The Coaldrake and Joyce Reviews into Australia's Tertiary Education Systems

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In 2013 the Australian tertiary education landscape looked like this¹ and it is not getting any simpler!

(i) Coaldrake Review

In October 2018 the Commonwealth Minister for Education, the Hon. Dan Tehan MP announced that Australia’s Higher Education Provider Category Standards will be reviewed to ensure the sector has the capacity to meet the evolving needs of students, employers and the wider community. A discussion paper has been released. This will be followed by community and stakeholder consultations. The final review report is expected to be submitted to Government in the second half of 2019. It is important the Non-University Higher Education Providers such as EEI contribute to the discussion so that our place in the future of the complicated tertiary education landscape is fit for our future mission and vision.

* These papers are for internal discussion within CESA: on topics related to CESA’s Mission and Vision.

Emeritus Professor Peter Coaldrake AO\(^2\) will lead the review and examine the different types of higher education providers in Australia, including universities and non-university providers.

All higher education providers must meet conditions around

- research,
- community engagement and
- quality assurance.

The review will examine whether the standards should evolve to improve the flexibility and transparency of the sector.

Furthermore, the relationship between the Higher Education sector and the Vocational Education and Training sector cannot be ignored given the number of dual-sector providers.\(^3\) Related to this there is also a VET Review.

(ii) Joyce Review

This Review will focus on how the Australian Government’s investment in VET could be more effective to provide Australians with the skills they need to be successful throughout their working life. It will also focus on ensuring Australian businesses, including small and family businesses and businesses in rural and regional areas, have the skills they need to support their business growth.

The Expert Review will be led by the Hon. Steven Joyce, former New Zealand Minister for Tertiary Education, Skills and Employment, and Minister for Finance, who will bring fresh eyes to consideration of Australia’s VET sector and insights from the New Zealand reform experience.

Mr Joyce will host a series of focused discussions with states and territories, and industry, employer, student and workforce groups. Mr Joyce will deliver a report to Government in March of next year, focused on practical steps the Australian Government could take to improve our VET sector, alongside a longer term road map for the future. The Review may seek information from any persons or bodies that it considers relevant. It will accept submissions from interested parties.

1. The Review will have regard to VET funding, policy and regulatory settings and how they can be optimised to support both school leavers and workers to maximise the achievement of relevant skills and employment outcomes from the VET sector.
2. It will examine skills shortages in VET-related occupations, in particular any tension between VET outcomes and the needs of industries and employers, and what might be done to better align these.
3. It will consider expected changes in future work patterns and the impact of new technologies and how the VET sector can prepare Australians for those changes and the opportunities they will bring.
4. The Review may consider the flexibility of qualification structures, particularly for mid-career workers, and for industries seeking rapid deployment of new skills.
5. The Review may have regard to community perceptions of the effectiveness of the VET sector and the accessibility and utility of information about VET options and outcomes, both for employers and students, including information linking training options to employment outcomes.

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\(^2\) Professor Coaldrake is the former Vice-Chancellor of Queensland University of Technology, and previous Chair of both Universities Australia and the Australian Technology Network of Universities.

6. It may review whether additional support is needed for vulnerable cohorts, including those currently unemployed and at risk of unemployment, or those with low literacy and numeracy skills.

7. The Review may seek out case studies of best practice in VET, and consider whether specific trials should be undertaken to test innovative approaches likely to deliver better outcomes.

8. The Review should have regard to the scope and outcomes from any previous or forthcoming reviews, consultation to date, and inputs made by industry and peak groups.

Postscripts


- A copy of the Review undertaken by the Hon Steven Joyce is now available on the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet website, including copies of all submissions to the Review.