and an education and training system that was, with few notable exceptions, largely geared to it.

1.26 The ACTU is committed to address all of the above matters through the pursuit of award restructuring as we now generally embark upon its implementation stages.

1.27 Implementation will involve new ways of learning and arranging work, building higher competence - stage upon stage. It will require consultation and negotiation in industry and in the workplace. It will require effective, positive and independent trade union input and it will require competent handling of education and training matters.

1.28 Complementary adjustment in the delivery of education and training must proceed along with award restructuring.

1.29 The ACTU believes that the processes involved will be complex and will require testing and modification. They will require adequate explanation and committed work from the Trade Union Movement.

1.30 The future holds the prospect of unions becoming as much an assistance to their members in the realm of their career development as in servicing their award needs and increasingly over time the two merging into a single process.

1.31 As work becomes less fragmented and as wages are more clearly linked through productivity to skill, the delivery of collective goals will no longer be separate from the need to protect and promote individual development. If the unions seek to maintain this separation they will increasingly be seen as outdated, out of touch and irrelevant.

1.32 Just as award restructuring is fundamentally altering the content of our awards by linking skill formation, classification levels and rates of pay so too is it significantly altering the role of trade unions in servicing those awards.

1.33 Increasingly that role will include professional development assistance and career advice. It will become clear that competency development is closely tied to rates of remuneration arising from award restructuring processes.

1.34 What follows is a range of principles and points of policy which aim to provide a basis from which the union movement can chart programs of action in developing the professional level of education and skill formation of all working people.

The Convergence of Working, Learning and Responsibility Throughout a Working Life Time

1. To maintain and improve living standards, Australia requires a shift from low value added, low skill, domestically oriented production to higher value added production and services directed towards the global market. This can only be achieved through a continuous process of employees adding to their learning and responsibilities in new forms of work organisation and professional development throughout a working lifetime.

1.1 Industry and society at large are rapidly becoming more and more knowledge and competence based.

1.2 A combination of;

- higher community expectations
- information technology
- a highly competitive market that is now predominantly global and demanding greater quality, uniqueness and service exerts intensive pressure to continuously upgrade performance in every area.

1.3 There is also a fundamental shift in the world of work away from the "Taylorist" individual work station operation, stratified skills, separation of functions and authoritarian supervision to systems work units that embrace new technologies, participative decision making and greater responsibility for outcomes.

1.4 There is a growing convergence of work and continuous learning; where learning becomes an increasing proportion of working life and inseparable from it, having its effect upon the whole of society as well as industry.

1.5 Development of knowledge, skill and competence is becoming a learning requirement throughout a working lifetime for all individuals, all industries and all economies.

1.6 Because of the need for new and higher levels of personal and social skills in industry there is also a convergence (over time) of vocational and general education where one becomes increasingly infused with the other.

1.7 This convergence also embraces long held principles of educators relating to personal awareness and development, social awareness and responsibility, equity matters, environmental awareness and responsibility and greater ethical and humanistic awareness and responsibility.

1.8 This convergence of both higher vocational and general education requirement creates additional vital relevance of education to an "emerging majority" of people which should be welcomed and encouraged as being neither instrumentalist nor diluting quality.

1.9 This emerging majority will for the most part achieve a breadth of education and skill formation by both structured learning and experiential means which properly developed produce high levels of competency of both a practical and theoretical/speculative nature, that is also rich in cultural wealth.

1.10 It is not possible to ignore the relationship of industry, the individual, society and the environment. Even to the extent of accountability of all factors in the final profit performance of industry.

1.11 Personal, social and environmental behaviour, knowledge and competence at all levels of skill formation including management skill formation will be increasing requisites converging with other vital areas of knowledge, skill and competence. The concepts of "human resource management";

quality and service in the market and net outcome accountability are the beginnings of a process that will evolve over time; the positive sides of which should be vigorously encouraged and pursued. Possible limitations of human resource management means that positive outcomes cannot be taken as automatic. Effective affirmative action is required by trade unions to ensure that both the direct and the outcome is positive and assured in terms of this policy.

1.12 The labor market now demands rapidly increasing numbers of people with significantly new and higher levels of knowledge, skill formation and competence calling for a paradigm shift in and restructuring of education and training systems. It is one thing to recreate a small number of highly educated and competent elite. It is quite another to meet the requirement of a mass condition which has to be inescapably created from amongst those who previously were ignored and deprived.

1.13 Demand for higher levels of skill formation and competence is already greater than supply in many areas calling for continuous and urgent action to change the situation with education and training supply systems and institutions.

1.14 Australia's particular industry profile and external account circumstance also demands an intensive sense of urgency for change.

1.15 Failure of the union movement to intervene and effect change toward a more educated high competence industry and society away from Taylorist forms of elitist management and non participative work organisation; would condemn Australian industry and our people to being comparatively uncompetitive and backward with continuously declining living standards. Outdated approaches to work organisation creates the danger of excessively specific, task based standards and training with employees unable to adjust through the lack of transferable skills. It creates the danger of trade unions and awards losing relevance.

1.16 Resistance to change will occur in various ways and in all areas. A satisfactory outcome will take time but for this to occur at all there must be a range of general and specific strategies to press the process forward and to achieve significant results by the Year 2000.

1.17 Our objective is to establish a holistic inter-related framework for all areas of post compulsory education in which education and vocational training converge to create broadbased key and core skills with equity and choice in determining career pathways.

1.18 This framework should be supported by consistent Award Classification systems and standards setting processes linked to curriculum, training-delivery and assessment. It should incorporate:

- a market of training providers;
- on and off-the-job training;
- recognition and accreditation of prior learning;
- consistent articulation mechanisms through to
- higher education levels;
- equity of access and recognition;
- the incorporation of active labour market training schemes.

1.19 The general outcome however, should be a very broadly based growing renaissance in all areas of economic, social and cultural development with mutual benefit to all.

1.20 Congress endorses the minimum targets for education and training as set out in the "Review of Post Compulsory Education and Training Committee" Report - viz:

- as a minimum, at least a Level 1 traineeship or participation in Year 12 for all 18 year olds by 1995;
- at least a Level 2 traineeship or progress toward a higher level vocational or academic qualification for almost all 20 year olds by 2001;
- at least a vocational certificate (Level 3) or progress toward a vocational qualification above Level 3 or a diploma or degree for at least 50% of 22 year olds by 2001.

1.21 This set of targets can be distilled into a single summary target that, by the year 2001, 95% of 19 year olds should have completed Year 12 or an initial post-school qualification or be participating in education or training.

1.22 To support this goal, the Finn Committee proposes that:

- governments should agree to introduce a post-compulsory Education and Training Guarantee whereby all young people would be guaranteed a place in school or TAFE after Year 10 for 2 years of full-time education or training or its equivalent part-time for up to 3 years. The Guarantee should apply for all those who are under 20 at the first of January in each year.
- State and Territory governments should introduce a uniform compulsory requirement to attend school (unless exempted) to at least the end of year 10.
- current entry-level training arrangements should be reformed
- a new entry-level training system should be developed which extends these reformed arrangements beyond the existing apprenticeship and traineeship occupations.

1.23 Fundamental principles for a new entry-level training system include:

- it should provide high quality education involving general vocational as well as occupation-specific competencies;
- it should meet and relate clearly to industry needs and standards;
- it should integrate with other educational pathways, for example, providing clear opportunities for movement to and from school and to further educational programs with maximum credit;
- it should provide opportunities for as many young people as possible who do not proceed direct to higher education. This implies coverage of the maximum possible number of occupations.

Skill and Information

2. A structured, national approach to career development, competency based training and skill formation under tripartite control is required now.

2.1 New and higher levels of skill formation and competence are required by employees to meet a growing participation in decision making, increasing use of discretion and innovation along with greater emphasis on personal and interpersonal skills.

2.2 New and higher levels of skill formation and competence are required by industry to meet increasing obligations in regard to ethical standards, equity, community expectations and environmental protection.

2.3 Skill for management by objectives and outcomes, is now emerging as a practice which involves a genuine devolution of decision making on the one hand and an acceptance of rising levels of responsibility on the other. As expertise increases and a new industrial culture is formed this approach will become widespread replacing outdated technical and directive styles of management.

2.4 New and higher levels of skill formation and competence are required by people within and between systems work units to handle mutual support activity, including humanist understanding, ethical behavioural relationships, regard and respect for the individual and personal appraisal for assistance and development.

2.5 Skill formation in all of its dimensions needs to be both broadly based and career pathed associated with job redesign and industry development. Individuals need to be allowed to complete a course to a whole skill level.

2.6 Broadly based "multi-skilling" enables the efficient and effective operation of a systems work unit including full participatory activity in decision making.

2.7 Quality skill standards need to be established through the National Training Board (NTB) for a hierarchy of skill and responsibility levels, related to competence based skill formation in all of their dimensions.

2.8 Skill standards, core curriculum and course accreditation guidelines need to be nationally determined. There needs to be concurrent review of existing courses and processes to allow alignment with competency based approaches and the developing national framework. National competency standards should be:

- developed with full union involvement in tripartite advisory bodies
- closely related to the levels in restructured awards
- developed for broadly defined industries and/or occupations to achieve maximum portability and breadth
- linked to a national system of qualifications, course accreditation guidelines and core curriculum development
- used to promote the recognition of prior learning and skills acquired on the job or by other means
- developed so as to encompass broad education goals and conceptual ability both in the definition of the standards and the assessment of outcomes by trainers and teachers.

2.9 Skill formation and education should be modularised to suit competency standards and "articulated" to meet flexible career and learning pathways with recognition of prior learning, assessment mechanisms and procedures and credentials to suit.

2.10 NOOSR and the NTB should be merged under effective Tripartite control to ensure consistency in setting standards and competency assessment guidelines for all purposes.

2.11 Effective tripartite Industry Training Advisory Bodies need to be established for all industry sectors; nationally where possible; with adequate monitoring, accountability, equitable resourcing and membership and prescribed three yearly reviews operating under an overarching, tripartite national body. ITAB's should be tripartite and based upon broadly defined industry or occupational areas. To the maximum extent possible these should be the only bodies to develop industry standards.

2.12 Award prescription is desirable as the means of ensuring national standards in each industry sector with prescribed consultation processes to facilitate agreed skill formation and work redesign programs.

2.13 Development of skill formation and competence must meet 3 levels of flexibility viz

- Society wide, interactive and infrastructure requirements
- Structural adjustment requirements to meet both new and redundant industries, products and processes
- Enterprise specific requirements.

2.14 In industry there needs to be a combination of internal and external labour market skill formation including on and off-the-job training components to provide general core skills, skills common to the field or discipline and specialised skills.

2.15 Distribution of wealth through remuneration is increasingly as a result of a struggle for the right of access to higher skills and increasing competence and the right to "participate in" and "exercise responsibility" in industry.

2.16 Independent trade union input into all skill formation and work organisation issues is an essential component of a creative tension to achieve maximum progress.

Schools

3. Schools must provide the opportunity for the development of the full potential of their students. Along with the need for the workforce to be more highly skilled there is a need for young people to remain in the learning system longer and to receive a broadly based education which is at the same time related to the experience of the workplace and achieving quality standards of competency.

3.1 The national curriculum framework to Year 12 or its equivalent should provide the means for an individual to meet their full personal potential, their role as a citizen and maximise their potential for employment. Such curriculum should be designed to be relevant and to meet the national competency targets for the year 2000 as set out in this document. Assessment of competence must reflect an understanding of context, content and outcomes both in the definition of the standards and the assessment of outcomes by teachers.

3.2 Learning throughout the whole of a student's school career should as far as is practical be of a nature as to provide actual experience in new forms of work organisation, participation and self-managing responsibility.

3.3 The work organisation of teaching and school management should be of a nature to display the actual practice of new forms of work organisation, participation, self-managing responsibility (including peer appraisal) both for the benefit of student experience and for greater efficiency and quality in the delivery and productivity for teaching and learning. This requires significant changes in management systems and the organisation of work. As part of that process and in order to provide equity and promote commitment, support staff must be accorded the normal permanent employment applicable in industry generally.

3.4 Funding of the "best schools practice" is needed to be related to the development of these new forms of work organisation and pedagogy in schools. Effective introduction of such changes on a broader scale will require specific funding for that purpose.

3.5 Contrived corporate management systems in schools that promote preferential elitism in education and inequitable funding, distort genuine devolvement and teacher participation, and reduce quality and equity outcomes must be opposed with effective campaigns that mobilise industry and the community.

3.6 The emergence of a variety of award "classifications" (School Support Staff, Teachers, Advanced Skills Teachers, Assistant Principal and Principals) along with greater student involvement and use of technology now provides an opportunity to explore new forms of work organisation in teaching and learning in schools based on a quality management of a learning system. Such an opportunity cannot be realised unless there is a commitment to the new forms of work organisation by all levels of the education system. This means state, regional and school levels including school communities.

3.7 New forms of work organisation also requires a commitment to the training and professional development of the various classifications of education employees.

3.8 A range of measures is needed to ensure that there is a substantially upgraded and effective vocational education and careers advisory apparatus in all schools for at least the school years 9 to 12. This will also require the development of appropriate links between industry, TAFE and schools.

3.9 One of the prime objectives of any financial program related to young people to the age of 18 should be to assist them in achieving the highest possible retention rate to year 12 or its equivalent.

3.10 Commensurate with genuine reforms in schools and as industry and society becomes more and more knowledge and competency based with a convergence of working and learning; funding for schools must be provided as an investment in no less a way to investments made in technology and industry.

In the Workplace

4. Work organisation in the future must overturn the Taylorist approaches of the past. Workers must be provided with greater scope for individual initiative, judgement and responsibility for quality outcomes. The nature of management and supervision must change from an emphasis on control and direction to one which co-ordinates and develops the skills and potential of all employees.

4.1 Job redesign for reform of work organisation is the most fundamental requirement upon which maximum possible utilisation of advanced technology, skill formation and wage remuneration can be built.

4.2 The number, shape and interactive operations of effective and productive "systems work units" can only be determined at enterprise level and requires research, study and involvement of all participants.

4.3 A greater degree of "core" and "specific" skill formation is moving into the workplace with a greater degree of diversity in its delivery. This needs to follow the principles set out in this policy.

4.4 The concept of "the learning workplace" needs to be cultivated to promote the pursuit of and responsibility for productivity, quality, uniqueness and service through constantly working smarter and innovatively with increasing levels of skill formation and participative practices.

4.5 The objective is to achieve the minimum targets as set out in section 1.20 of this policy and strategy and that those entering the workforce have the right of access to and the means of meeting these targets. To achieve this there will need to be progressive developments of awards beyond existing provisions and coverage with appropriate and effective direction of government funding arrangements.

4.6 Regulatory mechanisms are needed for workplace training to ensure that skill standards are met, modularisation-articulation and recognition of prior learning is applied, and that all those involved in any degree of training, education or assessment in the workplace are adequately trained to meet the national competency standards established by the National Training Board.

4.7 Adequate consultative processes are needed to ensure that agreements can be reached on objectives and outcomes; training to be undertaken, and that costs and training time can be met.

4.8 Flexibility wage component negotiations related to productivity objectives should clearly relate to implementation of job redesign, skill and education upgrading and award career paths.

4.9 Management by objectives and outcomes of system work units requires workers participation in setting 3 to 5 year objectives, intermediate targets, monitoring progress, making adjustments, evaluating results with objective measurement and the means to learn from experience.

4.9 Independent and professional input by union representatives into new work organisation, skill formation and related productivity outcomes is required as one of the principal means by which union organisation is built and exercised. It is an essential component of the productive process.

4.10 For maximum possible results employees and their representatives need the time, opportunity and training to provide creative and effective input to the production and skill formation process.

The Training Market

5. Training opportunities in the future will be provided through a variety of organisations including State training institutions, private providers and individual enterprises. The essential requirements of this development of a training market are to achieve quality standards with education and training which leads to recognised qualifications associated with those standards.

5.1 A training delivery "market" is now burgeoning and this must be taken into account. It is stimulated by a shift to delivery in the workplace and it involves a changed orientation of public sector delivery (Higher Education, TAFE, Councils of Adult Education) "in house" and growing private sector components (Consultancies, private "colleges", et al) with diverse delivery methods.

5.2 Adequate national standards are required to be approved by the National Training Board for all those seeking to deliver and assess training either internal or external to the workplace.

5.3 Effective tripartite mechanisms and co-operation by state training authorities will be a key to ensuring that the capabilities of all providers can be fully applied within an integrated training framework to produce consistent high quality skill formation in the market with upgraded access and delivery.

5.4 All experience shows that in any market, distortions and cheating will occur. Regulation is required and accountability to meet quality outcomes, NTB approved standards and effectiveness. The regulatory framework which emerges should apply to the following elements of the system:

- the national skill standards framework
- course accreditation;
- registration of deliverers
- credit transfer and articulation mechanisms and procedures
- training/education exports
- certification for the purposes of an educational credential
- quality control of work place/trainers or teachers and assessors

5.5 Curriculum and training materials to meet quality outcomes and NTB standards needs to be developed and available to all participants in the training/education market along with obligations to meet clear curriculum guidelines albeit with any diversity in delivery methods.

5.6 New arrangements and curriculum needs to be urgently developed to meet changed award circumstances in some industries relating to traineeships and apprenticeships where 3 levels of traineeship equates to a trade equivalent outcome or meets a current TAFE certificate qualification outcome.

5.7 Effective development of skill formation and competence throughout Australian industry requires that the minimum training guarantee be set at 3% of payroll for all companies and employing authorities.

5.8 All training and education programs under the minimum guarantee must be tied into achieving standards set by the NTB and relate to core skill and competence requirements as well as to enterprise specific skills and competence.

5.9 Effective guidelines and industry negotiations are needed to ensure that there is an "even spread" of training guarantee expenditure across all employees.

5.10 Registered Industry training agencies (RITA's) operating under the minimum guarantee regulations as a priority must be tripartite, must be effectively monitored including the requirement that they understand and apply the principles of modern skill formation and organisation of work. There must be mechanisms to test the effectiveness of training programs carried out under the training guarantee legislation.

T.A.F.E.

6. The TAFE system must be an essential element of the developing education and training resources of Australia. Adequate funding for up-to-date industrial technology and skill formation practices must be available to TAFE institutions and their related operations with industry.

6.1 TAFE, in providing wider education and training services, is increasingly subject to "training market" influence and will need to adjust to maintain future effectiveness especially with increased emphasis to the work place.

6.2 TAFE requires on ongoing equitable share of guaranteed funding to the education sectors whilst using market generated income to expand and improve services to the public and the industry parties.

6.3 Congress specifically condemns those state governments that reduce recurrent funding of TAFE when there is increased funding made available by the Commonwealth. We call for this to be stopped and for all extra funding to be made available to expand the provision of training.

6.4 Award restructuring in TAFE needs to be facilitated to ensure that teacher and other staff professional development and career paths are improved and that there is complementary reform of work organisation and TAFE management to reflect best practice in the vocational education and training system. As part of that process and in order to provide equity and promote commitment, support staff must be accorded the normal permanent employment applicable in industry generally.

6.5 TAFE - Industry connections requires a complementary relationship, including interchange of teachers and instructors, to ensure that the most up-to-date industrial technology and skill formation practices are available and delivered by TAFE and other providers.

6.6 TAFE - Industry connections requires a new relationship where rapidly changing or high cost technology is involved, including the exploration of possible subsidy of equipment in industry in exchange for external access for training purposes.

6.7 TAFE needs to provide flexible packages that relates its strength in core skill delivery to enterprise specific requirements and also relating both of these to work organisation, job redesign and self management responsibilities.

6.8 TAFE must closely re-examine its course structures, entry requisites and module design to meet curriculum articulation and credit transfer requirements both internally; with schools and to higher education. This needs to relate to recognition of prior learning, competency based training and assessment to meet national standards.

Higher Education

7. Higher education institutions have been transformed from elite institutions into a fundamental part of the public education system. The growth in higher education enrolments and the need of greater mature age access challenges the institutions to provide a diverse range of courses of a generalist and professional nature achieving genuine quality standards of competency.

7.1 Higher education, as part of post compulsory education and training systems, must respond to the principles of life long learning, labour market demands for higher competence the provision of broad skills in critical analysis and evaluation and career pathing. Flexible pathways within the post compulsory education sector, and complementary provision of educational opportunities must be vastly expanded.

7.2 Adequate credit transfer mechanisms in all post compulsory education and training systems including higher education are required based on recognition of prior learning (RPL) related to quality with clearly known standards and qualifications. The onus should be shifted from the individual to the institution.

7.3 "Competency levels" which recognise generalist and qualitative skills should be developed for higher education qualifications.

7.4 Some aspects of tertiary entrance is unhelpful, wasteful of talent and inefficient. Entrance systems should select on broader and more equitable criteria of "quality" and be responsive to the demands for career pathing with the provision of bridging courses and modules enabling effective credit recognition..

7.5 Participation rates in higher education must be based on expanding opportunities for mature age entry and a new balance between graduate Year 12 entry and alternate entry paths is needed.

7.6 Higher education must provide for the highest developments of skills within professions, recognising that the exercise of high level professional skill is a career path alternative to management and should attract status and remuneration accordingly.

7.7 Professional development at the highest levels including management training needs to recognise the need for reform of work organisation, fewer levels of management, strategic management by objectives and outcomes and to democratise human resource management.

7.8 The economic development of Australia requires a competitive system to promote the role of higher education in basic and applied research and innovation. A "leading edge" capacity in research and innovation must permeate a new learning environment in all post compulsory education and training systems and be adequately balanced with high quality teaching and learning environments.

7.9 A new networking relationship is required between Universities, TAFE Colleges and Industry relating to research, innovation, skill formation and participative management systems.

7.10 The expanded opportunities for participation in all areas of post compulsory education and training calls for more diverse systems of delivery, including open University systems, mixed-mode teaching, an expansion of distance and off-campus learning systems and cross utilisation of higher education and TAFE systems.

7.11 A mass system of post compulsory education requires new skills for higher education staff and a rigorous emphasis on equity programmes for students.

7.12 The public interest in an expanded post compulsory education and training system must ensure that full public accountability and an equitable distribution of revenue is maintained to ensure that diverse funding sources do not distort public goals.

7.13 Austudy should ensure adequate income maintenance for all students without alternative means of support.

Active Employment Strategy and Structural Adjustment

8. There is a need for a structured, Active Employment Strategy to provide skill development and training opportunities for those in need of further assistance. Courses provided through the AES should be properly resourced and lead to recognised qualifications.

8.1 Promotion and implementation of an Active Employment Strategy (AES) the basis for dealing with unemployment and the disadvantaged in the labor market.

8.2 Flexible, diverse and appropriate short time based programs effectively and efficiently delivered are essential to an active employment strategy.

8.3 All AES programs need to be "articulated" into traineeships and other programs that meet NTB standards and attract some credit accordingly.

8.4 All forms of unemployment assistance should be geared into promoting an effective AES.

8.5 Where retraining is required as a result of government policy created industry restructuring; labor market adjustment assistance should apply.

8.6 Redundancy packages negotiated with companies restructuring employment out of existence should include retraining provisions.

8.7 CES staff selected for AES advice should have appropriate and adequate training for the purpose.

Equity Issues

9. Education and training opportunities are a pre-requisite to achieving greater equity in Australian workplaces. Access to skill development with literacy/numeracy training will significantly assist in overcoming the barriers to equal opportunity.

9.1 The new circumstances relating to skill formation create expanded opportunities but their effect is not automatic. Affirmative action programs are required to promote access and career progression for disadvantaged groups or sectors of society.

9.2 Governments, Education providers and agencies should ensure that all policies and programs contain equity targets. The funding, including differential funding should be provided to ensure that competitiveness is enhanced.

9.3 Access to training; the formulation of competency standards; training programs and curricular, delivery methods and times, assessment mechanisms and procedures and skills "being used" all need to be doubly examined to ensure there is no bias.

9.4 Changed work organisation through job redesign needs to be effected in such a manner as to break down any segmentation or discrimination.

9.5 Specific assistance with resources and programs needs to be provided in areas where there has been a lack of structured training in the past.

9.6 Fees and charges must not inhibit access to education, training and AES. Special financial assistance must be provided for disadvantaged groups.

9.7 Bridging, remedial and access programs must be available to ensure that education and employment progression is not blocked by narrow credentialling processes.

9.8 Education, training and AES strategies need to recognise and build on the diversity of knowledge, skill, linguistic and cultural experience available including Aboriginal culture.

9.9 Key skills of english, communication and numeracy need to be integrated with the setting of competency standards.

9.10 Recognition of overseas qualifications and competencies needs to be integrated into the system of NTB national standards and skill recognition.

9.11 Strategies and programs must be developed to ensure that those employed in some rural or other areas where high competencies are not traditionally required can receive opportunities for adequate education and training.

Trade Union Involvement and Training

10. Training for active trade unionists is essential if up to date union services around new skill formation are to be provided effectively at workplace level.

10.1 Appropriate Trade Union Training should apply at work place representative, local organiser and policy making levels to ensure effective pursuit of strategies around skill formation, work organisation and higher levels of education concretely related to the restructure of industry sectors involved.

10.2 Union strategy, its daily implementation and union education and training need to mutually reinforce each other.

10.3 The ACTU needs to complete the development of a team of education and skill formation experts drawn from a combination of the unions in education and training delivery and representatives from all the major union groups along with relevant ACTU Officers to achieve a more closely co-ordinated union response to the education and training reform agenda.

10.4 There is a need to constantly produce itemised policy and functional activities papers for information and discussion throughout the Trade Union Movement.

10.5 Unions must be concerned with and able to service both the professional development of their members and reform requirements in the workplace as an integral part of servicing their award requirements.

10.6 Unions must be involved in the reforms currently under way regarding the career development of their members so as to be effective in the relevant debates, policy development and programs.

10.7 Trade union training/education must play a key role in keeping union activists abreast of issues/developments in education/training and in related issues such as work organisation change.

10.8 TUTA must ensure its trainers are abreast of developments in literacy/communications/and that these issues are addressed in their training programs.

10.9 Trade Union Training (TUTA) courses should be accredited and recognised as relevant for career path skill acquisition (in such areas as communications, industrial relations, consultative practices and job redesign).

Appendix 1 - Glossary of Terms Re: Education, Training and Work

Accreditation

Courses of training and/or education are "accredited" which signifies that they will meet appropriate curriculum contents standards and methods.

Active Labour Market

To intervene in the market for skill to positively influence the outcome.

Active Employment Strategy

Pursuing skill development for unemployed or likely to be unemployed persons.

Articulation

The "internal" design of curriculum to interconnect with other curriculum and higher levels of curriculum.

Assessment

Judging the outcomes of learning or training processes and programs.

Austudy

The Government financial assistance available to full-time students.

Award Course

Refers to an accredited course which lead to the following awards/credentials - Apprenticeship Certificate, Advance Certificate, Associate Diploma, Diploma. This includes the accreditation of a course framework from a broad selection of modules.

Bridging

Courses or more likely modules that enable people to make up the difference between what they already know and what they need to know for formal entry into an accredited/award course.

Certification or Credential

The provision of a Certificate, Advanced Certificate, Associate Diploma, Diploma, Degree etc to certify that a full award course has been satisfactorily completed.

Competency Standards

Covers skills, knowledge and understanding at specified levels.

Competency Based Training

Training that is designed to achieve standards levels irrespective of the time taken to achieve them and recognises learning achieved by any means measured against those standards.

Credit Transfer

The recognition of learning already achieved as an entry qualification to a higher course.

Curriculum

The content and skills to be learnt in a course or module of education or training.

Experiential

Learning that occurs as a result of experience (in daily work and living or as a structured means of learning through the experience of doing something).

On and Off-the-Job Training

Arranging training so that there is a close relationship between what is able to be learnt on the job and what needs to be added by off the job learning.

Internal and External Labour Market

A distinction between what is planned and developed by a company internally to meet its needs and that which is accessed externally.

Key and Core Skills

Key Skills are those such as language, communication, numeracy, framework of knowledge about science, technology etc. Core Skills are those vocational abilities that can be transferable and applied to a variety of specific circumstances in industry e.g. - use of computers, welding or drafting objectives and strategies for their achievement.

Module, (Modularised)

A segment of learning more or less complete in itself so that it can be assessed. A course can be made up of modules that inter relate or build up on each other.

Pedagogy

Methods and modes of teaching and the management of learning processes.

Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Achieved by formal or informal means and given credit toward entry to another course, toward a standard of competency or a credential.

Skill Formation

Any or all the processes by which skill and competence is formed in a person.

Systems Work Units

Units made up of people associated with a work system or clearly defined segments of a large system where those involved have closely related functions and can be largely responsible for the processes and outcomes of the unit.

Traineeship

A contract of training between an employer and a trainee leading to a formal recognised qualification. It can include both on and off-the-job training.

Training Program

Refers to a sequence of training which contains a component(s) of an award course.

Training

Refers to award courses, training programs and skill acquisition, formal or informal, that are related to vocational outcomes.

Work Organisation

Way jobs are designed and the work is arranged for the purposes of making decisions, taking responsibility, use of skills, undertaking tasks, and ensuring output of product or service.

Appendix 2 - Significant Education and Training Bodies/Organisations/Committees

- Vocational Education, Employment and Training Advisory Committee (VEETAC)
- National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET)
- National Training Board (NTB)
- Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITAB, ITC etc)
- Australian Education Council (AEC)
- AEC Review Committee on Post Compulsory Education and Training (Finn Review)
- National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL)

VEETAC - was established in November 1990 as the principal advisory forum to Ministers responsible for vocational education, training and related matters. Its principal role is to provide advise and give effect to Ministerial discussions.

VEETAC has 13 Working Parties and one Standing Committee (Women). Three key working parties are:

- National Consistency
- Competency Based Training
- Australian Committee for Training Curriculum (ACTRAC)

The National Consistency Working Party has responsibility for developing a framework of national recognition relating to accreditation, credit transfer, registration of providers, recognition of prior learning, assessment of competencies based on NTB standards. It has recently completed a report outlining the principles for national consistency on these matters.

The Competency Based Working Party is charged with developing an implementation of a timetable and plan of action and is currently examining threshold issues.

ACTRAC is responsible for developing integrated curricula for on and off the job training within a training market environment and in the context of the shift to competency based training.

NBEET - provides a separate source of information and advice to the Commonwealth Minister in the areas of education, youth affairs, employment and training, national research policy. It was set up in 1988.

There are four Councils of NBEET:

- Australian Research Council (ARC)
- Employment and Skills Formation Council (ESFC)
- Schools Council (SC)
- Higher Education Council (HEC)

The Board has established four priority working parties to examine some issues which require indepth study. These are:

- cross sectoral resourcing
- science and technology
- disadvantaged job seeker
- skill formation and recognition
- post compulsory education
- rural education and training

A major report has been recently prepared by the ESFC on the role of TAFE in the 1990s. The ESFC will also be responsible for determining the policy outlook on the establishment of a unified entry-level training system for Australia and a directions paper for management training providers.

The Schools Council work includes a project on the compulsory years of schooling, capital and equipment needs in upper secondary years of schooling and a follow up on Australia's teachers: An agenda for the next decade.

The Higher Education Council is launching a study on "Quality in Higher Education" and the Research Council is conducting a review of the "Key Centres of Teaching" and the "Research and Special Research Centres" program.

National Training Board (NTB) - was established in 1989. It's key functions are to establish a nationally consistent framework for developing competency standards by industrial parties based on industry awards. These standards to form the benchmarks for vocational education curriculum developments, industry training and recognition. Key issues have been: the establishment of the competency level framework which will provide the link between award skill levels and competency outcomes and education credentials; the structure and content of standards coming before the Board for endorsement; the determination of which bodies will receive Competency Standards Body (CSB) Status; and the interrelationship with National Office of Overseas Skills Recognition (NOOSR) and work of other bodies especially VEETAC and its Working Parties.

Industry Training Advisory Bodies (ITABs) - have been in existence in one form or another for many decades. They advise on competency requirements related to technology of materials, products and processes or to services including public services.

Australian Education Council (AEC) - has existed for many years and is comprised of the State and Federal Ministries of education. There is no union representation. It has a variety of bodies (e.g. Curriculum Research that report to it and carry out ongoing work.

The Finn Review - was established by the AEC to examine a range of issues relating to post compulsory education and training including the nature and form of a target, outcomes expected, curriculum issues, pathways, implications for teaching and delivery arrangements, its disadvantaged and resource implications.

The Committee has brought down a report which carries major ramifications for all sectors within the education and training system. Key recommendations have been incorporated into the body of this Policy.

National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL) - was established by the Commonwealth in February 1991 to develop a national policy framework on teacher education, professional development, work organisation, better management of teacher demand and supply, recognition arrangements and related issues arising out of award restructuring.

Three key Working Parties have been established to facilitate these objectives:

- Work Organisation and Related Pedagogical Issues
- Teacher Registration and Portability of Qualifications and Entitlements
- Teacher Education, Training and Professional Development

Commonwealth Employment Service Advisory Committee (CESAC) An advisory Committee to deal with the operations of the CES

The principal consideration for the ACTU has been the development and implementation of an Active Employment Strategy so that as far as it is possible every effort is made to match skills to employment opportunities. A range of programs are monitored for this purpose.