



Education International Task Force on Vocational Education and Training: Draft Working Paper

Privatization of Vocational Education and Training: Major Trends and Impacts

1. Introduction

In an increasing number of countries, privatization of vocational education and training (VET) has become a major policy thrust of governments. In the wake of the global economic recession and the rise in public sector deficits, many more governments are looking to the privatization of public services such as VET as a simple solution to what are in fact complex fiscal and economic problems.

This paper reviews the major privatization trends in VET in recent years, with a focus on the for-profit sector and market-based reforms. It is argued that privatization of VET has major consequences for the terms and conditions of employment, professional autonomy, and rights of staff. There are, it is noted, also significant negative consequences for VET students and for systems as a whole. The paper concludes with concrete recommendations for Education International and its affiliates.

2. The Many Faces of VET Privatization

Privatization is understood broadly as both the transfer of the ownership or control of public sector services or assets to the private sector, and as the importing of “ideas, techniques and practices from the private sector in order to make the public sector more like businesses and more business-like.”¹

Globally, VET is the most privatized sector within education. A survey of the relevant literature (see Appendix) reveals that many countries have experimented with both the direct and indirect privatization of public VET in recent years. This has included initiatives sell-off public institutions to for-profit providers, to encourage public institutions to compete with one another and with private providers, to expand “cost-recovery” financing systems, and to establish public-private partnerships.

Globally, a number of various forms of privatization can be indentified, including:

¹ Stephen J. Ball and Deborah Youdell, *Hidden Privatisation in Public Education* (Brussels: Education International, 2008), p. 9.



- The direct transfer or sale of public providers and services to private providers.
- Regulatory changes that allow for the recognition and operation of private and for-profit providers.
- Outsourcing and contracting out of aspects of public VET services to private providers.
- establishment of joint ventures and public/private partnerships;²
- private sector/corporate management principles applied to VET;
- privatization of financing (e.g. tuition fees/user fees, student vouchers, external funding requirements etc.)
- introduction of quasi-markets and competition (e.g. competitive tendering, funding tied to performance outcomes, etc.)

While there are many forms of privatization in VET, the two most common trends today appear to be the growth in private and for-profit institutions and providers, and the imposition of market reforms on the delivery and funding of VET.

For-Profit VET

While private, not-for-profit VET institutions have operated for some time in many countries, the fastest growing component in recent years has been the for-profit sector. In countries like the United States, for-profit VET now represents the fastest growing component of post-school education. Even countries that do not legally permit for-profit education generally, there is ambiguity over the status of for-profit VET providers (e.g. Poland, Portugal, Uruguay). At the other extreme, some countries permit only for-profits in the post-school VET sector (e.g. Chile).

For-profit VET institutions cannot be described in simple terms. They vary significantly in terms of their mission, curricula and ownership structures. While generalizations are difficult to make, there nevertheless do appear to be some common tendencies worth noting.

First, the for-profit provision of VET appears to be growing where the private not-for-profit sector as is well established and holds a large share of total enrolments, For example, roughly two-thirds of Brazil's private post-school institutions are for-profit. In the Philippines, nearly half of all students are enrolled in for-profit VET. Chinese for-profit VET institutions have proliferated with the encouragement of the ministry of education. As in other countries, however, for-profit providers are not eligible for government subsidies. Across the Middle East and Africa, several states welcome and

² The issue of public-private partnerships was dealt with extensively by the report of the EI Task Force Report, *Public Private Partnerships in Education* (Brussels: Education International, 2009).



encourage for-profit VET. Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand all have extensive numbers of for-profit training institutes and career colleges.

Chile is one country with a long established for-profit VET sector. Vocational education in Chile underwent radical deregulation during the 1980s, as part of broader privatization reforms implemented by the military dictatorship.

The government transferred some public vocational schools to private corporations and encouraged the establishment of new private for-profit providers known as Technical Education Centres. The remaining public technical schools were forced to reform their curriculum in line with the needs identified by local industries.

Several concerns have been raised about the growth in for-profit VET. There is considerable evidence that the quality of programs offered by for-profit VET companies is inferior to not-for-profit and public providers. As illustrated in Box 1, for-profit career colleges in the United States have been under intense scrutiny following a Congressional investigation uncovered poor student outcomes and widespread fraud in the industry.

Box 1:

An American Scandal: For-Profit Career Colleges in the United States

The for-profit education and training industry in the United States is valued at about \$US 120 billion a year. A Congressional investigation of the industry in 2010 found evidence of widespread fraud, questionable marketing practices, and poor student outcomes.

About a third of for-profit school graduates are actively repaying their student loans, compared to about 55% for public colleges, according to the Government Accountability Office report.

The report also found that recruiters at 15 for-profit colleges encouraged investigators posing as students to commit fraud on financial aid applications or misled them about tuition cost and potential salaries after graduation.

Source: United States Government Accountability Office, "For-Profit Colleges: Undercover testing finds colleges encouraged fraud and engaged in deceptive and questionable marketing practices," (Washington, August, 2010).

In addition, concerns about been raised about how for-profit education affects the terms and conditions of employment. For-profit provision is often justified on the grounds that it will increase "efficiencies" in the delivery of VET. In practice, however, efficiencies are often achieved through reductions in labour costs, not in quality improvements. For instance, there is evidence in the United States and Latin America



for-profit providers offer fixed-term employment contracts only, thus increasing the precariousness and casualization of VET staff.

Market Reform in VET: The Case of Australia

Market reform of VET refers to a privatization process that involves the introduction of market mechanisms into VET. This normally includes the use of competitive tendering for government funds, whereby public and private VET providers must compete for financing and for students. Another element of this is the introduction of a “user-choice” or demand-driven system. Under this model, government reduces its role as planner and funder of VET, and instead acts as a market regulator to ensure competition. Both public and private VET providers are seen as “sellers” of programs and services who compete with one another for government funds and fee-paying clients. Employers and students are viewed as customers or consumers of VET who pay more of the cost and choose their VET provider and curricula.

The case of Australia offers an interesting example of the process of market reforms and their consequences. Australia redesigned its VET system along a competitive market model nearly two decades ago. In place of the previous centralized system of planning, funding and provision of VET, the Australian government in the early 1990s began recognizing and encouraging the establishment of private providers, and introduced competitive funding and user choice. The public Technical and Further Education (TAFE) institutes were forced to compete with these new providers for a reduced pot of funding. Students were forced pay more of the costs of their education. Between 1997 and 2008, total government funding fell in real terms by more than 20% per annual hour of training.³

The market design approach was intended to provide for more choice, greater efficiency, and improved quality while maintaining access and equity. However, the market reforms introduced in Australia have failed on a number of key grounds. They have resulted in higher transaction costs and have increased the reliance of a large proportion of private providers on public funding. Quality has also suffered as a result of the diversion of resources away from instruction and student services to administration and marketing. Overall, the evidence shows that the imposition of market forces on the VET system has created incentives to reduce costs, rather than improve quality.⁴

The impact on VET teachers and students has been marked. Cost-reductions have resulted in larger class sizes, a downward pressure on salaries, reduced face-to-face teaching hours, fewer course offerings, and the increased use of fixed-term employees. A 2006 study undertaken by the Australian Education Union documented high levels of

³ P. Kell, *TAFE Futures: An Inquiry into the future of technical and further education in Australia* (Melbourne: AEU, 2006), p. 21.

⁴ D. Anderson, “Trading Places: The impact and outcomes of market reform in vocational



student poverty, prohibitive course costs and an increased tendency to shift costs onto students. The inquiry also found that:

- In industry-based programs, VET teachers worked long hours with no support systems;
- VET teachers were forced to invest their own time and money into maintaining their vocational knowledge; and
- VET teachers were forced to take on extra responsibilities for frontline employment and human resource tasks, including mentoring casually employed staff.⁵

4. Conclusion

This brief review has shown that the privatization of VET, either directly through the development of a for-profit sector or more subtly through the imposition of markets on VET systems, has major consequences for teachers' remuneration, working conditions, autonomy, job security and tenure, and professional development. Privatization initiatives also have a direct impact on students, institutions and entire systems in ways that do not serve the public interest.

The EI Task Force on VET is invited to consider the analysis and conclusions of this paper and to develop appropriate recommendations for EI and its affiliates.

⁵ Kell, *op. cit.* p. 27.



Appendix

Privatization of Vocational Education and Training: Selected Bibliography

Adhikari, Ramesh Kant (2006) "Privatization in Technical Education: The Case of Education of Health Professionals in Nepal." *Regional Health Forum*. Vol. 10, no. 1: 59-64.

Nepal has seen major changes in the field of training of health professionals over the last 15 years. This field has attracted significant private investment and a number of training institutions with hospitals, have come into existence. However, the trend of opening new institutions is continuing. Not only is it likely to be detrimental to the existing facilities but it is also raising doubts about the quality and standards of some of the institutions in the private sector. This article is an attempt to briefly look into the different issues of the subject and also suggest a comprehensive review of the situation, which will guide the future course of action.

Gill, I. Fluitman, F. and Amit Dar (eds.) (2000) *Vocational education and training reform: matching skills to markets and budgets* IDRB/World Bank

Gasskov, Vladimir (ed.) (1994) *Alternative Schemes of Financing Training*. Geneva: International Labour Office.

Gasskov, Vladimir (2000) *Managing Vocational Training Systems* ILO

Paul Bennell (1998) Privatization, choice and competition: The World Bank's reform agenda for vocational education and training in sub-Saharan Africa? *Journal of International Development* 8: 3

This article assesses the extent to which the reform strategy presented in the World Bank's 1991 Sector Policy paper on vocational education and training (VET) has been implemented in Sub-Saharan Africa. The two main conclusions are, (1) to date, only a small group of countries in Africa have seriously attempted to implement the Bank's reform agenda for skills training; and (2) as currently conceived, it is unlikely that demand-led VET systems and related policies will be successfully introduced in most SSA countries.

Mitra J. and Matlay H. (2004) "Entrepreneurial and vocational education and training: Lessons from Central and Eastern Europe" *Industry and Higher Education* 18: 1



Fairley, John (1996) "Vocational Education and Training Reform in Scotland: Towards a Strategic Approach?" *Scottish Educational Review*

This paper traces policy trends in Scottish vocational education and training (VET) over the past 20 years. It describes the current institutional framework for VET, which focuses on employer-oriented "local enterprise companies." The author suggests that the complexity and decentralization of the VET system impedes evolution of a coherent VET strategy and that employer control and "output"-based budgeting undermine educational equity.

Ball, Stephen (2010) "Privatising Education, Privatising Education Policy, Privatising Educational Research: Network Governance and the "Competition State"" *Journal of Education Policy*, v24 n1

This paper explores some particular aspects of the privatisation of public sector education, mapping and analysing the participation of education businesses in a whole range of public sector education services both in the UK and overseas. It addresses some of the types of privatisation(s) which are taking place "of", "in" and "through" education and education policy, "in" and "through" the work of education businesses. This entails a traversal of some of the multi-level and multi-layered fields of policy: institutional, national and international. Such an approach is important in demonstrating the increasing diversity and reach of some of the education businesses and their different kinds of involvements with different institutions and sectors of education. It also makes it possible to set local rhetorics, such as "partnership", within the context of corporate logics of expansion, diversification, integration and profit.

West, Anne and Ylonen, Annamarie (2010) "Market-Oriented School Reform in England and Finland: School Choice, Finance and Governance" *Educational Studies*, v36 n1

This paper explores the introduction of market-oriented reforms into school-based education in England and Finland. The contexts into which reforms were introduced differed, with a fully comprehensive system being in place in Finland but not in England; the motives were also different; and different trajectories have since been followed. Whilst there are apparent similarities, with choice and diversity having a high political profile in each country, the policy mix varies: two different models can be discerned, with the Finnish reforms being characterised by more regulatory control in relation to school access and choice, but less in relation to the financing of schools by local authorities. It is argued that the mediating role played by local authorities in jurisdictions with high levels of decentralisation means that the legislative framework needs to be taken into account when examining policy implementation and educational outcomes.



Spottl, Georg (2008) "Autonomy of (Vocational) Schools as an Answer to Structural Changes" *Policy Futures in Education*, v6 n2 p257-264

In Europe a very intensive discussion is in full swing as to whether vocational schools should in future be guided and monitored by the state or whether they should be freed from state dependency. Within the framework of a number of pilot projects in German-speaking countries, vocational school centers are currently testing their autonomy. This article sketches out the discussion on a way forward.

Torche, Florencia (2005) Privatization Reform and Inequality of Educational Opportunity: The Case of Chile. *Sociology of Education*. Vol. 78 (October): 316-343.

Chile has experienced considerable educational expansion over the past few decades, as well as a privatization reform in 1981 that introduced full parental choice through a voucher system, in the context of a market-oriented transformation of the country. Using a cohort analysis of the 2001 Chilean Mobility Survey, this article examines trends in educational stratification

in Chile over the past 50 years, with a focus on the changes that followed the privatization reform. The analysis shows that, in line with international findings, there is "persistent inequality" of educational opportunity across cohorts in Chile. Persistent inequality is not total, however. There is a small but significant *increase* in inequality in the transition to secondary education, which is contemporaneous with the market-oriented transformation. Furthermore, when school sector—a form of "qualitative inequality" expressed in the distinction among public, private-voucher, and private-paid schools—is considered, the analysis suggests an increase in the advantages that are associated with private-voucher schools after the privatization reform, as well as in the benefits of attending private-paid schools during and after the reform. The article concludes by discussing the relationship among economic context, privatization reform, and educational inequality.

Kirby, Dale (2007) "Reviewing Canadian Post-secondary Education: Post-secondary Education Policy in Post-Industrial Canada" *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, n65 p1-24

Since 2004, a number of Canadian provinces have initiated comprehensive reviews of their respective public post-secondary education systems. This paper examines the ways in which these provincial post-secondary education reviews are consistent with the pervasive influence of economic globalization on higher education and a more market-driven and commercially-oriented ideological outlook on post-secondary education's *raison d'être*. Taken together, these provincial reviews provide an informative and interesting repository of the current tendencies in Canadian post-secondary education policy.



Gao, X. et al. (2006) "Managing Vocational Institutional Transformation: A Chinese Case Study" *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, v11 n1 p49-63

This paper is a case study of a Chinese educational leader who was in charge of an institution when it was in the process of being upgraded from a secondary vocational school to a self-funded tertiary vocational institution. Using a life history approach, the paper furnishes an informative picture capturing the dual transformation process of the informant's leadership and the institution under his leadership. It describes how the informant adopted a diversity of leadership images in winning various stakeholders for his institution in the leading process. It reflects enormous challenges that tertiary vocational education leaders have to face in the commercialisation process of tertiary education on the Chinese mainland.

Naravana, M.R. (2006) "Privatisation Policies and Postprivatisation Control Devices in India's Higher Education: Evidence from a Regional Study and Implications for Developing Countries" *Journal of Studies in International Education*, v10 n1 p46-70

This article focuses on economic analysis of privatisation policies and postprivatisation control devices in India's higher education. As a case study, the experiences of Karnataka State in collegiate education under general higher education are emphasised. A change in public financing, rather than a shift of public ownership and management to private sector, is the most dominant feature of privatisation policies. The impact of privatisation is estimated in terms of fiscal effect, price effect, and effects on quality, equity, and affordability. To overcome the negative effects of privatisation policies, the need for postprivatisation control devices are argued, and a few policy devices are suggested. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development experiences in postprivatisation control devices for manufacturing and infrastructure privatisation are shown to have relevance for both privatisation and globalisation of higher education services, especially in view of bringing education services for negotiations under the World Trade Organisation's General Agreement on Trade in Services.

Glonti, Kote et al. (2002) "National Observatory Report on Vocational Education and Training in Georgia"

The state of vocational education and training (VET) in the Georgia Republic in 1999-2000 was examined. The study focused on the following topics: (1) the socioeconomic context of VET; (2) Georgia's labor market (the current labor market situation, employment, unemployment); (3) management of VET (legislation and policy, responsible bodies, financing of VET); (4) Georgia's VET system (initial training, continuing education and training of managers, training of teachers and masters); and (5) skills and standards (skill demands and standards, curricula, research). Selected findings were as follows: (1) Georgia has encountered many political and socioeconomic difficulties during its transition to a market economy, including problems related to or stemming from privatization, foreign trade, the informal economy and corruption, tight



monetary policy, aging of the population, and migration; (2) Georgia is plagued with a poorly organized labor market, high unemployment levels, low income levels, and a training system that remains rigidly organized and does not meet the needs of Georgia's new economy; (3) Georgia's severe economic problems have resulted in significant under-funding of all education, including VET, leaving vocational schools struggling to survive; (4) like Georgia's centrally planned economy, its VET system was unprepared for transition to a market economy; and (5) no research on VET has been conducted in Georgia.

Shobhana, Sosale (2000) "Trends in Private Sector Development in World Bank Education Projects." *Policy Research Working Paper Series*. (Washington: World Bank).

The private sector is playing an increasingly important role in financing and providing educational services in many countries. (Often the term "private sector" encompasses households' out-of-pocket expenses rather than describing for-profit or not-for-profit sectors.) Private sector development has not arisen primarily through public policy design but has been affected by the design and limitations of public policy. Analyses of case studies of 11 of 70 World Bank education projects in 1995-97 reveal that the World Bank's interest in private sector development is in capacity-oriented privatization to absorb excess demand for education. This is crucial to the bank's general strategy for education lending: promoting access with equity, focusing on efficiency in resource allocation, promoting quality, and supporting capacity building. Absorbing excess demand tends to involve poorer families, usually much poorer than those that take advantage of other forms of privatized education. The bank emphasizes capacity-oriented privatization, especially of teacher training for primary and secondary schools, as well as institutional capacity building for tertiary and vocational education. The underlying principle is that strengthening the private sector's role in noncompulsory education over time will release public resources for the compulsory (primary) level. (Case studies of World Bank projects in the following countries are appended: Dominican Republic, Maldives, Chile, Mauritania, Argentina, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Mali, Indonesia, El Salvador, and Comoros.

Brandsma, Jittie et al. (2000) *Transforming the Public Provision of Training: Reorganisation or Privatisation? Long-Term Changes in Sweden and the Netherlands*. CEDEFOP Discussion Dossier.

The public sector is becoming less concerned with who is providing a given service but more concerned about the quality, reliability, accessibility, and price of the service. In vocational education and training (VET), one consequence of this transformation is that the various public stakeholders involved with funding, purchasing, and providing VET are increasingly being separated, ensuring that overlaps in responsibilities and sometimes contradicting interests of public stakeholders are minimized while guaranteeing a greater accountability of the various agencies, whether public or private. The



corporatization of the Swedish public training provision system, the AMU-Gruppen, is a clear example of deregulation and market orientation of a formerly highly public body with an almost monopolistic position. The process, which started in 1986 with the AMU-Gruppen being transformed from a division under the national board of education to an autonomous agency, may end with the privatization of the entire structure. Likewise, the restructuring of the Dutch VET system, which has resulted in the establishment of regional training centers, has been a long process, initiated by legislation in 1987 that resulted in the first mergers, and continuing so that by 1998-99, the total number of publicly funded VET institutions has dropped from 396 to 65.

Osborne, Mike and Turner, Eileen(2002) 'Private training providers in Scotland', *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 54: 2, 267 – 294

Reliable information on the private provision of training is scarce. This article, based on analysis of Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and City and Guilds (C & G) data sets for the period 1996-97 to 1998-99, provides an estimate of around 300 private training providers (PTPs) operating in Scotland. Further analysis shows that many PTPs concentrate on Vocational Qualifications (VQs – Levels I-III) and this is the only area of provision where PTPs compete seriously with Further Education (FE) colleges. There is, however, no central data source to allow access to comprehensive information about PTPs other provision. Much

quantifiable training in PTPs occurs courtesy of various Government sponsored schemes, and results in the award of Vocational Qualifications (VQs). It is these programmes and qualifications that are focused upon since they are numerically most important. PTPs operating in Scotland vary in the volume of their training business. Provision is dominated by a few large, multi-sited organisations. Case study analysis shows that many PTPs wish to diversify to reduce dependence on Local Enterprise Company (LEC) funding.

Palmer, Robert(2009) 'Formalising the informal: Ghana's National Apprenticeship Programme', *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 61: 1, 67-83

Since 2001 there has been a renewed government focus on skills development and its relationship with combating unemployment in Ghana. Technical and vocational education and training (hereinafter; TVET), delivered through public and private schools, vocational training institutes and informal apprenticeship training, continues to be seen as an important link to work. Rising concern over the large number of junior high school graduates that are unable to access further formal education and training has led politicians and policy makers to demand a National Apprenticeship Programme and ambitious plans are being put in place to move towards a more regulated, or formalised, informal apprenticeship system. This article examines these plans and argues that the government needs both to consider fully the ramifications of their proposed activities under the National Apprenticeship Programme, as well as learn from previous programmes in Ghana (and elsewhere) that have attempted to upgrade



informal apprenticeships.

Cantor, Leonard (1987) 'The role of the private sector in vocational education and training: The case of Japan's Special Training Schools', *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 39: 103, 35-41

Noble, Charles , Hill, Doug , Smith, Erica and Smith, Andrew(1999) 'Policy issues in the implementation of 'user choice' in the Australian training market', *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 51: 1, 5-22

This article focuses on the evolving concept of the training market and views about those factors which necessitate intervention in the market. User choice in apprenticeships and traineeships is the latest policy initiative in Australia to increase the responsiveness of the vocational education and training system to the needs of clients. It does so by channelling the flow of public funds to individual training providers to reflect the choice of training provider made by the client (employer and/or apprentice or trainee). The introduction of user choice raises several policy issues. Concerns have been expressed about providing continuous access to training in rural and remote areas. Also, there is considerable uncertainty about how user choice will impact on equity groups. Other issues that are considered in the article include: Will user choice increase the choices available to apprentices and trainees? How competitive will training markets be under user choice? How will private training providers and the publicly funded vocational education and training (VET) system adjust to user choice? What tensions between stakeholders are likely to be experienced in the introduction of user choice? The ways in which these policy issues are resolved is likely to determine whether user choice succeeds in creating a training system that is more responsive to the needs of stakeholders.

Russell, Lisa , Simmons, Robin and Thompson, Ron (2010) 'Playing the numbers game: Connexions personal advisers working with learners on entry to employment programmes', *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 62: 1, 1-12

Transitions of young people from school to employment, further education or training have been a focus of government policy in the UK for at least the last three decades. Since the late 1990s, numerous policy initiatives have been introduced by New Labour in an attempt to reduce social exclusion through the increased participation of young people in work-related training. This paper reports on a mixed-methods research project exploring Entry to Employment (E2E) provision in the north of England. It outlines the experiences of Connexions practitioners working with learners and staff at four E2E providers and illustrates the complexities involved with young people's transitions to and from E2E programmes. The paper shows that a marketised system driven by targets and funding constraints can compromise the ability of practitioners to best meet the needs of young people struggling with often difficult circumstances.



Gvaramadze, Irakli (2010) 'Low-skilled workers and adult vocational skills-upgrading strategies in Denmark and South Korea', *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 62: 1, 51-61

The main objective of the paper was to address the relevance of adult vocational skills-upgrading strategies for low-skilled workers. The research was based on an identification of core elements such as time, cost and access which define and impact on formulation and implementation of adult vocational skills-upgrading strategies. The literature review has identified potential challenges for low-skilled workers brought by skill-biased technological changes and labour market conditions, which define the correlation between low-skilled workers, employers and training opportunities. By illustrating adult vocational skills-upgrading strategies in Denmark and South Korea the paper concludes that elements such as time, cost and access have direct implications for low-skilled workers' skills acquisition and their integration into the labour market.

McGrath, Simon (2007) 'Transnationals, globalisation and education and training: evidence from the South African automotive sector', *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 59: 4, 575-589

This study explores the relationships between globalisation and education and training through an examination of certain transnational corporations operating in the automotive sector in South Africa. The automotive industry is an important source of improvements in both the quality and quantity of skills in South Africa. This sector was the initial driver of much of recent changes in skills development in response to globalisation and has particular potential to be incorporated into global production chains. The South African policy strategies for skills and for industrial development are still relatively young and fragile. Nonetheless, they do appear to point to the scope that a developing country with comparative economic strength and state capacity has for positive interventions to support international competitiveness.

Ryan, Paul , Gospel, Howard and Lewis, Paul(2006) 'Educational and contractual attributes of the apprenticeship programmes of large employers in Britain', *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 58: 3, 359-383

The authors consider two quality-related aspects of large employers' apprenticeship programmes. The first is their contribution to national educational objectives, including the creation and strengthening of ladders of vocational attainment. Such ladders already exist in apprenticeship's traditional domains, but the prospects for their wider development appear unfavourable. Few employers support an increase in the educational contribution of apprenticeship, whether technical or general, even in sectors in which that contribution is currently minimal. The second issue is the extent of the employer's responsibility for its apprenticeship programme, which is often seen as important for training quality. No simple relationship is present across employers and sectors between the outsourcing of programme components and such attributes as



apprentice recruitment, apprentice status and the employer's investment in each apprentice. Within traditional sectors, however, sponsorship by a large employer means a substantially greater investment in each apprentice than that by a specialist training provider.

Smith, Erica and Smith, Andy (2009) 'Making training core business: Enterprise Registered Training Organisations in Australia', *Journal of Vocational Education & Training*, 61: 3, 287-306

This paper examines the Australian phenomenon of Enterprise Registered Training Organizations (RTOs). These are organisations that do not have training as their main business but that are accredited to deliver training and award qualifications, primarily to their own workers. Although Enterprise RTOs have been in existence in one form or another for around 15 years they have not been previously examined in the scholarly literature. The paper uses qualitative and quantitative data from two recent research projects to describe the nature and experiences of these RTOs and their workers. The findings are analysed using a framework recently used in an evaluation of the pilot of a similar English scheme: quality concerns, resource intensiveness, impact on the training market, and restriction to larger firms. The paper concludes that enterprise RTOs have been beneficial to workers and companies alike, although not without problems, and that the Australian system appears to present fewer risks than the proposed English system.

Pedro Teixeira, Alberto Amaral and Maria João Rosa (2003) "Mediating the Economic Pulses: The International Connection in Portuguese Higher Education" *Higher Education Quarterly* Volume 57, No. 2, April 2003, pp 181–203

Manfred Wallenborn (2010) Vocational Education and Training and Human Capital Development: current practice and future options" *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 45, No. 2, 2010, Part I

Adrian Stoica (2003) "Vocational Education and Training Reform in Romania and Bosnia-Herzegovina: strategy, legislation, and implementation *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 38, No. 2, 2003

Fernanda Correia, Alberto Amaral and Antona Nia Magalh-Aes (2002) "Public and Private Higher Education in Portugal: unintended effects of deregulation" *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 37, No. 4, 2002

Erica Smith 2010) "A review of twenty years of competency-based training in the Australian vocational education and training system" *International Journal of Training and Development* 14:1



In this paper, the author reflects, both as an academic researcher and as a senior practitioner, on the experience of competency-based training (CBT) in the Australian vocational education and training system. She seeks to draw conclusions about the Australian experience using a typology drawn from the academic literature which focuses on the philosophical, educational, technical and market aspects of CBT. She concludes that, despite many improvements over the past 10 years, some potential problems remain. The system is controlled overly tightly by the interests of industry and it also exhibits some inflexibilities. Both of these act to disadvantage some groups of learners. Teachers and trainers do not have adequate skills to work skillfully and critically with CBT, leading to thin pedagogy and a narrow focus on assessment of individual items of performance.

Johnny Sung (2010) “Vocational education and training and employer engagement: an industry-led sectoral system in the Netherlands” *International Journal of Training and Development* 14:1

The overall objective of this paper is to determine, through a qualitative case study of the Dutch sectoral training system, factors associated with successful employer engagement. As well as examining the key features of the Dutch approach to vocational education and training (VET), the article makes a number of specific arguments: (1) employer ‘buy-in’ is crucial to the success of the sectoral approach to VET; (2) simply establishing a system of sector-based training bodies (e.g. skills councils) does not guarantee effective employer engagement; and (3) to make sectoral training work, especially in countries where a ‘supply-led’ system dominates, a fundamental reform is required in areas such as funding, qualification structure, leadership and system support.

Geers, Frederick (1995) “The role of the private sector in vocational education and training in the Belgian-Flemish community” *Journal of European Industrial Training*, Vol. 19 No. 7, 1995, pp. 26-32

UNESCO (2006) *G8-BMENA Cooperation TVET Mapping Exercise in BMENA region: Recent Trends and Initiatives. Volume One: Regional Synthesis Report.*