Welcome
Professor Erica Smith, RAVE Convenor

The VET sector continues to evolve and change rapidly, pointing to the need for research evidence. A case in point has been the VET FEE-HELP problem, which arguably arose because research evidence was not used in the change of legislation which occurred in 2012 and led to the ‘rots’ which were exposed earlier this year.

Erica Smith co-authored a paper on VET FEE-HELP which was published in 2014 - but cannot claim to have foreseen the current crisis! The paper can be provided on demand:


In the current newsletter we report on activities of RAVE research group members since May 2015. Further information about most of these activities is available on our web site (URL above). Do not hesitate to email RAVE for more details about any items:

rave.research@federation.edu.au

Federation University hosted the successful sixth international conference of INAP (the International Network on Innovative Apprenticeship) on 1st-2nd September 2015. Senator Simon Birmingham addressed the conference on the first day, in one of his last appearances as Assistant Minister in charge of VET, before being promoted to Cabinet as Minister for Education and Training. Senator Birmingham’s address was very well received by delegates, and we wish him well in his expanded portfolio. This was also RAVE’s OctoberVET event for 2015. A report on the conference is provided below.

If you are interested in further study in VET, you might like to think about Fed Uni’s Master of Education Studies which has a VET stream. Senior RAVE academics teach the subjects in this stream. Details are provided on p.2.

Finally, RAVE members have been active in organising the first VET teacher-education conference for 19 years, taking place on 14th December in Melbourne. Details follow on this page.

‘Refocusing on teaching and training in Vocational Education and Training’
National conference on VET teaching & VET teacher education

The Australian Council of Deans of Education Vocational Education Group (ACDEVEG) invites you to this landmark occasion, marking the revival of annual national VET teacher-education conferences.

Keynote speakers:
Professor Roger Harris, University of South Australia; ‘What do we learn from 40 years of history? Issues in VET teacher education from Kangan to today’. Craig Robertson, Deputy Secretary, Victorian Department of Education and Training.

Welcome on behalf of the Australian College of Educators by The Honourable Bronwyn Pike, President-elect.

Other organisations presenting:
The Victorian TAFE Association, Australian Council of Private Education and Training, the Australian Skills Quality Authority, the VET Development Centre, and Innovation and Business Skills Australia. Students of VET teacher-training courses and TAFE CEOs will also be speaking.

Research-based papers:
Ten research-based papers on VET teaching, assessment in VET, and VET teacher-training have been selected from submissions.

Who should attend?
This conference will be of interest to:

- Teachers from TAFE Institutes and RTOs who are interested in good practice in teaching;
- Teacher and trainers who deliver the Diploma of VET and Certificate IV in TAE;
- VET teacher-educators and researchers from universities and research organisations;
- CEOs and Managers from TAFE Institutes and RTOs.

The conference registration fee is $100. You can see the draft program, and register, at:


On September 1st and 2nd Fed Uni’s Mt Helen campus hosted the 6th International Network on Innovative Apprenticeship (INAP) conference for the first time in Australia. INAP was hosted by co-chair of INAP, Erica Smith, and included keynote speeches from Dr Raymond Patel (MERSETA); Dr Paul Comyn (International Labor Organisation) and Professor Stephen Billett (Griffith Uni), as well as Minister Birmingham. The conference was sponsored by the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training, and attracted presentations from world leading apprenticeship researchers, with 35 papers presented, from 12 countries. There was also a panel of Worldskills finalists and Australian Apprenticeships Ambassadors.

A pre-conference visit to Fed Uni’s TAFE facilities proved very popular with attendees, particularly international visitors. Evaluations of the conference were very favourable, with almost all of the Australian attendees saying they would consider attending a future INAP conference overseas. A typical comment was ‘Thoroughly enjoyed the conference and presentations’.

RAVE members and research assistants worked to produce a book of papers for the conference. The book was published by Australian Scholarly Press and is available at a specially negotiated price at http://www.scholarly.info/newrelease/

Or you can download an e-version via http://www.inap.unibremen.de/

VET stream in the Master of Education Studies

Federation University Australia has now instituted a stream in the MEd Studies especially for people working or wishing to work in the VET sector, or in jobs related to VET (e.g. government departments). While all courses (subjects) in the Masters are open to students from any sector, this stream is particularly targeted at VET practitioners.

RAVE researchers are involved in teaching the courses, meaning you will be learning from leaders in the field. As Fed Uni is dual-sector, our teaching is also strongly grounded in the practice of the sector.

To enter the program, you will need to have a first degree, which need not be in the VET field. If you have a postgraduate qualification or ‘four-year’ teaching degree, you may receive additional credit into the program.

The Masters of Education Studies is delivered flexibly on-line with no requirement for on campus attendance.

The VET stream for 2016 commencers is as follows. Each course is ‘double-weighted’ meaning part-timers are only expected to study one course a semester.

2016

Semester 1: EDMED7038, Analysis and inquiry: Reading and framing the research
Semester 2: EDMED7102, Vocational and workplace teaching and learning

2017 (semester of offering to be confirmed)
EDMED7001, Issues in vocational education & workplace learning
EDMED7103, Curriculum Design for vocational and workplace learning

You will select four further courses from a wide range (depending on any extra credit) to complete your Masters.

Enquiries about the Master of Education Studies program should be directed to the Program Leader Dr. Sharon McDonough on 03-5327 9703 or s.mcdonough@federation.edu.au or the administrative officer for the program Judy Mitchell on 03-53279730 or j.mitchell@federation.edu.au

Enquiries about the content of the VET stream can be directed to Erica Smith on 03-5327 9665 or e.smith@federation.edu.au

RAVE researcher wins Fed Uni’s ‘Five Minute Research Pitch’ competition

Carolyn Johnstone describes below her experience in this event. Congratulations to Carolyn!

The "5 Minute Research Pitch" (5RP) is an annual competition run between Australian Catholic University; Edith Cowan University; Fed Uni; Southern Cross University;
University of Southern Queensland; Central Queensland University and Victoria University. Regarded by some as the PhD “3 Minute Thesis” on steroids, I took the 5RP challenge this year. It all seemed straightforward: three PowerPoint slides, five minutes, and present my research in a creative and engaging manner.

I decided to talk about a small, unfunded project I am doing with another Fed Uni staff member Maxine Cooper, examining how pre-service teachers be, and become, socially and culturally inclusive in a global context, and focusing in particular on the effect of doing professional experience placements overseas. The title of my 5RP was *The globe … in my classroom … to the globe* and I was able to include gorgeous images taken by students in Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste. It was more difficult than I expected to synthesise everything I wanted to say into just five minutes; there was a lot of discarding, editing and cutting of my material.

Each university in the competition runs its own heats, with two discipline winners going forward in the competition. I won the FedUni heat and travelled to ACU’s North Sydney campus for the national final. On the day, competitors were very nervous (speaking to peers is more difficult than dominating lecture rooms with hundreds of students!) but every 5 minute pitch was fascinating. I learned lots of things ranging from determining the age of a crustacean to infanticide in 19th Century Western Australia. Although I did not win any of the prizes at ACU, the networking and the experience were very valuable.

**Retirement of Professor Lawrie Angus**

As mentioned in the last edition of RAVE News, members Barry Golding and Lawrie Angus retired in March 2015. They have been appointed as Adjunct Professors for a period of three years and will continue to work with us on a range of research and writing projects. We wrote about Barry in the last edition, and outline Lawrie Angus’s contribution here.

Lawrie’s scholarship and contribution to equity research and ethnographic methodology have been internationally significant. He has a record of using ethnographic research to pursue questions about the embeddedness of social and cultural norms and equity relations in institutional structures, social attitudes and conventional practices. This work has contributed to rethinking theoretical presuppositions and policy directions in relation to organisational change, disadvantage and equality of opportunity. The approach has enabled him to make important contributions to numerous areas of social and educational thought and practice including theories of institutionalism in education, school and community relationships, leadership and organisational culture, school restructuring and educational disadvantage.

Lawrie’s publications include 16 books and reports and over 50 refereed book chapters and articles in academic journals.

**Reports from completed project**

Manufacturing Skills Australia has published our summary report on the RAVE ARC-funded project ‘Recognising the skill in jobs traditionally considered unskilled’. MSA was a partner on this research project and the report can be found at: [http://www.mskills.org.au/industry-intelligence/info/research-publications](http://www.mskills.org.au/industry-intelligence/info/research-publications) (Look under the sub-heading ‘Update’)

A version of the report was also sent to leading academics in the UK and the USA for comment and six useful and detailed responses were received. All endorsed our findings and made very helpful suggestions about further analysis and dissemination.

**New RAVE research project: ‘Employer Training in a Changed Environment’ – Would you like to take part?**

Fed Uni researchers *Erica Smith*, Jackie Tuck and Andy Smith, together with Victor Callan from the University of Queensland are mid-way through an NCVER-funded project on employer training. The project, which concludes in early 2016, examines why and how employers train their workers, and employers’ choices about whether and how to engage with the formal VET sector.

So far we have surveyed all TAFE Institutes, a sample of RTOs, and a sample of employers nationally, and we are now in a phase of ‘matched-pair’ interviews where we interview the employer and the RTO. The project concludes in March 2016 and the project web site is at: [http://federation.edu.au/faculties-and-schools/faculty-of-education-and-arts/research/fea-research-groups/rave-researching-adult-and-vocational-education/current-research/employer-training-in-a-changed-environment](http://federation.edu.au/faculties-and-schools/faculty-of-education-and-arts/research/fea-research-groups/rave-researching-adult-and-vocational-education/current-research/employer-training-in-a-changed-environment)

Anyone who would like to be involved in the ‘matched-pair interviews is invited to contact Erica Smith, as we are still looking for participants. Contact details: e.smith@federation.edu.au or 03-5327 9665.

**Donation of Springer books from INAP conference to FedUni library**

International publisher Springer has donated the books that they sent for display at the INAP conference publications. We have passed these on to the Fed Uni library, making them available throughout Australia for loan. The following titles are in the process of being included in the library collection:

- Work and Education in America: The art of integration. (Rauner & Barabasch, Eds)
- International handbook of research in professional and practice-based learning (vol 1) (Billett, Harteis, & Gruber)
- Francophone perspectives of learning through work: conceptions, traditions and practices (Fillettaz & Billett)
- Competence development and assessment in TVET (COMET): Theoretical framework and empirical results (Rauner, Heinemann et al, Eds)
- Areas of vocational education research (Zhao & Rauner)
- Integrating practice-based experiences into higher education (Billett)
- Learning through practice: Models, traditions, orientations and approaches (Billett)
- International handbook of research in professional and practice-based learning (vol 2) (Billett, Harteis & Gruber)
- Handbook of technical and vocational education and training research (Rauner & Maclean, Eds).
RAVE members’ publications since RAVE News 4 (May 2015) *(RAVE members’ names are bolded)*

**Books**


**Book Chapters**


**Peer-reviewed journal papers**


**Refereed conference papers**


**Non-refereed publications**


Other conferences, public addresses etc


* denotes RAVE doctoral student.