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## REVIEW OF EQUITY AND ACCESS PROGRAM

### FEATURES



### REGULAR ITEMS



### SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

# Editorial

*In a speech delivered to a three-day National Participation and Equity Conference on 3 September 1984, the Prime Minister stated that it was essential that educational opportunities in Australia be made more equal, and he committed his Government to taking a major step in that direction. This commitment was reflected in Volume I of the Report for the 1985-87 Triennium of the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission which urged all sectors of tertiary education to strive for "increased participation by young people and greater access for disadvantaged groups".*

*Since 1985 the Federal Government has each year invited universities and colleges to propose ways of achieving these objectives. Approximately one million dollars has been allocated each year to the successful projects, these being distributed among 42 tertiary institutions around Australia.*

*When I was asked to be Guest Editor of this edition of* HERDSA News, *I decided at once that I would devote it to some sort of review of what has happened within the Federal Government's Equity and Access Program over the past four years. After all, this program would appear already to have affected the ways in which higher education institutions view themselves and their students, and it is even arguable that it has begun to bring about a profound change to the very nature and purposes of higher education.*

*Of course, the effects of such a program will be very complex. Some institutions will be much more resistant to change than others; some will need to attract additional students while others will have a large unmet demand; some will be economically vulnerable and will be desperate for additional funding while others may have well-established sources of income in addition to Government funding; some may see their futures depending upon building a reputation for maintaining and conserving long-established practices and traditions. For these and many other reasons, the full impact of Federal Government intervention will be difficult to gauge.*

*Nevertheless, we could expect the program to produce some extremely interesting outcomes. The program has resulted in four million dollars being channelled into what are, in effect, some forty-odd research and development activities. These have not been "big R" research activities and they may lack some of the prestige associated with much traditional academic research; but they have been attempts by people "working at the coalface" to define certain kinds of educational difficulties, to postulate ways of overcoming those difficulties, to implement particular courses of action and finally to evaluate the effectiveness of that action. This may prove to be a watershed in the history of higher education in this country.*

*What has made these research and development activities especially interesting is that they have focused upon ways in which higher education can be made more accessible to groups of people previously under-represented within it. Consequently they have directly or indirectly raised very fundamental and previously unasked questions about the nature of such education. Why are some groups of people under-represented while others are not? What are the conditions necessary to provide a more equitable higher education system? To what extent are universities and colleges themselves responsible for student attrition and failure, and how can they better develop the intellectual and imaginative capacities of all of their students? Should equity and access programs be essentially "remedial" programs which are separate from and peripheral to mainstream courses, or should they be innovative developments within mainstream practices which will enable us to design and teach* all *of our courses more appropriately and effectively? The articles in this edition suggest some answers.*

*Hanne Bock describes how she had initially believed that many Social Science students at La Trobe University needed remedial "supplementary tuition" before they could achieve a satisfactory level of academic literacy, but has come to consider such an approach as ineffective and inappropriate. She concludes that an effective equity program needs to expand and change the perceptions of both staff and students concerning the nature of literacy and the very process of learning itself.*

*In Western Australia Alex Main wondered whether the academic success of students at Murdoch University might be closely related to their English "proficiency" as measured by a Tertiary Entrance Examination, but could find no evidence to support this. He concludes that it is more important to focus on how to teach these students effectively in the university context than on what they might or might not have done in secondary school.*

*Back in Victoria, Bryan Barwood was discovering that students from working class schools were notably under-represented at Monash. What is new is the evidence which he is accumulating to suggest that it is possible to achieve both a more representative intake* and *pleasing levels of academic success.*

*Across the border Helen McGregor was being shocked to discover that there was a desperate shortage of Engineering graduates in Australia, that very few women entered Engineering courses and that, despite this, only a minority within the profession favoured action to increase the intake of female students. Her work suggests, however, that covert educational discrimination on the basis of gender can be countered.*

*The most dramatic Australian examples of inequity and discrimination in education occur among Aboriginal people. Keith McConnochie and Rosie Farrow make it clear that even these can be confronted and overcome, but they offer a number of salutary warnings. They stress that social justice in education cannot be achieved by any easy or single action: an effective equity program needs to develop practices and policies which will allow bridging courses, selection and admission procedures, orientation programs and support services for students to be matched with inservice and development activities for staff.*

*Taken as a group these articles suggest that higher education in Australia is undergoing significant change. The institutions which they represent seem to be taking some direct responsibility for the difficulties which particular groups in our society have experienced in either gaining access to or coping with their courses; and all of them are actively engaged in finding new and better ways of developing the intellectual potential of people, regardless of their gender, class or ethnic background. If this is representative of what is going on around the country, then a quite profound change is indeed occurring.*

*If nothing else I hope that this edition will provide a stimulus for more detailed analysis of the nature and the direction of the changes we are experiencing. The annual conference of HERDSA to be held in Adelaide next year is being designed to provide a forum for just such an analysis; perhaps you should prepare a paper over the Christmas break.*

*Vic Beasley,*
*Flinders University.*

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# In Search of a Task

An effective equity program must expand and change the perceptions of both staff and students, concludes Hanne Bock after nearly a decade of experience advising students at La Trobe University.

Supplementary tuition was first made available to students of the School of Social Sciences at La Trobe University in 1979, when the School appointed an adviser in the use of English. The adviser was me. The School saw its students as intellectually able but hampered by inadequate expression and study skills. It was my task to improve these skills by teaching remedial English, essay structure and related study skills, and by maintaining cooperative links with the various services on campus.

From the School's point of view, the stress was on the goal. Apart from broad guidelines, I was left free to define the particular nature of my contribution in amongst departmental teaching, study skills counselling, EFL/ESL instruction and the vast supply of English expression and study skills guides available in print in Bookshop and Library.

My first move was to define my task negatively in relation to these resources, reasoning that if cooperation was to have any meaning, my contribution had to be "something else". In working out what that was, I started exploring why my students were doing what they were doing: what kind of problems were referred to me as literacy problems, what kind of writing escaped such censure and why it escaped. All the while, demands increased. In 1981 this led to the appointment of Helene Lewit. Helene scoffed at my assumptions. I sneered at hers. We could not but get on.

Defining and re-defining the nature of our task and the means by which to carry it out has remained our main preoccupation. As this pursuit has determined shape, form and objectives of our Equity projects, the assumptions on which they were based and the expectations we had of them, I will in this paper give an account of the main steps in a development which culminated in three years of Equity projects beginning in 1985.

I began by accepting the remediation concept, accepting the premise that there were gaps in students' language competence which could be filled by basic instruction and practice in morphology and syntax. Tuition was individual and based on students' own work. I soon found that the quality of a student's written expression was capable of changing between sections of any one essay, between different types of essay and between essays from different disciplines. I also found that often the quality of expression fell from HSC essays to first term university essays. But although HSC essays showed fewer errors, the errors were of a similar kind to those which had exploded in the university essays. I therefore persevered with formal language instruction and as numbers increased, I began to arrange students in groups with shared problems.

That didn't get me far. I found that groups established on the basis of common problems in expression worked poorly. Attendance was low and the tuition had little effect upon subsequent essays. Students felt that the tuition was marginal to their major concern: to become better students. When these groups succeeded in generating a momentum of their own, it was because the group members happened to share some task or subject and because the focus of tuition was allowed to switch to common goals.

Despite the persistence of errors, however, later essays also indicated that the students were expanding their language repertoire massively. They seemed to be learning through assimilation and association, by modelling their work upon their favourite lecturers. The evidence was there in the style of some essays which began to read like the silent voice of certain teaching staff, and in certain types of errors in syntax which were becoming more pronounced and which "sounded" like attempts at reproducing that voice.

*"I began by accepting the remediation concept . . ."*

In comprehension, too, association was important. My students created meaning out of sentences they did not understand by making associative links between high content words while ignoring structure words and words referring to abstract concepts; that is, they ignored words which interrelated content words through discipline-specific analytic processes (Bock, 1983).

If the main mode of learning was assimilation and association, and if some sets of errors were a signal that the students were acquiring new language, was then the remedial concept, with its disregard of context, appropriate? The answer had to be no. If for example a student was taught the linguistic features of the possessive case on sentences of the type "the cat's basket is near the fireplace", which is legitimate within the remediation concept with its focus upon basic sentence analysis, there would be nothing in the language context of the tertiary Social Sciences student to remind her to apply the rule, because association as a learning factor works on content, not on systems (grammatical structures). If we were to stimulate that factor for our students, we had to teach language analysis on language data which would spark recognition in the writing the students were producing.

Even the students who were inclined to take an analytical approach had problems. Language rules must be able to account for the complexity in the language to which they are applied if they are to serve as tools of revision of writing. The remediation approach, however, faces backwards towards over-simplification. Basic advice on sentence structure is a case in point.

Further, theoretical understanding of rules is one thing; the application to new data is something else. The latter requires much practice; and in periods when a student's language repertoire is under rapid expansion, it requires a conscious, exclusive, time-consuming focus and a particular mode of analysis, which to an extent excludes focus on disciplinary content. No wonder my students had found "the cat's basket" kind of teaching of marginal relevance.

Finally, the remediation concept stipulates that errors are absolute, as is good writing, that we all know and agree, or would agree if we had been taught properly, what good writing is. Comments on student essays indicated rather that errors of expression were defined variously by different disciplines and by individual teachers. They were determined by political convictions, by social and ethnic background, by fashion, by age and by sex (Bock and Lewit, 1984; Bock, 1988). What were the implications for my work?

Teaching "good writing" did not involve plugging holes in a student's language competence, according to rules on which we all agreed, but expanding and often changing, sometimes radically and against resistance, individual students' perceptions of grammaticality and staff's perceptions of literacy and the process of learning. As regards the students, this was at best a slow process. At worst, it was a dubious one. Was it justifiable?

It was justifiable if we accepted and taught that literacy is contextual, i.e. if we treated "errors" as relative to context, not as absolute. It was inevitable if we were to act in accordance with the view that learning is inherently valuable, an expansion of the self, that learning develops an analytical mind, gives us flexibility and adaptability and teaches us to make judgments on an informed basis according to objective contextualised principles. I had no reason to assume that the mastering of one's own language would not be learning.

*"... errors of expression were defined variously by different disciplines and by individual teachers."*

For these justifications to be more than cliches, the rules of the context had to be established. The difficulties our students had in meeting these rules had to be defined beyond the level of mere appearances, and teaching materials had to be developed which addressed fundamental difficulties directly. As an exercise in logical thinking, this was not a difficult step to take. The difficulty arose with the ambition to leave its footprint on actual teaching projects.

We had to develop new teaching materials for our students. These materials would have to develop writing, comprehension and analytical skills alike; and they would have to be based on language data of the kind our students were struggling with. In this work, Helene soon took the lead. She could fold language to her purposes as our grandmothers fold linen.

As we began using these materials, we found that our students' grasp of the content and processes of their subjects improved as did their essay writing. We found that in going beyond appearances we were beginning to deal with problems at a level where language and content converged. It was not the case that our students had the concepts but not the language. They were learning the language with the concepts. We began to see our role within the School in a new light. It was complementary to, not complimentary to, departmental teaching. Where mainstream academics taught language through content, we taught content through language. Where these two lines met, the outcome for the student was an understanding of disciplinary analysis and expressive power.

I should have known better than to include standard instruction in reading techniques in my groups; I didn't. As I watched my students apply the techniques on their texts, however, and as I saw the essays they produced as a result, I found that all I had achieved was a conflagration of problems we had already identified. Advice on skim reading appeared to have legitimised meaning making through association on a grand scale. My students were unable to compensate in close reading for the damage done through skim reading for two reasons. They could not identify relevant parts reliably, partly because skim reading aggravated weaknesses in comprehension, partly because they were too new to the discipline and to academic essay writing to determine what was relevant without also reading that which wasn't. Secondly, their reading skills were not yet adequate for the task when applied to texts of this complexity. The result was a despondent conviction that academic texts were not structured, did not have a line of argument and were contradictory and confusing.

There were students who were "too scared" to use these techniques, who zealously and laboriously read their texts word by word once, twice or more. Some of these ended up discovering effective reading techniques of their own. One of them came to show me her techniques. They were exactly what I had attempted to teach her two years previously. She asked, "Why didn't you teach us this? It's very good." That was too much! I began to listen to Helene, who was already saying we had to do "something else". We started looking at how we could support the familiarisation process and the analytical development through which some students themselves discovered effective reading techniques.

Might problems with note taking be related? Our students loved the sessions on note taking techniques. They had the five-easy-steps approach which makes us all feel we have got something really useful out of a session. They kept coming back, however, and always with the same request: "Give us more! This is great — but..." What did that "but" cover? What more could we give them? Notetaking techniques were a filing system, we began to see, which allowed you to organise an analytical process quite effectively. But what if the analytical process wasn't there in the first place? How could we expect it to be there, when we knew it wasn't there in their essays or in their reading?

*"Where mainstream academics taught language through content, we taught content through language."*

One student said, "It's great! But you shouldn't tell them to do it at the lecture; you don't have the time for it there. I don't think of it at the lecture. I do it when I copy out my notes at home." But students shouldn't copy out their notes, should they? I asked to see her notes.

The raw notes were almost a Hansard copy of the lecture. But the rewritten notes showed clear distinctions between various types of information. Several words had a definition following in parenthesis. They were still very full. Was this because she needed practice in summarising? Would she lose her grip of the content if she lost the actual words in which it had been couched? We talked about the notes; and it became clear not only that all of these factors played in, but also that the learning she was taking part in was so intense relative to her level of knowledge and skill that the processes of listening and

analysing had to be separated for her to be able to grasp at the matter. It was also clear that the rapport between her and the lecturer of one subject in particular made this an enjoyable task for her.

What could this imply for the teaching of note taking skills? What about the "but" of those other students? Might it be that their problems were similar but that their instinct for what was best for them was less certain? And if, as we thought, reading and essay writing, note-taking and essay planning were mirror skills, manifestations of the same underlying grasp of content, language and processes, was there then "something" we could teach at a level which would underpin these activities, strengthen the instinct and quicken the pace with which they developed their own techniques?

## *"Why give a Unit which supports learning the air of a VD clinic?"*

We started with basic text analysis: structure, content, types of information, how an argument built up, how it was supported and exemplified, how focus determined what was questioned and what was assumed, the sequencing of old and new knowledge, etc etc. One short article was studied per week, rounding into an essay at the end of the course on a question which cut across the articles studied. Now we were getting somewhere, but not far enough.

Excursions into departmental essay pools told us that there could be a circularity at work, which ensured that the students who sought us were those who saw themselves and their needs in terms which corresponded to and reinforced our view of student problems.

Demand was heaviest late in the year, when the students were too anxious to engage in the process of solid focused learning which alone could save them. Why were some so late? Why were they so convinced they had been doing the "right thing", that they could only put their failure down to a bias in the marking and a secret "answer", "trick" or "skill" which everybody conspired to keep from them? What did they think "the right thing" was? How did they come to be so sure they were doing it?

We began to shift the bulk of our intake forward in the year and as we did so, we gained more contact with students who were wondering why we would not leave them alone. These we found were the students most at risk. The institutional view of at-risk students tends to be that the students need support and remediation. Both should be given discretely to protect the students from stigma. They will need confidence building, and a supportive, caring adviser. This view assumes that the students share the institution's perception, that they know and accept that they are at risk. These students didn't.

They thought University was largely "a social affair", "easy", "a breeze" after HSC, the work "a revision, really" of the HSC year. These expectations left them secure: "What's wrong with low marks? If low marks got me into Uni, and Uni is easier than HSC, I'll be right with a bit of revision". We saw that the ultimate fallacy of the remediation approach to the teaching of at-risk students was that it confirmed this view, thus effectively blocking their development.

We began to see the poor quality of first term work partly as evidence of a downward adjustment in effort and concentration on the student's part. This downward adjustment was based in their belief that University would be easy. We began to see low motivation as evidence of a cue blindness determined by the same belief. We began to see the institutional recognition of motivation in our students as dependent upon the sharing of expectations. As a corollary, we no longer saw motivation or the lack of it. We saw an institutionally legitimate motivation which was dependent upon an awareness of what university study involves, and an illegitimate motivation which was dependent upon the development of, let us say, alternative survival skills.

We began to consider how we could change perceptions, influence and shape motivation. To this end, we began to make a distinction between the best and the worst performances our students were capable of, to see the importance of directing tuition to their highest level of achievement. We began to draw our second and third year students into our work to act as models and mentors. We began to look at the language in which the University communicated with its entering students and to focus on the extent to which institutional expectations were made explicit.

Our view became: discretion involves secrecy and that creates stigma, so place the Unit in a busy thoroughfare and keep the doors open to all students and staff. If learning is inherently valuable, then it is honourable to seek it. Why give a Unit which supports learning the air of a VD clinic? Self-confidence is self-destructive if based on ignorance of the odds. Caring is less important than firstly, a challenge in which the rules are made explicit and couched in language that gets through and secondly, a sense of belonging to and of occupying a position of importance in the University.

This is where we were in 1984, when the possibility of Equity funds presented an opportunity to develop our work systematically according to our understanding of the issues involved. It was a comprehensive project. Its focus was a six-week introductory course for entering students supplemented by various back-up programs. Two such have become a debating society and a drama group. A student mentor scheme was built into the introductory course. Provisions were also made for various liaison programs. In 1985 the first year of operation, the target was 200 students from at-risk categories and score levels. In 1986, the course was extended to all entering students. Project reports are available from the Unit for the years 1985-87.

What did we learn from doing it? Lots, but that is another paper. Would we do it the same way again? No!

Hanne Bock,
La Trobe University.

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# Tertiary Literacy: Hunting the Bunyip

Could the academic success of students be closely related to English "proficiency" as measured by a Tertiary Entrance Examination? Alex Main has decided...

During the twenty years I spent as a University teacher and a study counsellor in the UK, I felt really uneasy about the idea of literacy — especially the belief that there could be some criterion score on a literacy test for entry to higher education. I saw a lot of students with high scores in English language or literature struggling with assignments in University philosophy or sociology; and I met a lot of mature-age learners who had failed school English at the age of 15 but who could express themselves cogently in politics, economics or history essays.

Gradually I have become convinced — not through objective research, but through the gut feelings you get when you work closely with students on a daily basis — that school English (in the UK at any rate) is a subject-specific skill, and not a universal measure of the basic skills of construction and expression needed for higher learning. I cannot ignore my hundreds of case studies of students who, once motivated by the study of a particular discipline, learn rapidly and thoroughly the basic skills underlying communication in that discipline. Nor can I ignore the calculated way in which many students have reported to me how they deliberately cut out of studying English at school — because "it was boring", "it didn't relate to science", "it seemed out of date" or "it wasn't a subject I wanted to go on with at University".

When I came to Western Australia in 1987, I was fortunate to get a grant from the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission to examine the progress of students with low entrance scores in English. Dorothy Toussaint and I carried out intensive interviews over a period of nine months with 85 students who entered Murdoch University that year with a mark of less than 50 in English in the Tertiary Entrance Examination (TEE) in Western Australia. We looked at the progress these students were making in all academic subjects; their general progress in developing learning skills, their social and personal adjustment, and their relationships with fellow students and teachers. We paid a lot of attention to the intervention strategies which they used (or which others suggested) to assist their progress.

Had I not already developed some healthy cynicism of the status of "entrance English" in another country, then the hypotheses of this study would have been that

(a) scores in English and English literature provide a measure of "academic literacy";
(b) students scoring low on "academic literacy" will perform less well in all University subjects than those scoring highly; and
(c) specific intervention strategies can improve "academic literacy" and consequently improve student performance.

I cannot claim to have set up these three hypotheses quite so explicitly as this. But I did set out to discover if TEE English told us anything about the basic skills and performance of first year students at Murdoch.

To cut a long story short, we found several things.

1 About half the students had English as their second language, even though they had sat the TEE in Western Australia.
2 The majority of the other students could trace their poor performance in TEE English to specific educational difficulties (such as a break in study, conflict with an individual teacher or some crisis of motivation) — or could recognise that they had used their energies for other subjects at the expense of English. (96% of the group entered scientific or commercial areas of study and had not seen English as an important part of their future).

*"... school English ... is not a universal measure of the basic skills of construction and expression needed for higher learning."*

3 The students with low "literacy" scores had the same pattern of progress as the rest of the first year intake, and this was so across all subject-areas.
4 There was no relationship between English scores in TEE and subsequent withdrawal from the University.
5 Students with low "literacy" appeared to be fitting into University life, and did not differ from other students in the range or magnitude of their concerns about personal or academic adjustment.
6 All but 5 students in this group had sought some assistance with their studies, generally in relation to the preparation of assignments or the mechanics of writing. In this sense, they followed the same pattern of seeking help as the majority of students in Murdoch's first year Trunk Courses.
7 Students who had failed TEE English seemed to be aware of the potential disadvantage which this could be to the development of appropriate tertiary skills, and seemed generally determined to compensate for any deficiency.

*"... a failure in TEE English acted in some students as a direct motivator to develop tertiary learning skills."*

Taken together, these findings point to a group of students who recognise that their educational background is in general terms matched to the areas of science or commerce which they wish to pursue. Where they

*(Continued page 24)*

# An Alternative Means of University Selection

Monash University's Link Program seeks not only to make admission a bit easier for disadvantaged students but also to change community attitudes. Bryan Barwood reports.

The Monash University Schools Link Program, funded by the Australian government under an access and equity grant, stemmed from a study of first year results of students at Monash conducted by Dr Leo West, which revealed that students from state schools were performing about 20% better than those from independent or private schools.

A primary intention in developing the program was therefore to enter into activities with selected state schools designed to encourage students to proceed to year 12 with a view to undertaking tertiary study. Special admission arrangements were developed to provide a particular incentive for students to apply for Monash courses. Support mechanisms, particularly during the first year of tertiary study, have also been developed for students admitted to courses from the Link schools.

The schools identified for inclusion in the initial program demonstrated either low retention from year 10 to year 12 and low tertiary participation, or reasonably high retention at school but low tertiary participation, particularly at university. Schools with recently established year 12 programs, where awareness of the value of higher education was low, were included. Some girls' schools are in the program, especially those where the career options of the girls were judged to be restricted because of the nature of the school and parent communities. A high proportion of girls to boys and a predominantly migrant community were significant factors in selection. Another criterion was the lack of physical resources to aid tuition; consequently schools with limited or no library facilities and limited laboratory resources were included.

About 25 schools are actively participating in the program. The majority are state schools but schools from the Independent and the Roman Catholic school systems have been included. A set of questionnaires was developed which would give measures of the awareness of tertiary education and its value, of attitudes towards secondary and tertiary education, and of knowledge about Monash University and its courses. These questionnaires were designed for completion by students in years 10-12 and their parents.

*"... the program was ... designed to encourage students to proceed to year 12 with a view to undertaking tertiary study."*

By having the questionnaire completed by students in successive years, as they proceed from year 10 to year 12, we seek to gain an indication of the effectiveness of the program. In schools with low retention the emphasis is on the year 10 students who, in the absence of information and advice about the value of tertiary education, may simply choose to leave school at an early stage and seek employment. Data from the year 10 questionnaires in the low retention group thus far reveals a low awareness of the value of tertiary education. There may well be a relationship between this and the level of education of the parents (or a single parent in many cases), which is often no higher than year 10 or its equivalent.

It seems to be the case that a significant factor in low retention and participation is the education level of the parent community. Certainly the schools in our program have placed importance upon directing link activities towards parent/student activities. The influence of parents on course and career aspirations seems consistently high, even in schools with good retention rates. The schools suggest that the limitations on the scope of further education and career opportunities for girls, particularly those from a migrant background, provide a striking example of this.

In order to encourage greater participation in tertiary education by students from the selected schools, the following activities have been undertaken by Monash staff.

- Provision of work experience for year 10 students in various departments of the Univeristy.
- Tours of the campus, including visits to specific departments, observation of practical classes in session, and library orientation.
- Residential visits to the campus for school camps which include a variety of academic and non-academic activities.
- Presentation of careers and course guidance to year 10-12, often involving employers of graduates.
- Participation in parent/teacher evenings in the schools or on campus.
- Visits to schools by academic staff members to address students with specific study interests.
- Presentation of study skills, time and stress management seminars.
- Workshop and practical sessions in developing interview presentation skills for course selection (and job seeking).

In addition, each secondary school has developed a program which the principal and teachers believe best suits the needs of its students, its parents and its community; what is appropriate for one school may not be for another.

Special admission arrangements to courses at Monash have been developed as a further incentive. Schools are invited to nominate year 12 students for admission to courses on criteria such as likely tertiary success and non-achievement of potential. In the latter case, they are asked to provide an explanation of circumstances which may have hindered academic performance, particularly in year 12. On the basis of these school reports and recommendations, nominated students who obtain an aggregate matriculation score within 15-20 of the cut-off score for a particular course can be awarded bonus marks

which would allow them to be admitted to that course. In 1987 a total of 17 students out of 37 nominated by five schools were admitted to courses; of these six gained admission with bonus marks, two each into the B.A. and B.Ec. degree programs and two into law. In 1988 more than 25 offers were made to students strongly recommended by schools but who did not achieve the selection scores for entry to their chosen courses. They included special admissions to all faculties including medicine, law and the combined science/engineering course.

Perhaps the most significant indicators of the effectiveness of the scheme to date are the number of students from schools in the Link program who have sought and gained entry to courses, and the influence of the program on the aspirations of year 10 and 11 students. In 1988 more than 50 students from schools in the Link program gained admission to courses at Monash. More than half gained entry without need for bonus marks, but a survey revealed that they were more likely to apply for courses at Monash as a direct result of the Link program; they would not otherwise have considered entering a university course as being within their range of options.

*"All students admitted ... under the special admission arrangement in 1987 have proceeded to second year..."*

The progress of students admitted to courses under the program is being monitored, particularly during their first year of study. Additional assistance with study is offered where appropriate, a special tutorship scheme has been established in one faculty and assistance is given to students experiencing difficulty in adjusting to tertiary life, which for many involves living away from home. Subject coordinators are informed of the students admitted to courses under special admission arrangements and this year all students admitted to courses under the Link program were invited to attend an informal meeting with members of academic staff, careers advisers and student counsellors.

To students, teachers and parents in the schools, the program is presented as a positive and constructive means of helping to develop in young students a sense of direction and a broader perspective of the educational opportunities available to them. We do not present the program as one designed to offer assistance for disadvantaged schools since we believe that such an approach can lead students to affirm that they are disadvantaged and should therefore be helped. It is important that they are inspired to look beyond the immediate future to the benefits of tertiary education in spite of circumstances which may in the past have restricted their vision and limited their level of achievement.

One measure of the success of the program is the feedback received from participating schools. Monterey High School was one of the early schools included in the program. The following comments were made by the Year 12 Coordinator and Careers Adviser in a report to the University following the school's first year of participation:

> We would like to thank you for your efforts with our students during this academic year. All four students who went to Monash this year have kept in contact with us and we eagerly await their examination results.
>
> Having had four students at the one institution has really increased the perception of this year's students as to the possibility of them attempting a tertiary course. The additional bonus of possible consideration under the Link Program has increased their interest.
>
> Our retention rate has improved from last year. We almost doubled the number of Year 12 students sitting for the V.C.E. This has enabled us to run a wider range of classes and it does increase the competition.
>
> The year 12 teachers were keen to participate in the program again this year. We had sixteen students who applied for Monash this year and after a great deal of consideration we have decided to recommend twelve of them. The four who missed out, in our humble opinion were unlikely to get within the 15 mark cut-off point on the Anderson score. Although we wish them well, and would be delighted by any success they may have, we feel that we have an obligation to call it the way we see it.
>
> The Link Program hopes to achieve a better social balance at Monash. I believe that we have some extremely capable students whose academic success would be higher if their socio-economic environment were different. James Button (*Age* 27.11.87) wrote that "educationalists have debated whether the education system, with the external exam as its flagbearer, does little more than offer a magic carpet ride to top jobs for the middle class". We appreciate your efforts to assist students from Monterey High.
>
> We cater for a diverse range of students, and even allowing for the hard work of teachers at more middle-class schools, we believe that the Anderson Score allocates more than its fair share of places to a select group in our society.

All schools present data as a basis for inclusion in the program. The schools, with one or two exceptions, have responded enthusiastically to it. But such a program takes time to develop in a school, and its success is related to the enthusiasm of the principal and teachers and their willingness to participate. The academic performance of students, especially those admitted with the benefit of bonus marks, is monitored by subject coordinators. Already positive feedback on the performance of many of these students has been received and their commitment and enthusiasm has been commented on in several instances. One lecturer in Biology recently reported that their Link student was "a positive influence not only on the other students, but also on the staff".

All students admitted to courses under the special admission arrangements in 1987 have proceeded to second year of their studies this year.

A significant outcome has been that courses at Monash, including medicine and law, are now accessible to students who are judged to have the academic ability and the personal qualities (such as motivation) to complete a degree course successfully, even though they have not achieved the score traditionally necessary for selection. The evidence to date suggests not only that Monash is achieving by this means a more representative student population, but also that the students so admitted are achieving a pleasing level of academic success.

The program now constitutes an integral part of our activities with schools and will be continued in schools where the Link is valued and effective.

Bryan Barwood,
Monash University.

# Women in Engineering

Most Schools of Engineering would be happy to increase the number of talented students being admitted. Helen McGregor suggests how to attract and retain women students.

How can you judge whether an equity program has been successful? Is it enough to look at the statistics and bask in the glory of a 1% increase or mourn the absence of a 50% rise. Is it possible to gauge objectively a change in the attitudes of society? When can we say that our task is complete? All of these ideas have been popping around in my mind as I have been reviewing my involvement with the Women in Engineering Program at the University of Technology, Sydney.

In May 1986 Meredith Rogers and I accepted the positions of coordinators of a CTEC funded program to encourage more women to choose careers in the Engineering profession. Meredith, a mechanical engineer, had been active in the Institution of Engineers Australia Women's Group. She had a deep commitment to the profession and welcomed the opportunity to participate in a program which she felt could only enrich it.

My background was in teaching Human Communication to Engineering students and being involved in our family engineering business. My comparisons of Engineering classes with other classes which I taught for the Business and Science Faculties left me in no doubt that the absence of female students impoverished the learning experience of engineering students. Their ideas tended to remain too stereotyped. They were missing the zest and enthusiasm that my other classes had. Of course, other factors were contributing to this situation; but as my time for professional experience leave drew near, I was enthusiastic about accepting a position which would allow me to develop my own skills in communication, and also contribute towards a more balanced Engineering profession.

We began our new assignment by reviewing the initiatives which led to the funding of our program. This gave us important insights and forced us to be as objective as possible when planning our own strategy. The greatest force for change came from the 1985 Report on the Bureau of Labour Market Research, *The Labour Market for Professional Engineers*, which highlighted the continuous decline in the number of new graduates in Engineering since 1970. As a consequence, Australia relied heavily on attracting its highly qualified engineers from overseas. The situation was so critical that four Commonwealth Departments had sent representatives to recruit engineers in the UK.

The second area for concern, and one which was certainly affecting the first, was the noticeable absence of women in the profession. A report by Professor Eileen Byrne, *Women in Engineering, A Comparative Overview of New Initiatives*, which had been commissioned for the BLMR study, disclosed some quite startling and alarming facts pertinent to the shortage of qualified engineers. Dr Byrne's research showed that Engineering was almost exclusively a male profession and had remained so far longer than other professions such as Law and Medicine. In 1985 women accounted for less than 1% of the profession and less than 5% of new graduates.

It seemed fairly obvious that encouraging women to take up engineering careers is more than just an equity issue. It involves efficient use of resources. It would be far better to attract top class boys and girls than to continue to limit the pool of talent to only 50% of the population. The question now was how to do it.

Dr Byrne had also analysed the perceived barriers which deterred girls from choosing a career in Engineering. Foremost of these was the lack of knowledge on the part of the general community of what Engineering is about, and what Engineers actually do. What knowledge there was portrayed Engineering as being totally incompatible with normal feminine roles and family roles. She discovered that this perception was held by both males and females. High School Careers Advisors also did not seem to have an accurate idea of the scope of the Engineering profession, and the opportunities for women with skills in maths and science. The Byrne Study reinforced an area of growing concern to educationalists, by highlighting inadequacies in preparatory maths and science, especially physics. And finally, most interesting of all, was the recognition that many people did not see this absence of women in the profession as being a problem at all. Some 42% of the respondents to the study were either unconvinced that there was a problem, were satisfied with the present position, or were negative in their attitude. Only 25% of respondents were positively in favour of encouraging women into Engineering.

*"... the absence of female students impoverished the learning experience of engineering students."*

In comparing Australia with other developed countries, Dr Byrne noted that there were few countries where women accounted for more than 10% of Engineers but in those countries where growth had occurred, there had been positive influences such as systematic political and professional encouragement involving funding, affirmative action policies and institutional enthusiasm. Other factors which had contributed to a rise in the number of female students had been labour shortages forcing industry to look for and actively recruit additional staff, and new fields of engineering such as computer engineering which are less male oriented.

Considering the Byrne recommendations, the BLMR report concluded that "there is considerable scope for improving women's participation in Engineering and it is necessary to draw upon successful overseas initiatives" (BLMR 1985:92). It recommended that CTEC examine means of reducing obstacles and eliminating restrictions.

It suggested that CTEC consider supplementary funding for the establishment of a few centres of Engineering Education for women. Other suggestions included a more active participation by the Institution of Engineers Australia and the convening of a national conference to develop a long term strategy to increase women's participation in education, training and employment.

Our brief was fairly clear, therefore, and most of these suggestions have now been implemented. Women in Engineering Programs were set up at QIT, RMIT, and NSWIT (now UTS). QIT would continue developing bridging courses to help women with deficiencies in maths and science, while RMIT and UTS would concentrate on increasing the number of women Engineering students in universities and CAEs.

At UTS, we set ourselves a list of objectives and strategies. Our initial objective was to attract more female high school students already taking maths and science. We saw this as an achievable goal and believed that if the number of female students increased, some of the perceived barriers would be broken down. If more role models existed, more high school girls would believe that it is possible and indeed desirable to study the prerequisite subjects. This in turn would give some added stimulus to the already existing programs to increase girls' participation in maths and science.

Our initial target audience, therefore, was not those who we felt would have any difficulty coping with the academic rigour of the Engineering curriculum. If anything, the current female students at UTS perform as well as, if not better than, the male students. So we did not envisage any remedial programs as being within our brief.

*"In 1985 women accounted for less than 1% of the profession and less than 5% of new graduates."*

Coping with the social scene was another matter altogether. We were conscious of the isolation which female students face in Engineering Schools, and we addressed ourselves to this issue immediately. Our strategy was to organise a series of get-togethers in the institutions so that female students and interested and supportive staff could come and discuss issues. These discussions led us to formulate further strategies to help these women.

One of the major hurdles for students from the universities was the required work experience. Most female students felt that they did not have the same basic "hands-on" skills as their male colleagues. As a consequence, they faced their first work experience with feelings of inadequacy.

The students at UTS, however, had a different story to tell. UTS follows the Cooperative Education program. All students are required to work and study in an integrated pattern. Some students study for 20 weeks and work for the remainder of the year, while other students work full time and study one afternoon and three evenings a week for the entire year. The UTS female students are therefore introduced to the Engineering profession at a very junior level and receive the opportunity for hands-on training in the workplaces. These students develop confidence early in their academic careers, and therefore are not frightened of the male-dominated workplace.

Our support strategy at UTS was to organise informal gatherings of the female students from the three Engineering Schools. The girls could then discuss their different experiences both in the classroom and in the workplace, and learn from each other. We also worked in liaison with the Institution of Engineers Australia by inviting student engineers to their functions.

In our mission to attract high school girls, we decided to continue the Women in Engineering Seminars which UTS had been presenting since 1981. These seminars were becoming a focal point of the careers calendar, and we felt they needed very little alteration to be even more successful. We revamped the publicity by making the posters bright and distinctly modern. We worked in close liaison with the Senior Careers Consultant in the NSW Department of Education and implemented her suggestions whenever possible. Even simple suggestions such as sending duplicate copies of the invitation to the Schools, increased our chances of attracting a larger attendance. We integrated the speaking program by suggesting outlines to the speakers and workshopping the talks. We were grateful for the continued generous support by engineering employers who provided staff and displays which showed the scope of employment opportunities for graduates, and to the staff of UTS who provided School displays and literature and opened laboratories for inspection and hands-on experience. We also decided to hold both day and evening sessions, so that parents could attend with their daughters and help them assess whether Engineering was the career for them.

*"Only 25% of respondents were positively in favour of encouraging women into Engineering."*

We were sent into a mild panic when the acceptance figures continued to rise above the expected 300 and the venue we had booked was beginning to look inadequate. We devised an emergency procedure, and the 1986 Seminar was presented in simulcast, with over 100 students listening to the talks on closed-circuit television in a classroom adjacent to the seminar room. We were better prepared for 1987, but were still overjoyed when the attendance topped 800. This year the tally neared the 1000 mark.

*"We were conscious of the isolation which female students face in Engineering Schools..."*

The growing interest in the seminars has been matched by a slow but significant increase in the number of incoming students. In 1988, the first year in which enrolments could reasonably be expected to have been influenced by the activities of the Program, the number of women enrolled in the first year at UTS doubled, from 16 in 1987 to 33. The percentage of incoming female students rose from 3.7% in 1987 to 6%, an increase of over 50%.

The effect of the program cannot be judged solely by enrolments at UTS. Many students who are enthused by the Seminar presentations and other activities of the WIE Program eventually select other campuses. Most other institutions have also witnessed significant increases in female participation rates, with 34% in Chemical Engineering at Sydney University being the most outstanding achievement. The overall target of 20% female undergraduate engineering students by 1997 set by the recent Review of the Discipline of Engineering now seems an achievable goal.

Some of our other projects were not quite so successful. As an outcome of a discussion session with twenty careers advisors, we decided to compile a register of firms which would be willing to offer work experience to high school girls considering Engineering as a career option. We received positive replies from over 100 organisations, advertised our service in the careers newspapers, and could claim moderate success.

We also felt it was important to reach girls in small groups or individually. So we participated in careers markets and careers days at high schools, and discussed with the girls what Engineering was all about, and whether they might be suited to a career in the profession. This is a time consuming and expensive task. We were considering that a more cost effective approach would be for us to prepare information kits which we would make available to practising engineers who could speak to schools in their own communities.

We took an entirely new approach to designing pamphlets. We believed that we needed to present an image which reflected some of the positive aspects of Engineering. In interviews with practising Engineers, we were constantly reminded that the aspect of their work which appealed to them most was that it was never boring — always something new and challenging. It seemed obvious, therefore, that "Engineering is Fun" should be a main theme in careers information, and that cartoon style characters should be most effective in attracting a wide audience. We had also hoped to produce an animated video suitable for primary school children which showed some aspects of engineering and depicted both male and female characters in engineering roles. Unfortunately, we could not merge all the elements to bring this to fruition. Perhaps some others may think it a worthwhile project to tackle.

One of the hazards of working on equity issues is the likelihood of "burnout". You become so committed to your ideals, and so impatient about changing the world today, that you lose focus of the broad issues involved and the importance of evolving perspectives on those issues. Meredith and I both recognised that our new ideas were becoming fewer and the time had come for us to move on in our own career objectives. Meredith is now a management consultant specialising in training programs for continuing education in Engineering and I have rejoined the teaching staff of the University in the School of Mechanical Engineering.

The Women in Engineering Program is now in the competent hands of Vicki Webber and Liz Taylor and they have devised their own unique approach. As I chat with them from time to time I am reminded of the importance of equity programs in our society. Like tacking manoeuvres in sailing, they are absolutely essential to keep us on course. The trick is to know when to change tack.

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*"... success (of equity programs) must certainly lie in their ability to keep us aware of social justice in our teaching, research and writing."*

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In my opinion the effectiveness of programs such as the Women in Engineering Program at UTS can't be judged only by the statistics relating to their performance. Their influence reaches deeper and wider than we will ever know. For all of us as educators, their success must certainly lie in their ability to keep us aware of social justice in our teaching, research and writing. They are constant reminders of what I see as a major goal of our teaching profession — to help as many individuals as possible reach their full potential and be able to make their own unique and valuable contribution to the welfare of our society.

Helen McGregor,
University of Technology,
Sydney.

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## NEW EDITION

**Philanthropic Trusts in Australia**, Fifth Edition. Australian Council for Educational Research, Frederick Street, Hawthorn, Vic., 3122. $24.95 plus $3.00 handling.

A listing of 275 trusts or foundations for people or organisations seeking funds for various projects.

## NEW JOURNAL

**Higher Education Policy.** Quarterly Journal of the International Association of Universities. Annual subscription: £60.00 (institutional), £45.00 (individual), ISSN 0952-8733. (Available from Kogan Page, 120 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JN, UK).

Volume 1, no. 1 (March 1988) is devoted to "Higher Education and Development: A Reappraisal", based on proceedings at IAU/Association of Eastern and Southern African Universities Round Table, Harare, April 1987. Other 1988 issues will address "Conflict and Peace", "New Priorities", and "Funding".

# Aboriginal Access: What does it mean?

Higher education institutions can and should change, and will be better institutions when they do. Keith McConnochie and Rosie Farrow show the way.

The number of Aboriginal education programs in higher education institutions has dramatically increased in the past decade — since 1985 the number has increased from 17 to at least 39. While we wish to encourage institutions to improve Aboriginal access to their awards, we also want to provide some cautionary and practical suggestions to assist institutions to establish programs which are successful.

Aborigines have been, and of course still are, grossly under-represented in the tertiary sector, both as students and as teachers, administrators and policy-makers, so the need to increase the number of qualified Aboriginal professionals is still a pressing one. Institutions need to be aware that significant increases in their Aboriginal student population will bring about changes to the institution. These changes, designed to meet the needs of Aboriginal communities, have relevance for other groups such as women and geographically isolated people who have traditionally been denied equity of access to tertiary education.

We have structured our discussion around a series of warnings, with comments on the implications of those warnings.

### 1. Don't be in it for the money!

Successful programs are expensive — don't expect to make a profit. The Commonwealth Government, through its Participation and Equity Program and through the Department of Education, Employment and Training, does provide special funds to establish and maintain Aboriginal programs in higher education institutions. These funds are to enable institutions to set in place the kinds of structures appropriate and necessary for Aboriginal students studying at tertiary institutions. This funding often has to provide both the normal teaching costs of the institutions and the vital academic and personal support structures needed by Aboriginal students.

### 2. Don't expect your institution's practices and values to be unchanged

While institutions are becoming more willing to respond to the mounting pressure to address inequities, to do so will require them to re-assess their traditional structures and methodologies. Institutions will need to develop special entry and selection strategies, establish appropriate teaching and assessment techniques, and react to Aboriginal perspectives on the content of courses. These are likely to generate significant changes within institutions (for the good, we would hasten to add). Some of these are considered further below. However, inservicing of existing staff (at all levels) should be considered before embarking on Aboriginal education programs.

In the past decade, the South Australian College of Advanced Education has established a growing number of support programs. These have increasingly become better known in the Aboriginal community, and are attracting Aboriginal people from many parts of the country who wish to embark on careers including teaching, nursing, heritage and parks management, community work and in the public service.

The success of these programs rests upon three fundamental principles:

1 The Special Entry provisions which enable Aboriginal (particularly mature-aged) students to bypass protracted re-schooling at secondary level;
2 The delivery of several awards in the external mode;
3 The provision of an environment which fosters peer supports, and where students have ready access to academic support staff.

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*"Successful programs are expensive — don't expect to make a profit."*

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### 3. You will need to confront racism in your institution

Aboriginal programs which have been established thus far, have been confronted with racism at all levels in their institutions. This may include overt individual racism between students, between staff and students or between staff members, or may include institutional structures which are such that they disadvantage, discourage or alienate Aboriginal students and staff. For example, supportive staff may be called upon to intervene on behalf of students and be subjected to at worst open hostility, or at least protracted negotiations where they must play the role of "teacher" to colleagues and/or authorities within the institution. This requires staff to have or acquire quite a sophisticated set of negotiating skills, practical strategies and personal defences.

Aboriginal students who may have entered the institution under special entry provisions and so have a more rigorous study program to cope with, may also be challenged, with varying degrees of regularity and force, to a range of issues which relate to their Aboriginality.

Courses such as Australian History, Community Health etc may be offered with no regard for, let alone inclusion of, Aboriginal history, Aboriginal community issues, etc or indeed may include "Aborigines" in such ways as to offend Aboriginal students.

Preconceived notions by many staff within an institution of Aboriginal Culture, Aboriginal communities or Aboriginal people as students, as parents, as staff, etc may intrude upon fair and equitable treatment of

Aboriginal students in assessment, in course counselling, tutorials and so on. Because of commonly held notions of support programs as compensatory programs to address "deficits" in Aboriginal students, staff working in these programs, too, are often regarded as lower status para-academics by staff in the wider academic community. The N.A.E.C. has recently established a Working Party on Racism in Tertiary Institutions. As part of this strategy, the N.A.E.C. will be assisting institutions in establishing and implementing policies and practices to overcome racism.

### 4. You will need sound Aboriginal Advisory structures

Given the range of stresses which are placed upon Aboriginal programs, particularly if they are small units in large institutions, Aboriginal community support is essential. Strong links need to be fostered between the Aboriginal program and the State and National Aboriginal Education Consultative groups, and with Aboriginal organisations (many of which may be potential employers of graduates). This helps ensure not only a sense of solidarity and support for the Aboriginal program, but a high level of communication and mutual input during overall policy development.

An Aboriginal Policy Advisory Committee within the institution, with direct access and input to the overall policy structure, is another essential feature if the appropriate changes, processes and strategies are to be put in place. Membership of this advisory body would ideally include Aboriginal staff, Aboriginal students and Aboriginal community and education workers, with at least one member from the State Consultative group.

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*"Aboriginal programs which have been established thus far, have been confronted with racism at all levels in their institutions."*

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### 5. You will need to appoint Aboriginal staff

Aboriginal staff play an essential role in Aboriginal units within tertiary institutions — both as role models to Aboriginal students and to promote and strengthen notions of Aboriginal identity within the study environment. They are more likely to have had similar life experiences as the students and are therefore in a better position to convey related issues where necessary to the wider college/university community.

For similar reasons, the N.A.E.C. has stressed the urgent need for Aboriginal teachers, Aboriginal lecturers and Aboriginal education policy-makers. At this stage, in spite of the growing number of Aboriginal education programs in tertiary institutions, the major administration and policy decisions are still in the hands of non-Aboriginal academics and administrators.

While a growing number of Aboriginal people with formal qualifications are embarking on academic careers, it is also clear that if institutions are to attract and hold appropriately qualified Aboriginal staff, they will need to look at modifying existing appointment criteria to recognise the importance of non-academic qualifications.

Despite the centrality of the role of Aboriginal program staff, the terms and conditions under which they are employed is rarely equal to that of other academic staff. The dependence of support programs on short term funding, has led to a situation in which these staff are typically appointed to one-year contract positions, and so are typically denied routine access to inservicing, tenure, job security, study leave, superannuation and adequate career structures and prospects.

It is therefore essential that academic positions be placed on secure funding preferably within the institutions' overall funding structure, as early as possible, to ensure stability of staff profiles, to enable staff to envisage long-term career paths within the institution, and thus to attract experienced academics with competitive terms and conditions.

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*"... in spite of the growing number of Aboriginal education programs in tertiary institutions, the major administration and policy decisions are still in the hands of non-Aboriginal academics and administrators."*

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### 6. Staff will need inservicing

#### 6.1 Inservicing staff in Aboriginal support units

The demands placed upon staff in Aboriginal education programs are complex and wide ranging. They include:

- Advertising, recruiting and selection of students and staff;
- Academic, personal, economic and career counselling;
- Tutoring in study skills;
- Teaching a range of subjects, both within the program and in the wider institution;
- Providing advisory functions within and outside the institution, on a wide range of policy, administrative, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues;
- Maintaining budgets and managing complex funding processes;
- Providing the management and co-ordination of staff and students within the units.

Given the desirability of increasing the number of Aboriginal academics both in support programs and at all other levels of academia, it is clear that there is an urgent need for the establishment of viable staff support structures to facilitate the career development of current and future Aboriginal staff.

#### 6.2 Inservicing existing academics and administrative staff

The challenges and changes which are inevitably brought about by the establishment of successful Aboriginal education programs require appropriate inservicing of staff at all levels within the institution. It is important that all staff be made aware of the reasons behind these changes and assisted in the necessary adjustments. This inservicing role often falls on staff within the programs, often in ad hoc or informal ways. We would argue that inservicing should be formally incorporated into the institutional commitment to the concept and establishment of Aboriginal education initiatives, with responsibility (and resources) clearly identified.

### 7. You will need to establish special entry provisions and study skills programs

One of the major factors which has traditionally limited the number of Aboriginal students in tertiary institutions

is the failure of schools to provide adequate secondary education to Aboriginal students. This has resulted in an educational gulf which large numbers of Aboriginal people must cross if they are to build careers based upon a tertiary qualification. Not only have many Aboriginal people been unable to gain the formal entry requirements such as matriculation/HSC, but they often also have a history of negative experiences in educational institutions. Flexible access strategies combined with appropriate support and teaching are therefore essential to many Aboriginal students if they are to persist in a tertiary course of study.

Because of the relatively small numbers of Aboriginal matriculants, a large number of Aboriginal people who enter tertiary study are mature aged people who wish to benefit from positive changes in the education sector, by upgrading their formal educational qualifications. It therefore becomes the task of tertiary institutions to provide ways in which special entry students can cross this gulf, *within* a course of study. That is, institutions which have traditionally designed courses which assume certain prerequisite skills, must adjust their teaching strategies to accommodate these students' needs.

For example, the Associate Diploma in Aboriginal Studies at SACAE is a special entry award which attracts a high proportion of special entry students, many of whom are Aboriginal, and many of whom are unfamiliar with and unconfident in standard literacy skills. The style of teaching has therefore been adjusted to incorporate specialised language skills development at the same time as academic content is conveyed. A compulsory communication and expression unit, together with the use of structure assessment which makes progressively more elaborated language demands have assisted students to overcome these difficulties.

## 8. External studies and off-campus programs

A high proportion of Aboriginal people live in rural areas, and because of family, employment and community commitments are unable to travel to major centres to study. Distance education is increasingly providing these students with access to further education.

Aboriginal Studies awards at ASTEC have been steadily improving external studies delivery and materials and now have a range of strategies aimed at assisting students to persist in their studies without leaving their home communities.

However, the problem of retaining external students who study in isolation without the benefits of peer support and a discrete study environment, remains. Teleconferences are playing a significant role for these students, enabling them to make connections with other students, feel more a part of the College, and deal with issues and problems in a more personal and direct way.

For many Aboriginal students, increased access and development in distance education have been further enhanced by the establishment of off-campus study groups in their local area. Traditional Aboriginal people living in remote areas, for example, have thus been able to study for a Diploma of Teaching (Anangu Education), in the home communities through the Ernabella off-campus program, and in Alice Springs at the Yipirinya School.

A key relationship, of great importance for Aboriginal access to and successful completion of awards, is developing between the SACAE and other post-secondary institutions such as Adelaide Aboriginal Community College, TAFE, and the Institute for Aboriginal Devleopment in Alice Springs. These institutions provide essential pre-tertiary training and in some cases have provided the framework for off-campus programs in country centres (e.g. Alice Springs, Cairns, Murray Bridge, Port Augusta and Port Lincoln).

Students in these off-campus programs undertaking full-time study in range of awards (including Dip.T., B.A., and Assoc.Dip. in Aboriginal Studies) come into the programs as relatively cohesive groups, drawing upon each other for support and encouragement, and so do not have to contend either with the pressures of studying in isolation, or the disruption of leaving their home communities. The success of these programs has been consistently high and has encouraged the SACAE to continue to develop such programs in other areas.

## 9. Special selection and orientation processes

Similar developments are occurring in SACAE on-campus programs. The Aboriginal program previously operating as a co-ordinating unit for off-campus Diploma of Teaching (Early Childhood) now has an on-campus Aboriginal study centre for internal Aboriginal students. An on-campus Aboriginal study group is currently being established for Aboriginal students in the Diploma of Applied Science (Nursing) at Underdale. An Aboriginal study unit continues to service Aboriginal students in several awards at the Salisbury Campus and the Aboriginal Teacher Education Centre (ATEP) at Underdale, now in its tenth year, continues to successfully support Aboriginal teaching students.

All these programs incorporate pre-selection and orientation programs to enable students, with staff, to assess for themselves their preparedness to embark on a tertiary course, and to enable potential students to develop study skills and a familiarity with the routines and expectations of an academic environment.

The problem of selecting and advising potential students on their career and study directions, especially when they do not have formal entry qualifications, is especially difficult for externally offered awards. The reasons which prevent students leaving their communities to study often restrict their ability to travel for pre-selection and orientation too. Many applicants may yet be undecided as to what award to opt for, so the process of self-assessment and decision is potentially expensive, disruptive and frustrating.

Aboriginal Studies staff at Underdale (ASTEC) have in part addressed these difficulties by developing an external pre-selection kit containing external studies information, typical study materials and some trial exercises to assist both staff and students make their decisions regarding entry to the Associate Diploma in Aboriginal Studies. It is, of course, extremely important that students do choose appropriately and are aware of the implications of their choices.

## Conclusion

Strategies which address the historical and practical factors relating to those students must first be set in place in concert. Students must be counselled correctly, enrol in courses which meet their individual needs, be provided with regular staff contact and academic support, receive encouragement and feedback on progress and relevant quality teaching. Clearly all of these things are necessary contributors to any student's success.

Equally clearly, universities and CAEs have not provided these for Aboriginal students (or for many others). Higher education institutions in Australia can and should change, and will be better institutions when they do.

Keith McConnochie,
Rosie Farrow,
South Australian College
of Advanced Education.

# REVIEWS

**Participation in Education.** Trevor Williams, ACER Research Monograph No. 30, Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, Vic., 1987, 215 pp, ISBN 0-86431-007-2, $14.95.

Who participates in the various forms of post compulsory education? Who is the most at risk of dropping out of school early? Who makes it into higher education? To what degree does making it depend on such factors as parental occupation and income, the type of school attended, ethnic background, gender, where one lives or one's achievement at school? How equitable is the education system? What do we really know about participation in education?

A recent ACER report, "Participation in Education" by Dr Trevor Williams, provides the type of evidence needed both to inform our attempts to grapple with such questions, while at the same time challenging some of our most widely held beliefs. Basically, the report estimates rates of participation in the various types of post-compulsory education by two cohorts of young people, those entering the post-compulsory phase in 1975 and in 1980.

The report begins by suggesting that participation in education has become an issue for three reasons. First, questions of equity lead to a concern about low levels of participation in education by some sub-population groups; second, keeping young people in school provides a "short-term solution to the unemployment problem"; and third, if we are to cope with technological change, then we need to improve the level of education of all Australians. The facts are that one half of the next generation will not have completed high school and only one in seven will have ever started a degree. As a nation, Australians are less well educated than their counterparts in the majority of advanced nations.

That young people coming from lower socio-economic families are much less likely to continue their education is a long-standing and universal fact. The cohorts studied by the ACER are no exception: the study found that two out of three children from professional families complete year 12, but the rates for the children of unskilled workers are half this. But surely it is not father's occupation alone which is involved? What the ACER study has done is to try to tease apart the relative importance of factors using statistical techniques to hold other things like achievement and income "equal". Even after adjusting for other factors, participation rates at year 12 still range from a high of 50 percent for the children of professional families to a low of 30 percent for unskilled workers.

Other things again being "equal", income turns out only to be weakly associated with participation rates. Williams shows that among those eligible to enter higher education by virtue of having completed Year 12, there is no socio-economic imbalance. The imbalances in participation in higher education come about firstly because disproportionate numbers of students from blue-collar backgrounds fail to complete Year 12, and secondly because among those who are eligible for entry, few have the levels of achievement and motivation needed to go on. The results lead Williams to the view that at the present time the children of the working class are not hindered from entry into higher education by the limited economic resources of their parents. The apparent disadvantages occur further back in time during the school year.

In his account, the socio-economic imbalances in higher education seem more a matter of preference than access; they are not easily remedied by direct financial assistance. Williams suggests that we will get further if we seek to increase the value placed on education by those choosing not to participate. The implications drawn from the results by Williams are controversial. They are not, however, uninformed: they do deserve to be thought about and what they mean should be debated by educators and policy makers.

At a broader level, Williams seems to be suggesting that we do need to change the curriculum and teaching in order to ensure that working class students are successful. No details of precisely what changes are needed are given. This is understandable, given that surveys of the inputs and outputs of the education system tell us little about what is actually happening in schools. Moreover they do not, as *Making the Difference* tried to do, dig beneath the surface to explore the ways in which the education system shapes and is shaped by the processes of class construction and division. As a result, Williams cannot tell us if the rapid rise in participation rates and the demand for higher education are a result of the changes pushed by the various school authorities, the collapse of the teenage labour market, or some other factor.

In the current climate, the suggestion that for those eligible to enter higher education, equity is reasonably well served by the present student assistance schemes, can easily be misinterpreted or abused to justify further cuts in the support available to students in need. To suggest that the report itself is insensitive to the economic plight of the poor would be unfair. Williams very clearly makes the important point that less well-off families are very sensitive to economic pressures and that any increased demand on the economic resources of lower income families is likely to reduce the participation of their children in higher education, especially females. There is evidence in my own work (and others) that recent increases in the direct and the indirect costs of higher education and in the competition for places mean that we are returning to the situation in Australia where the amount and quality of education received by an individual are very much dependent on financial circumstances.

Other widely held beliefs are also challenged by the report. For example, the report suggests that the majority of persons from non-English speaking backgrounds are not disadvantaged with respect to participation in education (although Williams indicates that this finding relates mainly to people from Greek or Italian origin, and may not apply to other national groups). Geographical impediments to participation were deemed to be "minor" and limited to rural males. And while social status restricts participation, it does not restrict access.

Perhaps the most controversial conclusions relate to public versus private schools. The debate centres on the reasons why students from non-government schools, on average, do better. From the non-government perspective, the meaning given to this fact is that non-government schools are able to provide a "better" education through a combination of emphasis on academic excellence, discipline and pastoral care leading to the cultivation of a commitment to education. Those defending government schools deny that there is any difference in the quality of education provided; they would explain the observed differences in terms of a "selective-socio-economic-recruitment argument" and in terms of parental encouragement. Williams attempts to control for social origins, gender, state/territory and achievement (as measured by basic skills tests), and concludes that there is evidence in favour of both points of view.

In part, the observed differences in participation can be

explained in terms of the differences in social composition. But even when one equates for other factors, the between-system differences in participation remain. Williams concludes that parents who pay fees may be getting a return on their investment, though probably not as much as they think. But the results in this case are far from conclusive. After all, there is a growing literature on school effectiveness which points to the problems inherent in this sort of analysis. Firstly, there are technical problems in trying to equate statistically sub-populations. Secondly, there are dangers in reaching conclusions about private and public schools when schools and families are treated like "black boxes". The problem is that there are wide variations in what happens in schools within each school system, and in families with the same socio-economic status.

Participation and equity will remain on the agenda of education for a long time to come, as more and more young people are forced to remain longer and longer in the education system. The debate about what can and should be done at the post-compulsory level needs to be informed by the type of evidence provided by Williams. We should also be thinking hard about what this evidence suggests about possible impact of the changes being pushed by the Schools Commission, the Blackburn Report and other Reports on the one hand, and the Business Council of Australia on the other.

Colin Power,
Flinders University.

**Passages from Secondary School to Higher Education: Case Studies of Developments in the Processes of Selection for Higher Education.** Ron Toomey (ed.), Australian Education Review No. 25, Australian Council for Educational Research, Hawthorn, Vic., 1987, 93 pp, ISBN 0-86431-015-3, $8.95.

Government endorsement of the goal of improving equity and access to institutions of higher education has encouraged most institutions to re-examine their policies and practices in this area. Some have taken the opportunity to broaden the focus of their self-scrutiny to include their selection and admission policies *in toto*. In some cases this has led institutions to devise and experiment with imaginative new ways of recruiting and assisting students across the secondary-tertiary boundary.

This book publishes the papers given at a national, invitational workshop held at Footscray Institute of Technology during July 1986 where a number of people active in developing these schemes presented reports on progress made to that point and prospects for the future. The workshop concentrated on identifying ways of increasing participation and equity through appropriate innovation in the areas of curriculum reform, secondary certification and higher education admissions.

Peter Fensham's opening chapter provides a conceptual umbrella for the other studies. It is a lucid, unusual and very welcome defence of equity and access based on social inclusiveness as a norm. Although Fensham does not dwell on the deeper politico-philosophical foundations of his view, his is a conceptualisation which is potentially an engine of continuous social and educational reform, more subtle and more exciting than the minimalist position built on arguments about equality of individual opportunity.

The editor sets out the structure he has provided for the contributed papers. Eleven case studies are grouped into four sections.

The first section looks at ways of raising the awareness of tertiary opportunities among groups not traditionally involved. The projects reported here were carried out in the northern suburbs of Melbourne and the suburbs south-west of Sydney. In each case a number of tertiary institutions from either side of the old binary divide combined to mount a programme aimed at young people, and the families of young people, who would probably never have seen higher education as a likely part of their future lives.

The second looks at the tertiary access issue from the secondary school perspective. The three case studies which report upper secondary curriculum and certification innovations are very interesting. They look at ways of devising curriculum suitable for the expanded groups of students now staying on to year 12 which can also serve the purpose of preparing those students academically for higher education if that is the path they choose. Also included is a study of ways of certifying the capacities for higher studies of such students which does not involve them in the publicly-examined year 12 rat-race designed to produce the magic single aggregate score.

The next group of case studies, the third section, looks at this problem from the other side, that of the tertiary institutions. Examples are given of the ways in which first year curriculum design and admission procedures can open the pathways to success to people who would previously have been excluded from them.

The fourth section reports on special entry schemes in use at The University of Melbourne, James Cook and Flinders.

The final chapter attempts to draw some lessons from the fields previously surveyed and to point the way for future policy development. It makes a number of sensible and practicable suggestions which, although we may have heard most of them before, cannot be repeated too often, for they still fall mainly on deaf ears.

The papers are brief; none is more than ten pages in length. Each is written in a clear and informative way, perhaps because most of them are written by practitioners, concerned primarily with sharing their experience rather than with parading their learning.

It needs to be noted that these are all experiments. It is to be hoped that the monitoring process will continue because hard data arising out of these experiences will assist breaking down the barriers which remain.

It also needs to be noted that these schemes are alternatives to the mainstream practice which is still characteristic of most of our secondary and tertiary institutions. We must now begin to turn from surveying these alternatives to look squarely again at the mainstream practices of curriculum design, certification and selection to see what is worth preserving. Defences of the traditional practices are increasingly based, I think, on the costs and difficulties of large-scale change rather than on the superior virtues of what we are presently doing.

For this reason it is important to say that the projects reported here are not simply optional extras to the wave of reform now under way in both the secondary and tertiary spheres. How we teach, certificate, select and admit is absolutely integral to the current effort being directed at raising the efficiency and effectiveness with which our institutions serve their educational goals and the social needs of the wider community. This small book has much to teach anyone who wants to learn about what is possible now.

Brian Abbey,
University of Adelaide.

**Success in Higher Education.** Colin Power, Frances Robertson and Meredith Baker, National Institute of Labour Studies, Working Paper Series No. 94, Flinders University of South Australia, May 1987, $8.00.

One of the problems faced by researchers when confronted by super rapid policy changes is that their efforts to evaluate already implemented policies are consigned to the "history of organisations" rather than acting in the construction of new forms and structures. However, this work by Power, Robertson and Baker on how young people are "making sense" of their higher education experiences and who succeeds and who fails, is particularly timely given that we are about to see massive growth in student numbers within this sector of education.

Unfortunately the restrictions they obviously felt in producing a "report" format for the Tertiary Education Commission has resulted in a rather repetitive and stunted view of the rich everyday higher education experiences of Australian young people. They settle, very early, for a "deficit" model explanation of why working-class students are the most likely to fail, talking of disadvantaged "backgrounds", "groups" and "students" and suggesting that we must form policies that will have the effect of "compensating for *deficiency in student background*" (p. 3). It becomes quite clear that in their minds the lack of a rich culture, of knowledge and understanding is connected to a working class social background and that the "socio-cultural and educational background of a significant number of direct entrants is at variance with that expected by many academics" (p. 75). On the other hand, the more middle-class students who have taken the "most culturally rich" (p. 75) year 12 subjects, are the most likely to succeed.

Social class is seen throughout as a "problem", as we are told the staff of higher education institutions need "to determine the nature of students'... social backgrounds and therefore the *problems* which these students encounter", so that staff might "institute programs to assist students to overcome *their problems*" (p. 70) — that is the students' *problem of social origin*. This approach is summed up under the section heading — *"Determine the problems"* (p. 82) with the advice that staff "should be more aware of and understand the nature of students' ... social background", because this is felt to be the foremost problem confronting working class students. To be working class is to be a problem for higher education.

Their answer lies in cultural and educational compensation. If these students are to be given access to what was previously an exclusive middle-class institution, then because they are largely "not initiated into the ways and demands of the scholar and professional" and are faced with "what for them is an alien culture" (p. 3), then an extra year's bridging or foundation course that will up-grade working class students to the lofty heights of middle-class culture and sensitivity is what is needed.

The blame for this state of affairs is largely, but not totally, placed at the feet of the secondary education system and its inability to prepare these new conscripts for higher education; after all, lecturers have identified "insufficient preparation prior to admission" as one of the major factors in student difficulty.

This report produces the beginnings of an argument that needs to be engaged with. It alludes in a confused way, to the importance of culture in the way we choose our life paths and the commitment, or if you like "self-induction", that is a result. What we are talking about here is a process by which potential Labour power is recruited and transferred into actual Labour power. Because this period is social, because it is not a common process, it is differentiated by the social divisions of class, gender and race.

The different destinations assumed for young women and young men structure how they enter it, the sorts of experiences and directions they encounter within it and the manner in which they leave it. The answer then may *not*, as Power, Robertson and Baker suggest, be to attempt to change the new students whom access programs are enabling to enter higher education, but to let the new students themselves change the everyday life and practices of higher education so that it is no longer alien to them, but is their "place", rich with their culture. If we fail, the government might simply do it for us.

Mike Presdee,
South Australian College
of Advanced Education.

# Conferences

**HERDSA 89**

*Theme* Tertiary Education: Breaking the Mould
*Place* University of Adelaide
*Date* 1 — 4 July 1989
*Information* Bob Cannon, ACUE, University of Adelaide G.P.O. Box 498, Adelaide, 5001, S.A.

**Second International Conference on Experiential Learning**

*Theme* Learning ↔ Action For An Unknown Future
*Place* Hawkesbury Agricultural College
*Date* 3 — 7 July 1989
*Information* Roger Roberts and Ruth Cohen, Conference Secretariat, Dean's Unit, Faculty of Agriculture, Hawkesbury Agricultural College, Richmond, 2753, NSW

**Society for Research into Higher Education**

*Theme* Access and Institutional Change
*Place* The Polytechnic of North London
*Date* 18 — 20 December 1989
*Information* Dianne Willcocks, Coordinator SRHE Conference 1989, The Polytechnic of North London, Holloway Road, London N7 8 DB, England

# ABSTRACTS

HERDSA Abstracts are based on a regular survey of relevant literature. They are intended for use by tertiary teachers, research workers, students, administrators and librarians. The abstracts are classified into the same groups used by the Society for Research into Higher Education in their quarterly publication *Research into higher education abstracts.*

The *Abstracts* attempt a coverage of current English-language publications in Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Hong Kong. Publications describing research, teaching, administration, staff and students in tertiary education are abstracted.

Educational or other non-profit organisations may reproduce a limited number of these abstracts in their own publications provided that HERDSA receives suitable acknowledgment.

HERDSA is most grateful to its abstractors and the cooperation of the editors of the journals abstracted. The *Abstracts* are edited by Martin Hayden, Educational Development Services, Lincoln School of Health Sciences, La Trobe University, 625 Swanston Street, Carlton, Victoria 3053, Australia.*

* With this issue Hugh Guthrie passes on responsibility for the *Abstracts* to Martin Hayden. Hugh will continue to provide abstracts from TAFE journals, and Carol Bond has agreed to cover New Zealand journals. HERDSA very sincerely appreciates Hugh's contribution over recent years and thanks Martin for volunteering (yes, he really did!) to take on the task when Hugh decided the time had come to abdicate. (PN)

## A GENERAL

Davis, D., **Traineeships in the West German Context.** Australian Journal of Education, 32, 1, 1988: 44-58.

In 1985-86 the Australian Government introduced an elaborate scheme of traineeships to complement the already existing apprenticeship scheme. This article shows how the idea as originally conceived, but not implemented, was based upon the West German dual system. It examines the dual system within the West German setting to see what problems and benefits the traineeship based upon the German system would have in Australia.

(Modified journal abstract)

Hayton, G., **The Cost of Equipment for Training.** Australian Journal of TAFE Research and Development, 3, 2, 1988: 57-69.

The author recently completed a study for the National Printing Industry Training Committee Limited on training arrangements for the printing industry. Part of the study was concerned with identifying the general principles associated with equipment costs of present training arrangements. These principles are discussed in this paper.

(Modified journal abstract)

Rutter, A., **The Development of a Code of Research Practice for TAFE.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 8, 1988: 39-47.

Box Hill College of TAFE obtained a designated grant to explore the need for a code of research practice for the TAFE system in Victoria. Currently there is no code for research practice in TAFE and consequently there is little accountability for the quality of research practice and outcomes.

(Journal abstract)

## B SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS

Aitken, D., **Trends in Funding Arrangements.** Higher Education Quarterly, 42, 2, 1988: 144-151.

In the mid-1980s Australian higher education is experiencing a great change in the policy inspired by the Murray report of 1957 and the Martin report of 1964 which provided the main guidelines for policy during the next 20 years. It is particularly important that expenditure on research be given a much sharper focus and this paper examines some of the reasons for this claim and the background to the announcement in September 1987 of the establishment of an Australian Research Council as part of a single super Department of State, the Department of Employment, Education and Training.

(Journal abstract)

Beswick, D., **Prospects for the 1990s: A New Phase of Development in Australian Higher Education.** Higher Education Quarterly, 42, 2, 1988: 162-178.

Higher education in Australia is seen as having reached the conclusion of one phase of development characterised by a high degree of central planning and to be entering a new phase in which it is argued that a radically different orientation is required. Recovery of at least shared responsibility by the states and the development of private initiatives should help to promote more creative management through diversification of funding sources and lines of accountability. Pressures for change follow demographic and social changes in the Australian population which are likely to favour increased participation in higher education for both personal and national economic purposes.

(Journal abstract)

Braddy, J., **Intersectoral Co-operation and the VCE.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 55-57.

This article discusses ways for the movement of students from one sector of post-compulsory education to another with credit for previous learning. It distinguishes between cross-accreditation of courses and cross-crediting of units or blocks of units. Some potential links between schools, TAFE and higher education are explored, before preconditions are identified for effective cross-accreditation and cross-crediting.

(Journal abstract)

Brown, M., **The Restructuring of the Metal Industry Award and Changes in Trade Training.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 8, 1988: 12-13.

A key metal industry union is moving to restructure the Metal Industry Award in 1988. This implies a complete restructure of the present training system for metal industry workers. This article is a reaction to the proposal, and an opinion as to what metal trade teachers should be doing to ensure that they are included in planning and implementation strategies.

(Journal abstract)

Carmichael, R., **The TAFE View of Higher Education: A Policy Discussion Paper.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 8, 1988: 50-52.

This article provides one view of the Commonwealth Government's Green Paper on higher education, which was distributed in December 1987. The article attempts to address some of the

issues raised by the paper in so far as they have implications for the Victorian TAFE system.

(Journal abstract)

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Karmel, P., **The role of Central Government in Higher Education.** Higher Education Quarterly, 42, 2, 1988: 119-133.

This paper addresses three questions:

- How has the role of central government in higher education evolved?
- What have been the main concerns of government?
- How should government carry out its role?

(Modified journal abstract)

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Lake, J.H., Fraser, B.J. and Williamson, J.C., **An Alternative Route to Higher Education: An Evaluation of Senior Colleges in Western Australia.** Higher Education Research and Development, 7, 1, 1988: 37-48.

The establishment of two Senior Colleges in Western Australia in 1983 provided adult students with an alternative route to conventional schooling for completing matriculation requirements for entry to higher education. An evaluation of the Colleges involved large samples of students and staff and the triangulation of information obtained by different researchers working independently and using a variety of methods (interview, questionnaires, nominal groups, classroom and school climate assessment).

(Modified journal abstract)

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McKinnon, K.R., **Higher Education Industry.** Higher Education Quarterly, 42, 2, 1988: 179-192.

University research in Australia has in the past been devoted primarily to basic curiosity-initiated research based on the English model. Most senior academic staff have had advanced degrees from British universities and the ethos of pure research has permeated their work. In 1984 68 percent of all higher education research and development was classified as basic research. The impetus for change in the early 1980s has come largely from federal government. In particular shrinking per student grants have forced universities to try to supplement their incomes from other sources. This paper summarises and analyses some of the new initiatives and concludes with an examination of future prospects.

(Journal abstract)

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Predl, I., **The Climate for TAFE in the '90s.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 6-9.

In this paper the author considers some influences on directions for TAFE, some key aspects of TAFE programs and the importance to TAFE of governments and government policies, and concludes with some comments that TAFE needs to make effective and efficient use of resources at its disposal.

(Modified journal abstract)

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Selvaratnam, V., **Higher Education Co-operation and Western Dominance of Knowledge Creation and Flows in Third World Countries.** Higher Education, 17, 1, 1988: 41-68.

This paper outlines the Western model of university development with its accompanying Eurocentric knowledge systems adopted by Third World countries. It discusses the various productive and counterproductive effects of these alien features to Third World universities, their research institutions and the knowledge output of their academic communities.

(Modified journal abstract)

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Watkins, P., **Satisfying the Needs of Industry: Vocationalism, Corporate Culture and Education.** Unicorn, 14, 2, 1988: 69-76.

The current call for closer ties between education and industry to satisfy the needs of industry has a familiar ring to people acquainted with earlier moves toward vocational education. However as a number of scholars have observed the introduction of vocational education has not always borne the fruits that it has promised. Indeed the frequent underutilisation of skills has given rise to the development of corporate cultures in an effort to reduce any sense of alienation which this underutilisation might engender. The paper concludes by suggesting the students may be better served by an education that questions the taken-for-granted structures of work.

(Journal abstract)

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West, L.H.T., **Strategic Planning, Performance Indicators, Research Policy: the New Issues Facing University Management.** Higher Education Research and Development, 7, 1, 1988: 5-17.

Higher education systems throughout the world are coming under the joint influences of continuing reduced resources, demand for research to solve short term economic problems, and the perceived value in the application of business models of management. These influences have given rise to several related movements: strategic planning, performance indicators, research policy. The paper provides a discussion of each of these movements.

(Journal abstract)

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## C TEACHING AND LEARNING

Ashurst, J., **Open Learning — An Explanation of the Term and its Relevance to TAFE.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 15-19.

This article explains the concept of open learning by reference to the removal of barriers relating to the what, how, when and why of learning. The concept is distinguished from telematics and from distance education, before a discussion of support mechanisms for open learning, and the features of it. The article closes with an indication of why open learning is important for TAFE at this time.

(Journal abstract)

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Chen Ai Yen, **Trends and issues in Improving University Teaching.** Higher Education Research and Development, 7, 1, 1988: 49-61.

This study reports the trends and issues related to the teaching improvement efforts at the National University of Singapore as a whole and in the Medical Faculty in particular. The university-wide study is mainly based on the returns of a questionnaire evaluating the Teaching Methodology courses conducted in conjunction with the Institute of Education, Singapore in the past seven years (1981-1987). The perceptions and meanings regarding teaching improvement efforts that are derived from interviews with a purposive sample of Medical Faculty members confirm the advantages of the developmental approach of instructional and faculty development.

(Modified journal abstract)

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Clark, R.J., **The Teaching-Learning Event: A Conceptual Framework.** Australian Journal of Adult Education, 27, 3, 1987: 37-42.

This article argues that all teaching-learning events take place in a learning environment. The learning environment consists of five elements: contextual factors, the characteristics of the adult learners, teaching/learning theories, the characteristics of the facilitator, and the teaching techniques and methods. Each of these elements is discussed and the literature reviewed.

(Journal abstract)

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Crocker, C., **Library Services in Distance Education.** Unicorn, 14, 1, 1988: 17-23.

Distance education provides formal education for adults through degree and diploma courses; and continuing education classes held on or off the campus extend further educational opportunities to the community. This paper discusses the library support needed in these different circumstances and draws

particularly on practices in the universities of Australia and Britain.

(Journal abstract)

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Cumming, J., **Understanding the World of Work Through Co-operative Projects.** Unicorn, 14, 2, 1988: 90-98.

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the potential of co-operative projects as a practical means of expanding student understanding of work. An objective will be to illustrate the extent to which a consensus is emerging in the community on the reasons for including work in the curriculum as well as on the kind of knowledge about work that all students need to acquire.

(Modified journal abstract)

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Davidson, T. and Smith, R., **Skills, Self-paced Learning and Work: Motor Trade Training.** Unicorn, 14, 2, 1988: 77-84.

This paper analyses the ways in which the Apprentice Motor Vehicle Mechanic Syllabus presents to its readers a vision of curriculum knowledge, pedagogy and evaluation. It is argued that the discourse of the syllabus creates links between course-work and the work-place which appear to be "real" but are instead images. In turn, such images re-define what counts as knowledge, teaching and evaluation so that the apparent objectives of the syllabus are not easily attainable in their institutional settings. The syllabus, it is concluded, is structured around principles that identify a new conception of education which is in tune with more general patterns of social change in the 1980s.

(Journal abstract)

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Edwards, R. **Problem-Based Learning — An Alternative Teaching / Learning Strategy for TAFE Colleges.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 29-32.

Problem-based learning (PBL) has its emphasis in encouraging students to learn how to learn. Knowledge and skills acquired in solving problems relevant to a selected course of learning will remain with the student and greatly assist him or her in coping with other problems that will emerge as his or her career develops. The author asks readers to consider the relevance of PBL to their situation.

(Modified journal abstract)

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Hall, W.C., **Open Learning.** Australian Journal of TAFE Research and Development, 3, 2, 1988: 1-5.

In this article the author explains what open learning is and what it is not, discusses some of the practical implications arising from a commitment to open learning, and suggests that if open learning is to succeed in Australia then there does need to be some co-ordination of effort.

(Modified journal abstract)

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Hamilton, B., **Open Learning in TAFE.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 20-22.

Open learning has gained much attention in Victorian TAFE. The use of the phrase appears to be surrounded by several misconceptions. This article attempts to correct the major misconceptions and give a different perspective to the definition of open learning. The need for the adoption of an open learning philosophy in highlighted, as well as some ideas for its adoption.

(Journal abstract)

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Hoole, S.R.H., Hoole, P.R.P., Jayakumaran, S. and Hoole, N.R.G., **Teaching Electromagnetics Through Finite Elements. Part 2: The Instructional Program.** International Journal of Electrical Engineering Education, 25, 2, 1988: 151-161.

A finite element program for use in the instruction of electromagnetic field theory is described. The unity among the various disciplines of physics through the Poisson equation is exploited to make the same program solve problems from many areas. Graphics menus and adaptive mesh generation capabilities are provided to make the program easily usable by the uninitiated students.

(Journal abstract)

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Kingston, G., **Problem-Based Learning in Electronics.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 33-35.

This article details an investigation into problem-based learning based on a trial conducted with second-year radio trades apprentices in the School of Applied Electronics and Tele-communications at the RMIT. It provides a summary of a full report that will be issued in mid-1987.

(Journal abstract)

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Koh Moy Yin, **ESP for Engineers: A Reassessment.** ELT Journal, 42, 2, 1988: 102-108.

This article suggests that some engineering undergraduates already have adequate English for the Technical part of their academic and professional purposes, and that their problems are more to do with communication and with their management of appropriate interactive, interpersonal skills in English. The article suggests that conventional ESP courses do not meet the needs of such students. It examines the implications of this suggestion, with special reference to the development of communication skills courses for engineering students at Nanyan Technological Institute, Singapore.

(Journal abstract)

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Kunze, E., **Introduction to Electronics — A Beechworth Prison Education Program.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 8, 1988: 21-26.

This article contains extracts from a report on a short course educational program conducted at Beechworth Prison forming part of an action research project. The program is newly devised and was run through the Education Centre at Beechworth Prison for 12 weeks in 1987.

(Modified journal abstract)

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Lonergan, N. and Andresen, L.W., **Field-Based Education: Some Theoretical Considerations.** Higher Education Research and Development, 7, 1, 1988: 63-77.

Within a broad notion of "the field", teachers using field-based methods work towards many different educational aims, some implicit and others explicit. Particular aims are examined, and some types of field activity are seen to be better for achieving certain aims than others. Types of field excursion are classified and some special learning benefits of working in the field are suggested. Field teachers should set clear learning objectives and carefully plan and select the experiences they intend students to have, taking into account educational aims, time available, distance, student readiness, and availability of localities and resources. Thorough briefing and debriefing are important in maximising field learning.

(Journal abstract)

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Menahem, S., **Trigger Segments: Towards Improving Listening Skills?** Medical Education, 22, 3, 1988: 189-192.

Written "trigger" segments depicting emotionally charged clinical situations arising from real patient encounters, and ending with a pertinent statement by the parent, were prepared and presented to senior medical students, post-graduate medical and allied professionals. They were asked to record their immediate reactions, how they would have responded and on reflection, how they ought to have responded. General discussion followed, highlighting various issues dealing with patient management.

(Summary)

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Meyer, R.S., **The Comprehension Gap: Reflections on Staff-Student Misunderstandings in Respect of Language.** Higher Education Research and Development, 7, 1, 1988: 79-89.

This paper points to disparate expectations of language as one cause of staff-student misunderstandings. It examines the spoken language which students often write together with the written language that staff tend to speak. The two are compared in terms of vocabulary, style of structuring, and orality (use of oral expression). Analysis indicates that the different modes of using language reflect different approaches to learning, so that students may benefit from staff reconsidering the comprehension gap as well as enquiring into other factors which inhibit the tutorial dialogue.

(Journal abstract)

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Sanguinetti, J., **What is Open Learning; What Does it Mean for TAFE?** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 23-35.

In this article the author defines open learning, indicating that the principles on which it is based stem from the visions of Kangan. Plans for implementation of open learning in TAFE in Victoria are then outlined and a report is given of six seminars conducted across Victoria in 1986.

(Journal abstract)

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Smith, S. and Lindner, C., **Learning Styles and Teaching Methods.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 8, 1988: 27-29.

This study investigates the learning styles of students, and the delivery styles of teachers, in selected programs at a Victorian TAFE College. Teachers' perceptions of student learning preferences were assessed. Comparisons were made across the three measures to identify any matches and mismatches. A further group, consisting of university students, was also included in the study to provide a basis for comparison between TAFE and university students. Learning styles were determined using the Canfield Learning Styles Inventory, while teaching delivery modes and teacher perceptions of student preferences were determined through interview.

(Modified journal abstract)

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Sowey, E.R., **Mathematics for Economists — Varied, Versatile, Vital.** International Journal of Mathematical Education in Science and Technology, 19, 2, 1988: 255-267.

Mathematical and statistical techniques have been applied in economics for nearly two centuries, but it is only since about 1950 that the full power of these techniques has been felt pervasively in the discipline. To a modern economist, mathematics offers a rich and varied toolkit. The tools are versatile; a single approach can often solve quite diverse problems. One can, indeed, say that the contribution mathematics makes to economics nowadays is vital. This paper explores ideas on the mathematical and statistical education that is appropriate for economists, both at the preparatory level in secondary school and concurrently with undergraduate economics studies at university. The value of mathematical studies to economists is widely recognised. What must, however, also be recognised is that a mathematical approach to economics cannot ipso facto produce a solution to every applied economic problem. Mathematical skills are necessary but not sufficient for meeting the ultimately practical concerns of the economist.

(Journal abstract)

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Zubir, R., **Descriptions of Teaching and Learning: a Malaysian Perspective.** Studies in Higher Education, 13, 2, 1988: 139-149.

The study explores the impact of two teaching methods — the lecture and individualised learning — in the context of higher education in Malaysia through an investigation in two teacher training institutions. Research was carried out in a natural setting, through interviews and questionnaires. Contrary to the accepted view that Malaysian students cannot learn independently, it was found that over half the students expressed a preference for individualised learning.

(Summary)

## D INFORMATION NETWORKS

Journals, Oxford Ltd., **Technical Education Abstracts.** Abingdon: Carfax Publishing Company. ISSN 0040-0920.

*Technical Education Abstracts*, first published in 1961, is designed to serve the information needs of all those working in scientific, technical and further education, including education and training for industry and commerce. It provides abstracts of some 480 journal articles, books and reports each year in four quarterly issues. Each abstract provides a concise non-evaluative summary of the item and gives full bibliographical details. Regular scanning of the abstracts, aided by the provision of author and subject indexes in each issue, enable the reader to keep up-to-date with new techniques and developments not only within technical education itself but in areas which have a bearing on it, such as national government policy and legislation. Annual cumulative author and subject indexes are bound in the final issue of each volume for the purpose of retrospective retrieval.

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Society for Research into Higher Education. **Research into Higher Education Abstracts.** Abingdon: Carfax Publishing Company for SRHE. ISSN 0034-5326.

*Research into Higher Education Abstracts* is published by Carfax Publishing Company on behalf of the Society for Research into Higher Education and is based on a regular survey of the relevant journals and books. It is intended for use by administrators, libraries, research workers, students, teachers and all who are interested in higher education. Although it is mainly publications describing research which are abstracted, reference works, some theses, reviews and important articles of general interest are also noted.

The abstracts are classified into related groups and arranged within each group in alphabetical order of author. An author and subject index appear in each issue and are cumulated annually and bound in the final issue of each year.

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TAFE National Centre for Research and Development, **Initiatives in Technical and Further Education.** ISBN 0-159-5008.

"Initiatives" is the publication of the National TAFE Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse Officer in each of the eight TAFE Authorities in Australia summarises information on research and development reports published in their TAFE Authority. This information is collated by the National TAFE Clearinghouse Officer located at the TAFE National Centre, and is published twice a year in this "Initiatives" series. The information is also included in the Australian Education Index of the AUSINET database. Documents listed in the booklet and database can be obtained from the relevant Clearinghouse Officer in the TAFE system of their origin. Issues 1-14 are available.

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TAFE National Centre for Research and Development, **TAFE Projects in Progress.** ISBN 0729-5324.

Research and development projects that are currently in progress in TAFE Authorities, Government Training Authorities and other organisations that work in areas relevant to TAFE are detailed in this publication. It is published twice a year. Issues 6-13 are available.

## E STUDENTS GENERAL

Garton, J., **Student Profile Summary, TAFE Victoria 1986.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 36-39.

This paper reports the results of the Student Profile Survey carried out in 1986. The survey was initiated by the Chairman of the TAFE Board to remedy the deficiencies in data relating to student socio-demographic backgrounds and to assist TAFE

policy and planning development. The results give a detailed profile at state-wide level by TAFE streams of study of 22 socio-demographic variables. The survey was conducted as a pilot study of TAFE Streams 1 to 5 in colleges, and will be used as a basis for the 1987 Student Profile Survey of all streams of study in all categories of TAFE provider.

(Journal abstract)

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Hornblow, A.R., Kidson, M.A. and Ironside, W., **Empathetic Processes: Perception by Medical Students of Patients' Anxiety and Depression.** Medical Education, 22, 1988: 15-18.

Perceptions by medical students of patients' affective states were investigated, and the effect of the students' own emotions on such perceptions. One hundred and one fourth-year medical students rated the levels of anxiety and depression of three women patients presented on videotape, rated their own levels of anxiety and depression and completed a questionnaire on aspects of the rating process. Students had widely different and often inappropriate perceptions of patients' levels of anxiety and depression. Students who consistently overrated anxiety or depression in patients, compared to those who consistently underrated, were themselves significantly more anxious or depressed. These data suggest a need in medical education for systematic teaching of empathetic skills and for recognition of potential bias in clinical decision-making arising from the clinician's own emotional state.

(Journal abstract)

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Jones, K.V., and Lebnan, V., **A 6-year Follow-Up of the Type A Behaviour Pattern in Medical Students.** Medical Education, 22, 3, 1988: 211-213.

A sample of 104 medical students was tested for the Type A behaviour pattern using the Jenkins Activity Survey (Form N fully weighted and Form C Glass Student scores) at four points over a 6-year period during the medical course. Fully weighted Type A scores showed a significant increase over the first 3 years of the course, followed by a drop — to approximately second-year levels — by the end of the 6-year period. A similar but non-significant pattern was observed for the Glass scores. It was suggested that the decrease in the scores was related to lesser usefulness of the Type A pattern during the clinical years of the medical course. A significant difference was found for the final written examination, with those who scored above the median on the Glass Student Type A scale doing better than the lower scorers. This result was not replicated for the fully weighted Type A scores. It may be that there is some specific usefulness of Type A responding for performance on written examinations, although no equivalent performance difference was found for the final clinical examination.

(Summary)

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Townsend, R., **Students with Disabilities in NSW TAFE.** Australian Journal of TAFE Research and Development, 3, 2, 1988: 39-43.

The introduction of any new client group into TAFE means that, in meeting its needs, many organisational issues need to be resolved if the group is to receive quality education. In resolving these organisational issues, the importance of policy making in conjunction with an accurate assessment and development of resources such as staff, finances and facilities are stressed. Roslyn Townsend illustrates this point by considering the organisational changes which need to be made by NSW TAFE in catering for the needs of students with disabilities.

(Modified journal abstract)

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## F STUDENTS: SELCTION AND PERFORMANCE

Edwards, P. and Gould, W., **New Directions in Apprentice Selection: Self-Perceived "On-the-Job" Literacy (Reading) Demands of Apprentices.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 8, 1988: 14-17.

This article is based on an investigation of the self-perceived, on-the-job literacy tasks of electrical mechanic apprentices. Among other things it indicates the nature of the reading they commonly undertake and suggests implications for the kinds of reading experiences provided for them in trade courses.

(Journal abstract)

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Greagg, L., **The Student Selection and Access Project.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 8, 1988: 30-33.

This article gives an overview of the Student Selection and Access Project which was undertaken in 1987. The project undertook a literature search and collected information on selection and access tools and procedures being used. A major report was produced to record the findings of the project and to provide a resource for people devising policies and procedures. A feature of the report is the identification of several trends in selection practices.

(Modified journal abstracts)

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Mageean, P., **Work-Based Learning and its Assessment and Accreditation — Implications for Educators.** Unicorn, 14, 2, 1988: 85-89.

This article argues that educators should ensure that skills learned on-the-job are assessed and credited. The paper discusses the reasons for this, including the government's commitment to increasing industry's contribution to skills development. It points out the advantages of the workplace as a contributor to skills development and describes the types of assessment and accreditation which would be suitable for this.

(Modified journal abstract)

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Newble, D.I., **Eight Years' Experience with a Structured Clinical Examination.** Medical Education, 22, 3, 1988: 200-204.

A structured clinical examination has been an integral component of the final-year examinations conducted by the Departments of Medicine and Surgery at the University of Adelaide for the past 8 years. It has been used as an alternative to the traditional clinical examination. This paper describes the results of ongoing student and examiner surveys carried out to determine their views and satisfaction with this new approach. It also briefly discusses the feasibility of introducing such an examination into a conventional medical school environment.

(Summary)

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Thompson, P., **Inappropriate Uses of Tests in Vocational Education.** Australian Journal of TAFE Research and Development, 3, 2, 1988: 45-51.

This paper is an edited version of an address given by Peter Thompson to the 13th International Conference of the International Association for Educational Assessment in Bangkok in November 1987. He argues that vocational education should move away from paper and pencil tests in general and standardised tests in particular and move towards criterion-referenced practical tests which concentrate on meeting employer-based or enterprise-based standards rather than national standards.

(Journal abstract)

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West, A., **Performance of and Problems Encountered by Students Transferring from TAFE to Higher Education.** Australian Journal of TAFE Research and Development, 3, 2, 1988: 15-24.

Much work has been done in Australia in recent years in the opportunities for students who have successfully completed a relevant TAFE middle-level course for transfer to a higher education institution and the extent to which students avail themselves of these opportunities. However very little work has been done on how successful such students are when they do transfer. In this article, Alan West looks at the performance of students who have entered the University of Technology (UTS), with a TAFE award as their highest qualification and at the problems these students encounter.

(Modified journal abstract)

## G STUDENTS: CAREERS AND EMPLOYMENT

Shapiro, M.C., Western, J.S., and Anderson, D.S., **Career Preferences and Career Outcomes of Australian Medical Students.** Medical Education, 22, 3, 1988: 214-221.

Students entering three Australian medical schools were followed over a 15-year period to trace both movement into the profession and the longer-term outcomes of early career aspirations. A variety of student entry characteristics are examined together with aspirations, attainments and self-images. The results indicate that women, rather than men, are more likely to enter medical school with aspirations that involve specialty training. As they proceed through medical school, both groups move away from the idea of pursuing specialty training, although women tend to decide earlier than men that specialty practice is not for them.

(Summary)

## H STAFF

Boud, D., **Professional Development and Accountability: Working with Newly Appointed Staff to Foster Quality.** Studies in Higher Education, 13, 2, 1988: 165-176.

The aim of this paper is to examine some issues in professional development and the accountability of academic staff particularly in regard to newly appointed staff. It examines ways in which universities can assist new staff develop their skills in the various aspects of their academic role and identifies the responsibilities of the university and heads of department in this task. It illustrates these issues by reference to a case study of a major Australian university which has recently adopted a department-based scheme for the professional development of academic staff. This scheme, amongst other things, involves new staff in planning sessions with the head of their department and the keeping of records of responsibilities, achievement, needs for professional development and the resources which will be provided to assist staff.

The introduction of any scheme for accountability of staff or of professional dvelopment is likely to encounter some resistance in the prevailing academic ethos. The paper will examine ways in which the genuine fears of some groups can be addressed and how such schemes may be developed and introduced in a sensitive fashion.

(Journal abstract)

Hall, W.C., **The Continuing Education Needs of Academic Staff: Full-time College Lecturers.** Adelaide: TAFE National Centre for Research and Development. 1987. ISBN 86397-075-3. 94 pages.

This report investigates ways in which experienced TAFE lecturers can regularly update their technical knowledge and skills with special reference to the rapid technological changes occurring in industry and commerce. This is part two of a three-part report. Part one deals with beginning TAFE College lecturers while part two deals with senior academic staff.

(Publication summary)

Mageean, P., **The Continuing Education Needs of Academic Staff: Senior College Staff in TAFE.** Adelaide: TAFE National Centre for Research and Development. 1987. ISBN 86397-378-7. 92 pages.

TAFE senior college staff, like administrators and managers in other educational institutions, are generally promoted to these positions because of their expertise in teaching, without necessarily having the skills required in their new roles. This document suggests ways these skills could be provided and senior staff continually could be kept aware of new developments. The paper suggests this should be within the context of a continual process of individual professional development in which all staff would engage throughout their careers with TAFE. This is part three of a three-part report. Part two by W.C. Hall deals with full-time TAFE College lecturers. Part one by Z. Krzemionka deals with beginning TAFE teachers.

(Publication summary)

McFarlane, R., **In Search of Our Leader.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 46-50.

This paper attempts to provide a case that evidence can be found from both literature and research as to the type of people suitable for appointment to TAFE college director positions. Using many sources, it discusses the functions and tasks of the leader of an educational organisation with a clear focus on the enhancement of teaching and learning.

(Journal abstract)

McLean, L., **Excellence is Not a Dirty Word.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 46-50.

In this article the author outlines experiences she had at IBM when on an industrial placement on release from the TAFE Board. Some details are given about the approach at IBM to the development of people, particularly managers. A comprehensive training program is outlined. Some comments are then made about the relevance of the experience to the public sector within which the author normally works.

(Journal abstract)

Miller, A.H., **Student Assessment of Teaching in Higher Education.** Higher Education, 17, 1, 1988: 3-15.

Plans to introduce campus-wide assessments of college or university teaching which are largely dependent on student ratings are seen as a threat to academic freedom in those institutions with little or no experience of this form of evaluation. While regular student evaluations of teaching are very common in North America, their introduction is only now being considered in colleges and universities in a number of other countries. Research on the reliability and validity of student ratings indicate that they are capable of providing valuable information about the quality of teaching. Depending on the survey uses, this type of evaluation may be used to provide evidence of teaching ability to staffing committees or to suggest ways of improving teaching. The paper concludes with a set of recommendations for higher education institutions which are considering the regular assessment of all teachers by their students.

(Journal abstract)

Orton, T., **Towards Better Ways of Working in Groups.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 51-54.

An in-house training initiative, called "Working-in-Groups" (WIG), was started at Dandenong COT in September, 1986. Its objectives include helping participants to make more effective use of the time they spend in task-groups like committees and to increase the effectiveness of such groups. In addition, WIG is a test of a new approach to training in this area.

(Modified journal abstract)

Orton, T., **Developing Managers — A Program Development Process.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 8, 1988: 48-49.

This paper presents the process by which the Management Development Program at Dandenong College of TAFE was developed and implemented in 1987. This process attempted to put program design, implementation and evaluation into the hands of those the program was to serve and to embed the results of the program in the decision structures of the college. This approach is believed suitable for organisations at the stage of goal and priority clarity which Dandenong had at the time.

(Journal abstract)

## I CONTINUING EDUCATION

Delahaye, B., **The Orthogonal Relationship Between Pedagogy and Andragogy — Some Initial Findings.** The Australian Journal of Adult Education, 27, 3, 1987: 4-8.

While the debate on andragogy and pedagogy has been wide-ranging, there seems to be some agreement over the past ten years that these two constructs can be viewed as the ends of a continuum. However, initial results of research carried out by the author indicate that andragogy and pedagogy are independent and that their relationship is orthogonal or at right angles to each other. How this will affect approaches to learning, education and training will require further research. It does suggest that the issue is more complex than the one-dimensional view presented by the simplistic continuum and the possibilities for future research appear to be very exciting.

(Journal abstract)

Jones, P., **Community Education.** Victorian TAFE Papers, 6, 1987: 58-62.

This paper provides an historical perspective and overview of community education as part of TAFE. It helps to clarify the reader's perspectives on the providers, programs and funding of community education in the context of Victorian technical and further education.

(Journal abstract)

Sherwood, R., **The TAFE Programme at Nurrabundah — Education by Reaching Out.** Australian Journal of Adult Education, 27, 3, 1987: 9-13.

This paper presents a picture of what the Outreach Department of Canberra's Woden TAFE is, does, and why it should continue. Contact with its students, the department's history, other community education programmes both in and out of Canberra, and the philosophy behind the provision of community education programmes are used in an analysis that concludes that Outreach is of great need to the community, and that it is successfully doing what it set out to do, i.e. providing educational opportunities for those who would not be able to succeed in regular TAFE courses.

(Journal abstract)

**ABSTRACTORS:**

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*(From page 6)*

anticipate that poor background in verbal or written expression may hinder them, they actively seek assistance. It is my impression from this study that, far from being a drawback to academic progress, a failure in TEE English acted in some students as a direct motivator to develop tertiary learning skills.

Certainly, the results strengthen my doubts about the role of TEE English as a measure of tertiary literacy — or, at least, about the link between such literacy and progress in a broad sweep of academic disciplines.

We are currently following these students through second year: it could be that second and third year courses are more demanding than first year ones in their use of language and expression and the structure of discourse. If that is so, then some of the students who were low in "general literacy" may show specific difficulties which are not yet apparent. I am prepared to hypothesise delayed effects of "low literacy" — especially if students have entered courses which have a high degree of overlap with school syllabi in First Year.

But we are going further in our follow-up than merely reviewing progress. One of the fascinating findings of our study was the high degree to which students found their peers to be an important source of assistance with learning skills and with the basic skills of academic disciplines. We are developing an intensive study of peer help strategies — finding out what makes another student a good source of help, and hoping to see how far academic staff do (or could) adopt the same intervention strategies.

I suppose, to put it simply, we have moved away from asking "What should a student have done before coming to University in order to succeed here?", to asking "What do we need to do to help our students succeed, once they *are* here?". That has, for a long time, seemed to me to be the question behind equity.

Alex Main,
Murdoch University.

**Deadlines for future issues:**

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