

# MINISTERIAL COUNCIL FOR VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (MCVTE) MEETING

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**Date of Meeting:**  
Thursday 20 November 2008

**NSOC Agenda Item: 8**

**Originator:** National Advisory Alliance

## National VET Equity Advisory Council – Proposed Advisory Arrangements

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### RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Ministerial Council:

- (a) endorse the establishment from 2009, of a single-layer advisory body - the National VET Equity Advisory Council, (NVEAC) (replacing the current advisory structure) to provide (via NSOC) high level advice to MCVTE (or any successor Council) on all matters relevant to improving the participation in VET and achievement of VET equity students, and the performance of the national VET system in support of such students. Attachment A provides a detailed proposal.

Funding for the new arrangements of \$1.5million per annum (Attachment A Appendices 1 & 2) provides:

- The appointment of:
  - i A high calibre part time Chair NVEAC
  - ii A high level full time Director to oversee the activities of NVEAC
- Resources to support and action the above and to commission various projects as outlined in the NVEAC annual work plan to be prepared for endorsement by MCVTE.

The office of the NVEAC will be located in TVET Australia Ltd, who will host the Council's operations and act as the administrative employer.

The Director will be accountable to the NVEAC chair and report operationally to the CEO of TVET.

NVEAC will be established to commence in line with the new Commonwealth, State and Territory VET funding agreement.

- (b) 1. note the excerpt from the (draft) National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development (Attachment A Appendix 4) on proposed objectives, outcomes, outputs, progress measures, targets and annual performance measures.

2. endorse that all equity students (people with a disability, Indigenous Australians and other socially excluded groups) are an integral part of the national training system and whose performance is measured by the National Agreement and as a consequence, recognise that equity students have need of greater support than non equity students, in order for them to achieve the required training, skills and qualifications that would lead to improved employment outcomes.
- (c)
1. note the work of the national COAG data framework reporting to PAWG (Attachment A Appendix 6) and
  2. agree that all targets and measures relevant to VET equity students be considered under this framework
- (d)
- 1 endorse commissioning NCVET to undertake from 2009: The production of an annual VET Equity Report (either as a separate Report or as a distinct section within the ANR report) based on ANR data and NCVET reports on the VET system to monitor in detail the progress made by equity students in VET including participation and pass rates, attainment levels, further study and employment outcomes and other relevant progress measures for equity groups (as may be developed under the COAG data framework)
  2. endorse sponsoring or undertaking research (undertaken in collaboration with the new National VET Equity Advisory Council and States and Territories), to clearly establish the current level of investment and support for VET equity students at the state and national levels in delivering training and qualifications. This data would then be available to inform funding models and any future National Agreements for Skills and Workforce Development to better support students with higher needs.
- (e) note that NSOC will undertake further work to resolve the transitional arrangements for the establishment and funding of the new National VET Equity Advisory Council
- (f)
1. note the final reports from each of the three Advisory Taskforces
    - a) Indigenous Advisory Taskforce - Attachment B
    - b) Equity Advisory Taskforce - Attachment C
    - c) Disability Advisory Taskforce - Attachment D
  2. note the NSOC resolutions in relation to each of the final reports and to the Disability Advisory Taskforce recommendations at Attachment E
  3. note that NSOC will determine the process and responsibility for implementation of resolutions in relation to recommendations 6 – 9 of Attachment E.

## SUMMARY OF ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

At the 8 August 2008 NSOC meeting, the Advisory Alliance

- reviewed performance measures of the Australian VET system for the equity groups and indicated it had serious concerns about the lack of real improvement on a range of VET outcomes, particularly for people with disabilities and Indigenous people
- indicated that new strategies and approaches targeted to equity groups were needed to contribute to the achievement of the COAG Productivity Agenda and the Australian Government's social inclusion election commitments.
- proposed a replacement of the current two layer client advisory arrangements from 2009 with a single layer VET Equity Advisory Council structure to manage equity reform within the VET system.

The Advisory Alliance further developed its advice on this structure and provided the proposal to NSOC for its consideration at its 10 October 2008 meeting.

The proposal is now provided to MCVTE for its consideration as outlined in Attachment A.

The proposed National VET Equity Advisory Council aims to support State and Territory training systems to deliver national VET equity reform for all equity clients, particularly Indigenous Australians and people with a disability.

In addition the recommendations aim to build VET equity into the National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development; commission NCVET to produce an annual National VET Equity report; and sponsor or undertake research on the current level of investment and support for VET equity students to inform future national funding models and any future National Agreements for Skills and Workforce Development to better support students with higher needs.

## IMPLEMENTING MCVTE'S RESOLUTIONS

If MCVTE endorses the recommendations, any new appointments and advisory arrangements would need to be operational from the beginning of 2009 to ensure continuity of work undertaken by the three taskforces and the Advisory Alliance in the current advisory structure.

Any further developmental work that is able to be completed in 2008 to establish the new structure, could be led by the Advisory Alliance chair with support from the three Taskforce secretariats in collaboration with DEEWR.

## COMMUNICATING MCVTE'S RESOLUTIONS

Since there will be a strong interest in the outcomes of any revised equity arrangements, the taskforces could communicate any MCVTE decisions in its joint communiqué to over 600 stakeholders and their networks.

There are a range of other groups that would need to be informed of any changes, including students and student bodies, particularly from the equity groups, specific equity related and peak bodies and agencies representing equity groups, National Quality Council, the National Industry Skills Council, NCVET, TAFE Directors Australia.

A media release at an appropriate time is recommended.

## BACKGROUND

The current equity advisory structure of three taskforces and an Advisory Alliance was endorsed by MCVTE in November 2006 for a 2 year period that expires at the end of 2008.

## ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment A: Proposal for a National VET Equity Advisory Council (NVEAC):  
Business Case
- Attachment B: NVIAT Final Report
- Attachment C: NVEAT Final Report
- Attachment D: NVDAT Final Report
- Attachment E: Summary of NSOC 10 October 2008 meeting resolutions in relation  
to the Taskforces' final reports & recommendations