

Hunter Trade College

ABN: 49 119 150 159 RTO: 91287



CURRICULUM

- While BOSTES is very supportive of VET in the HSC organising a curriculum package for a student who wants breadth or depth of VET qualifications can be challenging within the current HSC pattern of study (see below)
 - at least six units from Board Developed Courses;
 - at least two units of a Board Developed Course in English (English Studies Content Endorsed Course satisfies the pattern of study English requirement);
 - at least three courses of two units value or greater (either Board Developed or Board Endorsed Courses); and
 - at least four subjects.

This pattern of study provides for an ATAR pathway but is not as supportive of a Vocational outcome. The area that can be most difficult to navigate is the requirement for 6 units of Board Developed Courses. Many schools require a student undertaking a School based apprenticeship or traineeship (SBAT) to maintain a full pattern of study regardless of the VET course attached to the SBAT. This puts a considerable strain on the student who is expected to keep up with 10 units of work, much of this in examinable subjects, while missing out on 1-2 days of schooling per week to undertake their work program. We had an example of this a few years ago when a large mining services company in the Hunter put on 3 SBT students, 1 from HTC and 2 from DEC schools. At the end of Yr 11 the Apprentice Master asked if we would allow the 2 DEC students to enrol at HTC. When I asked why he explained that he believed school pressure was impacting on their ability to complete the traineeship. I declined the request for obvious reasons! Another issue of concern with the pattern of study is if an existing Industry Curriculum Framework moves from Board Developed status to Board Endorsed status (a possibility for Engineering). This would further exacerbate pattern of study issues for schools with non-ATAR VET pathways

Many schools I work with do not use IBL as part of their pattern of study as they are not sure what will happen if the SBAT falls over. Technically the student would need to be withdrawn from IBL. This is not a big issue if it occurs at the end of the preliminary year but can be a concern if the SBAT falls over early in the year. I have had experience with some schools who do enrol the SBAT student in IBL but have the student maintain a full 12 unit pattern of study as well. This often leads to further stress for the student and may lead to the student pulling out of the SBAT.

The number of students wanting to undertake apprenticeships' or other non-tertiary training appears to have been fairly stable in recent years. These students would traditionally leave school after the School Certificate. With the increase of the leaving age for students there needs to be a review of HSC patterns of study to better reflect the interests of student who do not wish to undertake an ATAR. A HSC that allows maximum flexibility in subject choice and the ability to choose multiple VET courses, foundation skills courses and school developed courses targeting specific local needs would assist providing students with the outcomes they seek, mainly employment. The removal or revision of the pattern of study rules listed above would go a long way in assisting in this goal. In particular a review of the requirement for 6 units of Board Developed Courses would assist trade schools like ourselves in tailoring a package to suit our student's needs, especially when a VET course may change from Board developed status to Board endorsed status.

S K I L L S



K N O W L E D G E



E T H I C S

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES

- BOSTES currently issue VET qualifications for the majority of NSW schools. The EBOS VCS system collects this data via the School Online software. Schools are required to enter enrolment & completion data for competencies contained within each VET course. This forms the basis for the generation of the VET testamur and AVETMISS reporting to the Commonwealth. Trade schools such as Hunter Trade College can issue their own credentials and generate AVETMISS Reports as required by the National Regulator (ASQA). Having to also enter this data for BOSTES purposes adds considerable duplication with the associated administrative burden. When cross referencing both sets of data there are generally inconsistencies which require further investigation. The ability for a school-based RTO to “opt out” of using the VCS system would assist trade schools greatly in the administrative nightmare attached to VET reporting. The ability to simply enrol the student in the VET subject to show that a HSC pattern of study is being undertaken would remove some of the administrative duplication associated with VET
- Alignment between regulatory bodies and the legislation that governs both VET delivery (Commonwealth) and Education (State) should take into account the additional impacts on trade schools. The most pressing of these is the interaction between teacher accreditation requirements and ASQA requirements for delivery of a VET qualification. We currently employ a VET trainer to deliver a number of VET qualifications. The trainer does not teach any HSC non-VET courses. We are required to apply for an exemption every 3 years in order to employ the trainer. This is stressful for the trainer as we can only offer contract employment rather than permanent employment. This is not a requirement on private RTO's or TAFE who deliver a VET course to secondary school students. It would be very helpful if there was a level of accreditation that allowed VET trainers the opportunity to be part of the accreditation system. The entry requirements should be:
 1. Hold a current Certificate IV in Assessment and Training, or its equivalent as deemed by ASQA
 2. Hold the equivalent VET qualification/trade or licence

This would then allow a trade school the ability to hire staff on a long term basis and provide some certainty of on-going delivery

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