



# Queensland Vocational Education and Training Strategy

.....  
Response to Paper

August 2023





**18 August 2023**

QVET Strategy, Strategic Policy  
Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training  
East Brisbane QLD 4002

Submitted via email: [QVETStrategy@desbt.qld.gov.au](mailto:QVETStrategy@desbt.qld.gov.au)

My Pathway believes strongly in the benefits of developing people, connecting them to opportunities and helping communities to grow. We invest in training in several ways throughout our Queensland footprint including providing Vocational Education and Training (VET) through our own Registered Training Organisation (RTO). We also employ numerous apprentices and trainees annually, as well as having created several discrete projects such as Skilling Queenslanders for Work (SQW) projects to develop workplace skills in communities.

We have worked with many different RTO's over more than a decade and have identified significant issues in the current VET program that hamper efforts to grow skills in regional and remote communities. We welcome the opportunity to provide our feedback in the hope that any system reforms that arise from this process help to better address the VET training needs of these communities and help to create positive and lasting impacts.

Further queries about this submission can be directed to My Pathway Marketing and Communications Advisor, Aidan Lewis on 07 4033 3585 or [a.lewis@mypathway.com.au](mailto:a.lewis@mypathway.com.au).

## *What opportunities has your organisation been able to experience through VET?*

Through both our employment programs and in-house RTO, My Pathway have facilitated and delivered a range of VET courses and skill development opportunities. Our footprint includes remote communities including Bamaga, Cooktown, Cow Bay, Doomadgee, Lockhart River, Napranum and the Torres Strait as well as mainstream sites on the Eastern seaboard and central Queensland.

We currently deliver two accredited and one non-accredited course to build skills in Individual Supports as well as Foundation Skills and Career training in person and remotely.

My Pathway also partners with numerous other RTO's to deliver the best training outcomes to our employees. Recent partners have included Busy at Work, Civil Safety, C&K College of Early Childhood, Major Training, Martyr Training, MiHaven, Skill 360, TAFE Queensland, Transqual Pty Ltd and Workskills. Through these partnerships we ensure that timely, tailored and effective training is delivered in a range of locations across Queensland.

We believe strongly in the benefits of VET, and currently have 29 staff undertaking apprenticeships or traineeships within our organisation developing and growing their skills.

## *What gaps or challenges has your organisation experienced with VET?*

In our experience the current VET system has significant challenges addressing delivery in remote communities and tailoring training to overcome Literacy, Language, Numeracy and Digital barriers. We have faced pricing and logistical hurdles bringing trainers from other RTO's to communities and had many refuse to offer the services we require or pricing their delivery outside of acceptable costs.

Current accredited certificates also often do not have the flexibility in delivery or funding availability to allow learners with significant barriers to be supported to complete their training.

Current training for many apprenticeships is delivered from a central location, with participants either required to travel long distances to attend block training modules in a larger city or attempting to learn remotely.

## *What is the one thing you would do to improve the VET experience?*

The largest issue in our experience with VET is access to training, to which the preferred solution is making local face-to-face training courses available in communities. If this could not be achieved, then providing adequate supports, both financial and for wrap-around services that either allow learners to travel to training locations or preferable learn remotely in their community would be the next best improvement to the current system. Supports would need to be robust, tailored and comprehensive to address all barriers to learning outcomes especially in remote communities where significant barriers exist.

## How has TAFE supported your organisation, your industry and/or your community?

We feel it is essential to recognise that while TAFE and other institutions have made significant contributions to vocational education, there have been significant shortfalls in TAFE provided training in regional and remote Queensland communities. In some communities such as those in the Cook region, numerous meetings have been held with community stakeholders with very few outcomes delivered.

### What are the barriers to accessing or delivering quality training and skills for:

- \* *students*
- \* *apprentices and trainees*
- \* *employers*
- \* *registered training organisations*
- \* *other groups? (e.g. peak bodies, unions, community organisations)*

Some of the significant barriers we see in regional and remote VET delivery include:

- **Low Levels of Literacy and Numeracy:** One of the primary challenges we encounter often in training programs is the very low levels of literacy and numeracy among some learners. This makes it difficult for them to fully engage with the training materials and assessments, hindering their overall learning experience and progression. While this has been identified in the current system and supports are mentioned in courses, in our experience these are not often provided to the extent they need to be.
- **Contextualising Training Content:** Standard training materials often lack relevance in geographically isolated areas with specific challenges and demands. Where we have been able to customise training content to suit the unique needs and circumstances of learners, we have been able to make the content more relatable and achieved far better results.
- **Flexible Training Delivery:** Due to the remote nature of our delivery, scheduling training sessions can be challenging. Low class numbers, competing priorities and connectivity challenges all provide barriers to effective training delivery in these communities. The speed at which some cohorts can learn content is also not accounted for in current certifications, leading to many of these learners exiting before completion of their training.

For the external RTO's we work with, the most significant barrier is the significant costs of transporting trainers and necessary equipment to regional and remote sites. In many projects this has limited the number of providers we can access to provide necessary training, and the duration they can spend in a community, impacting the outcomes for learners.

## What is the one thing you would do to improve access to quality training and skills for users of VET, industry and/or communities?

Training needs to be available in rural and remote communities, allowing providers to deliver contextualised, culturally aware, and flexible training that is tailored to the place it is being delivered. This could either be achieved by increasing the funding available to providers to allow profitable place-based training to occur, or by creating mobile training “units” that could travel between rural and remote communities.

## What is one thing government could do differently to improve employer and industry input to training that meets workforce needs and delivers student outcomes?

If place-based training is the preferred solution, providers must be willing to embark on rigorous co-design processes with the communities they wish to deliver within. This would ensure that training not only meets the needs of learners, but also local industry needs. A flexible framework would need to be developed that would allow for more flexibility in core units to allow training to be truly tailored.

## How can we support the following groups to access the training they need to set them up for success:

- \* *students*
- \* *apprentices and trainees*
- \* *employers*
- \* *registered training organisations*
- \* *other groups? (e.g. peak bodies, unions, community organisations)*

Most of the job seekers we work with are in remote Queensland communities, so the solutions we have called for earlier in this submission are the most likely to support their needs. To reiterate, this would involve greater levels of financial support to allow providers to co-design and deliver place-based training in rural and remote communities. This should be coupled with greater flexibility in prescribed core units in some certifications and with timing, teaching and assessment methods. Through this flexibility, training that meets the needs of local jobseekers and employers will be delivered where it is most needed, creating skilled workforces where they are in the greatest demand. This would minimise wasted spend on non-targeted training outcomes and allow greater funding to be allocated to providing meaningful and valuable training, as well as potentially creating an environment where greater incentives could be offered to trainees and their employers.