

# VET and vocational learning in Catholic schools in Queensland



## Position Statement

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### Introduction

The Queensland Catholic Education Commission (QCEC) is committed to supporting Catholic School Authorities in their work of providing a range of curriculum offerings that respond to the personalised learning needs of students, support successful post-school pathways and maintain students' engagement with school.

Each Catholic School Authority is encouraged to use this Position Statement to frame Vocational Education and Training (VET) and vocational learning policies and procedures, which are socially just, equitable, inclusive, educationally sound and suited to their particular context.

### Definition

Vocational Education and Training (VET) delivers of formal units of competency and accredited qualifications, including apprenticeships and traineeships and can be studied as part of a pathway to work, further VET or tertiary education<sup>1</sup>. VET gives young people the opportunity to acquire transferable work ready skills and continue on their lifelong learning journey. VET provides opportunities to develop foundational skills that support worker readiness such as workplace literacy and numeracy, problem-solving, communication, self-management and to develop skills, attitudes and behaviours expected by employers.

Vocational learning has an exploratory purpose and is relevant to learners across all years in secondary education. It encompasses a range of educational opportunities including career education, short programs with industry, curriculum-based subjects and work placements to explore particular occupations. Vocational learning also helps secondary students identify career options and pathways, build career development skills and to directly experience the world of work by spending time in real or simulated workplaces<sup>2</sup>.

### Rationale

Catholic schools exist to educate the whole person and to provide an educational foundation for the whole of life. They play a critical role in preparing young people for their potential life after school in roles as friends, family, community, and workforce members<sup>3</sup>. High quality educational experiences, access to a range of courses, career education and support for students during their secondary years help lay the foundation for rewarding, productive and fulfilling careers and the development of a sense

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<sup>1</sup> Looking to the Future – Report of the review of senior secondary pathways into work, further education and training 2020

<sup>2</sup> Looking to the Future – Report of the review of senior secondary pathways into work, further education and training 2020

<sup>3</sup> Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration by the Council of Australian Governments Education Council 2019

of responsibility and active citizenship.

Catholic social teaching recognises the place of education and of work in promoting the wellbeing of individuals and of societies. Participation in VET and vocational learning builds and enhances young people's confidence to navigate pathways, provides opportunities to meet the different needs of young people in Catholic schools and contributes to a holistic and engaging education. In the Catholic context, vocational education is one of the ways young people can explore and develop 'the vocation to work'<sup>4</sup>.

Catholic education recognises the dignity of work and the importance of supporting the common good, to provide meaning in the lives of all people.

*Work is first and foremost "a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment". (Pope Francis, Geneva, June 2019)<sup>5</sup>*

### Position Statement

The Queensland Catholic Education Commission supports the provision of quality VET and vocational learning that addresses the individual needs of students and contributes to their post school outcomes. Catholic School Authorities seek to ensure VET and vocational learning are an integral and valued part of curriculum offerings in secondary school.

### Implications

Catholic School Authorities will give consideration to:

- Providing a range of curriculum and learning opportunities that cater for the different interests and skills of young people, enabling and valuing different ways of learning and knowing
- Accommodating flexible schooling arrangements to support VET and vocational learning options for students
- Promoting understanding of the value of VET and vocational learning to students, parents, teachers and employers
- Enabling students to make informed decisions about VET and vocational learning pathways through the provision of early, regular and intensive career advice
- Ensuring all student pathways are equally valued, resourced and delivered to the highest possible standard
- Ensuring all school leavers can communicate and evidence their learning to employers and educational institutions
- Supporting a range of pathways to further education, training or work that aligns with current and future employment markets
- Developing students' commitment and capacity to become lifelong learners so they can skill and re-skill post-school in response to personal and workforce considerations
- Providing engaging educational and work experiences to develop young people's drive, skills and disposition to contribute to their own economic and social wellbeing and to the wellbeing of society as a whole
- Ensuring that learning is built on and includes local, regional and national cultural knowledge and experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and work in partnership with local communities to provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to access employment opportunities within their communities (Alice Springs (Mparntwe)

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<sup>4</sup> Francis 2019. Message of His Holiness Pope Francis to Participants in the 108th Session of the International Labour Conference, 10-21 June 2019, Geneva.

<sup>5</sup> Francis 2019. Message of His Holiness Pope Francis to Participants in the 108th Session of the International Labour Conference, 10-21 June 2019, Geneva.

- Ensuring that all legislative and regulatory requirements for VET are adhered to in schools.

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[Queensland Government: Skills for Queensland – Great training for quality jobs](#)

[VET Reform Roadmap](#)

**Date of publication:** TBA  
**Next review:** TBA

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<sup>6</sup> Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration by the Council of Australian Governments Education Council 2019, page 14.