Years 9 to 12 Review Workshops

19-20 February 2018

Report

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Contents

Years 9 to 12 Review Workshops

Purpose

The Years 9 to 12 Review Report (ACER, 2016) made several recommendations to improve attendance, retention and attainment outcomes for all Tasmanian school-aged students and is available at: https://www.education.tas.gov.au/parents-carers/school-colleges/years-9-12-review/

The purpose of the workshops held on the 19-20 February 2018 in Hobart was to bring together representatives from all education sectors including principals and teachers (i.e. Tasmanian government schools, Catholic Education Tasmania and Independent Schools of Tasmania), TASC (Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards & Certification),TasTAFE and the University of Tasmania to discuss a way forward to implement the recommendations of the Year 9 to 12 Review Report (ACER, 2016).

The workshop participants (Attachment A) agreed that the overarching purpose in implementing these recommendations is a focus on learner outcomes, and specifically to "provide young people in Tasmania with a contemporary, rigorous, coherent and engaging curriculum in Years 9 to 12, positioning them to live fulfilling, productive and responsible lives." With this overarching purpose as the focus, the workshops had four main outcomes, which were to:

- productively discuss the work needed to develop the Years 9 to 12 Curriculum Framework in alignment with other actions being implemented in response to the Years 9 to 12 Review, and senior secondary reform in Tasmania more broadly;
- discuss the:
    - scope of work required to develop the Years 9 to 12 Curriculum Framework (including timeframes)
    - potential structure and governance of working groups
    - mechanisms for coordinating related outputs between working groups
    - intersection points with other initiatives/projects;
- identify the risks/issues/challenges of different approaches to undertaking the work; and
- provide the Facilitator with sufficient information to develop recommendations on the structure and governance of working groups for the Years 9 to 12 Steering Committee's consideration to be presented in this workshop report.

Participants

The workshops involved 29 participants drawn from different stakeholder groups, schooling sectors (government, Catholic and independent), and areas of expertise. A full list of the participants is at Attachment A.

Process

The workshops were structured to enable maximum engagement by and input from the participants and to ensure the proposals and directions arising from the two days were co-constructed. Discussion groups were mixed to ensure different perspectives were provided in deliberations, dialogue and determinations proposed by the respective groups.

Outcomes

In keeping with the stated purpose of the workshops a list of recommendations developed by the Facilitator based on the outcomes of the workshops are outlined in this report.

Goals and Sub-goals

As stated previously, the overarching purpose of the Years 9 to 12 Review Workshops was to provide young people in Tasmania with a contemporary, rigorous, coherent and engaging curriculum in Years 9 to 12, positioning them to live fulfilling, productive and responsible lives.

Key messages provided by participants at the commencement of and throughout the Workshops centred on this purpose and included the following advice and commitments:

- the focus needs to be firmly on what we want for our Tasmanian students – the skills/capabilities for successful employment and life;

- an aspirational, world-class curriculum is needed – we want the very best for our young people;

- the curriculum will make a real difference in the lives of our students - we will create an engaging curriculum with more streamlined assessment processes;

- we will provide timely and transparent information about each student's progress and what is to follow in their learning journey; and

- each student's learning journey will be chosen to meet their interests, needs and aspirations – students will be assessed in a way that is responsive to their individual learning pathways and recognise what they have achieved.

Three strategic **Goals** and three enabling sub-goals were developed during the two day Workshops. The three **Goals**, which are based on the stated primary objectives, are:

1. Developing a pathways approach to Years 9 to 12 education;
2. Scoping of work required and timeframes to develop a high quality Years 9 to 12 Curriculum Framework; and
3. Clarifying the status and provision of Vocational Education and Training (VET) and Vocational Education and Learning (VEL)

The sub-goals, which were discussed as enabling elements for the successful delivery of these **Goals**, are:

- clarifying the structure and governance of working groups;

- coordination of outputs between the working groups; and

- identification of risks, issues and challenges.

Key matters raised and proposed under these **Goals** and sub-goals are outlined in pages 7-19.

Goal 1: Developing a pathways approach to Years 9 to 12 education

Learning experiences in senior secondary schools need to ensure flexible pathways to accommodate more diverse learners and educational outcomes (Zammit et al., 2007; Boyd, McDowall & Farral, 2006; te Riele, 2014).

The pace of change across the Globe in recent years has brought into hard focus acceptance that the capabilities today's students need for a fulfilling life extend far beyond those required by young people from previous times (Griffin et al, 2012; Saavedra and Opfer, 2012; Trilling and Fadel, 2012; Voogt et al., 2012; Rotherham and Willingham, 2010; MCEETYA, 2008; Bruett, 2006; OECD, 2005; Autor et al., 2003)

Workshop objective:

To determine flexible and meaningful pathways provisions from Years 9 through to Years 12 to engage young people in Tasmania's government, Catholic and independent schools in purposeful learning, and maximising post-schooling destinations/options for them.

Focus:

The workshop participants were asked to consider the current and desirable pathways provisions for Years 9 to 12 students in government, Catholic and independent secondary schools in order to maximise attendance, attainment, engagement and transition to work, further study or training. Matters considered included whether such pathways would be linear in structure based on pre-determined sets of pathways or designed to enable multiple pathway options (including accumulation models).

Several limitations, challenges and opportunities concerning current and potential future pathways models were identified through the workshop process. These included the extent to which the current model and course provisions i) support the full range of students meeting the requirements of the *Education Act 2016*, and ii) provide the quality of learning and skill development required for post-schooling destinations. Another matter concerned the extent to which courses developed under

the Years 9 to 12 Curriculum Framework would or should continue to reflect requirements concerning each of the five standards[1].

There was universal agreement at the workshops that there should be seamless transition in curriculum course provision for students from Years 9 through to Year 12. Further, it was agreed that a student's pattern of study should enable her or him to build on prior learning (knowledge, skills, understanding and dispositions) and to ensure that the available options, regardless of where a student is located (or schooling sector he/she belongs to), are both engaging and rewarding in terms of post-schooling options.

Key points/issues noted:

Based on the viewpoints raised and discussed at the workshops regarding a pathways approach to Years 9 to 12 the following key points/issues were noted:

- the student cohort is diverse;

- course provisions and options need to cater for those students with complex needs or whom in the past have disengaged from education;

- there are currently too many courses and many of these lack breadth and depth;

- ensure that the blending of VET for school students and academic courses within a selected pathway is structurally supported;

- it is not sufficient to create pathways – the pathways must be meaningful in terms of the rewarding and beneficial outcomes they provide for students;

- ensure literacy and numeracy skills, Information and Communications Technology (ICT skills) and understanding of society are acquired within the Years 9 to 12 continuum regardless of the pathways provided/taken;

- ensure that appropriate and regular professional learning is provided to increase the capacity and expertise of those providing students with pathways advice;

- the development of "soft skills" (such as communication, team work, social awareness, intercultural understanding, problem solving, initiative) for post-schooling destinations and to equip them for contemporary life should be embedded in course content, where relevant;

- avoid pathway structures that limit post-schooling choices; and

- project-based and transdisciplinary learning models need to be explored within and across course provision as a means for providing students with relevant and meaningful learning experiences.

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[1] The five standards for the award of the Tasmanian Certificate of Education: Participation and achievement standard; Everyday adult reading and writing in English standard; Everyday adult mathematics standard; Everyday adult use of computers and the internet standard; Develop and review future career and education plans standard.

Recommendations:

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

1. *The curriculum for senior secondary students be developed based on a developmental model from Years 9 through to Year 12 that is sufficiently flexible to enable multiple pathways regardless of where students are undertaking their schooling in Tasmania.*

2. *The Australian Curriculum's general capabilities (https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/general-capabilities/) and Core Skills for Work (https://www.education.gov.au/core-skills-work-developmental-framework) be embedded, where relevant, in Years 9 to 12 courses.*

Goal 2: Scoping of work required and timeframes to develop a high quality Years 9 to 12 Curriculum Framework

A good quality curriculum is most likely to be achieved as a result of good quality curriculum development processes: planned and systematic; inclusive and consultative; led by curriculum professionals; cyclical in nature; sustainable (UNESCO, 2016).

Alignment between what is in the curriculum, what is assessed, and what is taught provides the best opportunity for students to learn and truly demonstrate what they have achieved (Martone & Sireci, 2009).

Workshop objective:

To discuss and identify the range of tasks and processes to be undertaken to develop high quality curriculum and assessment (school-based and external) for students in Years 9 and 12 through systematic planning to ensure alignment and coherence within an achievable timeframe.

Focus:

Several processes were employed using a logic model over the two days to enable the participants to identify the sequential steps, relevant time periods required and alignment of relationships between each step, and the internal and external dependencies associated with each task to develop each of the following:

- the Years 9 to 12 curriculum framework;
- a workforce development strategy (teachers' capacity building);
- a curriculum framework that includes an approach to assessment that will guide both school-based and external assessment processes and events;
- an accreditation framework; and
- a certification framework.

Steps required for the development of each of the above frameworks and strategies were identified, discussed and clarified. The scope of work was then considered in a holistic manner to determine internal and external dependencies, alignments, critical pathways and junctures where the Years 9 to 12 Steering Committee would be

required to make a determination both in terms of alignment and quality prior to further tasks being carried out by working groups.

Key points/issues noted:

Based on the viewpoints raised and discussed at the workshops regarding the scoping of work required and the timeframes to develop the Years 9 to 12 Curriculum Framework the following key points/issues were noted:

- there is a need for a structure to support the authorising body (the Years 9 to 12 Steering Committee) both in terms of the coordination of work being undertaken and the alignment between the various workstreams;
- senior executives and representatives of the Steering Committee should have a line of sight across all the work being undertaken; and,
- the risks associated with the scope of work to be undertaken are many and varied; hence the need to identify all risks and to monitor progress and outcomes in relation to these risks and the effectiveness of the preventive strategies.

Recommendations:

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

3. *A Years 9 to 12 Project Team (representing and supported by the key stakeholders) or alternative mechanisms/approach be formed to ensure close coordination of the work is undertaken by the different working groups.*

4. *A working group be formed for each of the following major work streams: curriculum and assessment (with the VET working group as a sub-group); workforce support; accreditation and certification.*

5. *The work undertaken by these groups be guided by a strategic plan endorsed by the Steering Committee,*

6. *Information collected through the workshops be used as the basis for the development of a comprehensive Years 9 to 12 Strategic Plan.*

Goal 3: Clarifying the status and provision of Vocational Education and Training and Vocational Education and Learning for Years 9-12 students

Vocational education for students in schools needs to be highly valued and effectively implemented (Gibbin, 2018, Strauss, 2017; Porter, 2006).

Students who study a VET qualification at school are more likely to succeed studying higher level VET qualifications and gain apprenticeships or other employment when they leave school (NSW Department of Education, 2017)

Workshop objective:

To clarify and confirm the status, scope and provision of Vocational Education and Learning (VEL)[2] and Vocational Education and Training VET)[3] by students in Years 9 to 12.

Focus:

The workshop participants were asked to contribute their views and clarify the status, extent and scope of both Vocational Education and Learning (VEL) and Vocational Education and Training(VET) within a reformed Years 9 to Year 12 curriculum and schooling system.

A key matter considered by the participants included the extent to which both VET and VEL should be an entitlement for students or an optional provision where resources are available.

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[2] Vocational Education and Learning (VEL) helps students explore the world of work, identify career possibilities, educational pathways and build career development skills. In Tasmania, Vocational Education and Learning is made up of the following components: (i) career education; (ii) work related curriculum; and, (iii) Vocational Education and Training (VET)

[3] Vocational Education and Training (VET) offers nationally recognised training programs that lead to Australian qualifications across a range of industries. VET includes training package and accredited courses, and Australian School-based Apprenticeships and Traineeships.

Another key matter considered by participants was the focus of VET and/or VEL in schools. This relates to refining the provision and choice of VET packages and/or VEL courses to the vocational areas considered as being of either: (i) most benefit to Tasmania's current and future workforce and economic needs or (ii) a less targeted approach based solely on students' interests and the availability of resources and funds.

Key points/issues noted:

Based on the viewpoints raised and discussed at the workshops regarding the status and provision of VET and VEL, the following key points/issues were noted:

- VET should be recognised as being of equivalent value to other curriculum provisions in schools;

- it is recognised that school and community perceptions can influence the provision of and status given to VET. It is important, therefore, to develop a marketing and communication strategy specifically for VET;

- there is a need for clearer post-school articulation between VET programs offered in or by schools and further training or work;

- while it would be desirable for VET provision to be accessible for students "on demand" this is not considered feasible at this time; and,

- VEL is required for all students and needs to be a supported provision. However, the provision has to be based on contemporary and future employment skills and understandings regarding the nature of work. This will require capacity building and quality professional learning for staff in schools responsible for VEL and for providing/facilitating work exposure including work placements.

Recommendations:

Accordingly, it is recommended that:

7. *VET be recognised as having equivalent status to other curriculum provisions and that promotional and marketing strategies are developed to reflect this status.*

8. *While it is recognised that current circumstances limit the provision of VET as an "on demand" provision in all schools, that strategic planning be undertaken to extend VET for universal provision ensuring that regardless of where a student is located she/he will can access VET should that support future pathway choices.*

9. *In addition to other intended areas, the forthcoming VET Forum address the following three areas:*

   - *short and long term planning for access to VET and VEL for school students;*

- *setting VET and VEL targets and provision across Tasmania with an aim for increased provision/access; and,*

- *establishing/increasing and supporting Industry-school partnerships in VET and VEL.*

Sub-goal A: Structure and governance of working groups

> ***Workshop objective:***
>
> To consider the structure and governance of the proposed working groups

Focus:

The workshop participants were asked to consider the composition of working groups required to undertake the actions identified in Goal 2 discussions.

In considering the formation of such groups, participants were asked to determine the capabilities and perspectives required by those appointed to such groups in keeping with the particular outputs required. Key considerations in this regard included whether:

- specific expertise in a designated field relevant to the deliverables was required;
- representation of a specific stakeholder group was necessary; and/or
- the "voice" of a stakeholder group nominee would be beneficial.

Another consideration was the extent to which each group required leadership at a senior level in order to undertake assigned tasks with the level of authority needed and to provide a line of sight for the Steering Committee in terms of the work being undertaken and the management of issues and/or risks.

Key points/issues noted:

Based on the viewpoints raised and discussed at the workshops regarding the structure and governance of working groups the following key points/issues were noted:

- expertise is required on each working group, however, an appropriate balance needs to be achieved by including in its membership those with insight into the implications of proposed changes for schooling systems and those who can provide a "voice" in relation to the operational impact in schools;
- a member of the Project Team or alternative mechanism/approach should be assigned to each working group;

- a mechanism is required to ensure that the work of each group is informed by and aligned to the work being undertaken by other groups; and,

- the timing of work being undertaken by each group needs to be monitored carefully to ensure dependencies are honoured and outputs delivered in accordance with stated delivery dates.

Sub-goal B: Coordination of outputs between the working groups

Workshop objective:

To discuss mechanisms and processes required to co-ordinate the outputs of
working groups

Focus:

In addition to determining the logical sequencing of the tasks to be undertaken in the
development of the Years 9 to 12 curriculum and assessment, workforce support
and accreditation and certification frameworks, the explicit need for alignment
between the various deliverables (outputs) was highlighted by the participants. Of
particular concern for them was avoidance of undue influence by one aspect of the
overall structural elements developed for Years 9 to 12 on other outputs. A specific
area here relates to assessment determinations driving practice rather than a well-
developed, articulated and developmental curriculum directing teaching and learning.

A related matter for participants was the need for the principles established through
the development of the Years 9 to 12 Curriculum Framework to inform all
contributing work impacting on Years 9 to 12 schooling. In this way, the approach to
curriculum, teaching, learning, assessing and reporting student achievement
(including certification) would be coherent, aligned and rigorous.

Key points/issues noted:

Based on the viewpoints raised and discussed at the workshops regarding the
coordination of outputs between the working groups the following key points/issues
were noted:

- there is a need for a Project Team or alternative mechanism/approach to be
  formed with two specific roles: i) coordinating and monitoring the activities and
  tasks being undertaken by each working group and ii) facilitating reports from
  each working group to the Steering Committee at each of its meetings; and,
- there is a need for timely reporting on the progress of work being undertaken by
  each working group at each Steering Committee meeting, with associated risks
  and dependencies identified.

Sub-goal C: Identifying the risks, issues and challenges

Workshop objective:

To identify potential risks, issues and challenges regarding the delivery of Goals 1-3 and discuss and propose possible preventative actions.

Focus:

While various risks, issues and challenges were identified over the duration of the two days, a specific task was undertaken by the participants to highlight the key issues and associated risks and the interventions and controls (preventative actions) required to minimise and manage these.

Foremost in the list of risks identified over the two days and through the process described above was the extent of work required to be completed prior to the implementation date. This highlighted the need for the work being undertaken by the different working groups to be closely coordinated, for the respective deliverables to be completed within an agreed timeframe (or preferably ahead of time, and for the Steering Committee to be fully briefed when critical decisions are required.

Key points/issues noted:

Based on the viewpoints raised and discussed at the workshops regarding risks, issues and challenges the following outcomes key issues, risks and preventative actions were noted:

Issue	*Risk*	*Preventative Action*
Overall timeline	The extent of work to be undertaken within the designated timeframe presents significant risks in terms of delivery and quality	- Ensure that the plans have clear milestones - Develop a realistic timeframe and phase the rollout
Sustainability of leadership	Loss of focus owing to changes in leadership during the reform process	A well-documented strategic plan to guide the work of current and future leaders

Issue	Risk	Preventative Action
Reforms not understood	Loss of confidence in TASC, school authorities and schools	• Clear and regular communication • Quality professional learning provided • Milestones acknowledged and celebrated
Managing the unknowns	Unexpected barriers presenting during the course of the reform process	• Detailed risk analysis and ongoing monitoring of risks
Complexity of the project	Parental concern regarding changes and timeframes	• Transition timelines and phased introduction • Clear communication • Milestones acknowledged and celebrated
Recruitment of teachers	Teachers not having the necessary skills and capabilities	• Phase the rollout to ensure recruitment processes are in place to meet need
Development of resources	Insufficient time to develop good quality resources for teachers to support new curricula and pedagogy	• Resource development to align with curriculum development • Targeting of new content areas/teaching practices and utilising resources developed by other jurisdictions • Facilitating peer-developed resource strategies
Time constraints in consulting	The "windows" for consultation may be narrow owing to the timeframe	• Ensure consultation periods are known well in advance and various strategies are employed to obtain feedback
Line of sight to the Review	The interdependencies of different project elements will add to the complexity of the project.	• Project Team or alternative mechanism/approach and work stream sponsors on Steering Committee to provide the line of sight across all activities being undertaken and back to the original Review

Issue	Risk	Preventative Action
Readiness of schools and teachers	Reduced implementation planning due to timeframes	• Broad consultation • Clear and regular communication • Quality professional learning • Well-developed resources
Assessment of each school's readiness and openness regarding the changes	The level of each school's preparedness for the changes ahead are unknown	• Targeted "just in time" support • Phased roll-out with regular checks on how each school is tracking
Development of professional learning: timing and content	Significant professional learning may be required for teachers and the opportunity to develop this and provide it will create many challenges	• A working group has been formed to ensure the professional learning needs of teachers is supported through close coordination with the other working groups

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Recommendations

It is recommended that:

    I.   *The curriculum for Years 9 to 12 students be developed based on a developmental model from Years 9 through to Year 12 that is sufficiently flexible to enable multiple pathways regardless of where students are undertaking their schooling in Tasmania.*

    II.   *The Australian Curriculum's general capabilities and Core Skills for Work be embedded, where relevant, in Years 9 to 12 courses.*

    III.   *A Years 9 to 12 Project Team (representing and supported by the key stakeholders) or alternative mechanism/approach be formed to ensure close coordination of the work is undertaken by the different working groups.*

    IV.   *A working group be formed for each of the following major work streams: curriculum and assessment (with the VET working group as a sub-group); workforce support; accreditation and certification.*

    V.   *The work undertaken by these groups be guided by a strategic plan endorsed by the Steering Committee.*

    VI.   *Information collected through the workshops be used as the basis for the development of a comprehensive Years 9 to 12 Strategic Plan.*

    VII.   *VET be recognised as having equivalent status to other curriculum provisions and that promotional and marketing strategies are developed to reflect this status.*

    VIII.   *While it is recognised that current circumstances limit the provision of VET as an "on demand" provision in all schools, that strategic planning be undertaken to extend VET for universal provision ensuring that regardless of where a student is located she/he will can access VET should that support future pathway choices.*

    IX.   *In addition to other intended areas, the forthcoming VET Forum address the following three areas:*

        o   *Short and long term planning for access to VET and VEL for school students*

        o   *Setting VET and VEL targets and provision across Tasmania with an aim for increased provision/access*

        o   *Establishing/increasing and supporting Industry-school partnerships in VET and VEL*

Attachment A – List of Participants

Participant	Organisation	Position
Adam Chambers	Independent Schools Tasmania	Teacher, Friends
Alanna Stretton	Catholic Education Tasmania	2017 Deputy Principal Marist Regional College/2018 Tasmanian Catholic Education Office/ Education Officer: Secondary/Senior Secondary
Andrew Oakley	Department of Education	Education Performance and Review, Data Specialist
Craig Deayton	Catholic Education Tasmania	Principal, Guildford Young College
Deb Day	Department of Education	Principal – Rosny College
Erika Alacs	Department of Education	Project Officer – Year 9-12 Review, Vocational Learning and Career Education
Fiona Lowethal	Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards & Certification	Policy and Communications Officer
Helen Dosser	Independent Schools Tasmania	Teacher, Scotch Oakburn
Jane Allwright	Tasmanian Secondary Colleges RTO	Executive Officer
Jenny Burgess	Department of Education	Deputy Secretary, Strategy and Performance
Jodee Wilson	Department of Education	Deputy Secretary, Support and Development
Katrina Beams	Office of Tasmanian Assessment, Standards & Certification	Executive Officer
Kerryn Meredith-Sotiris	TasTAFE	Division Manager, Technology Trades and Engineering
Marie Phillips	Department of Education	Years 11 and 12 Extension Project Officer
Mark Gleeson	Department of Education	Principal Education Officer – Extension Schools, North

Participant	Organisation	Position
Matthew Derrick	Catholic Education Tasmania	Deputy Principal and Teacher, Guildford Young College
Megan Gunn	Department of Education	Director, Vocational Learning and Career Education
Professor Kitty te Riele	Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment, University of Tasmania	Deputy Director (Research)
Stuart Hollingsworth	Skills Tasmania	Director - Workforce Policy and Strategic Relations
Suzanne Pennicott-Jones	Department of Education	Director, Curriculum Services
Terese Phillips	Independent Schools Tasmania	Manager, Education Services
Tom Dorey	Catholic Education Tasmania	Executive Officer, Directorate & Governing Councils
Tony Woodward	Department of Education	Assistant Director, Curriculum – Senior Secondary/ Manager – Aboriginal Education
Wendy Spencer	Department of Education	Director, Education Act Implementation and Organisational Change